



**COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

DECEMBER 13, 2022

On behalf of myself and my wife, Jean, I want to say that I'm honored to be a part of this event—an evening celebrating our great friend, Karen Poniachik.

Karen was a talented politician, a dedicated public servant, a fierce advocate for women, and a devoted mother.

After getting her masters from Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs, she served in the highest levels of the Chilean government before rejoining the University as Director of the Columbia Global Center in Santiago.

The idea behind the Global Centers was to strengthen and expand the university's physical and intellectual footprint around the world. It was also to build ties with local partners and engage with the great challenges they face.

Karen embodied this mission better than anyone. She was a major political figure who chose to be part of Columbia's efforts to be part of and learn from the world. We were so very fortunate to have her working with us, doing what she did best.

Karen's leadership was instrumental to the success of the Santiago center, and to that of the Global Centers more broadly. She built regional and local partnerships; she created programs on climate change, mental health, and the future of journalism; and she championed women's rights and worked tirelessly on initiatives that addressed economic and social inequities.

We grieve her loss so very deeply. But we are also left with a great sense of pride in what we collectively accomplished with the Global Centers, and a commitment to forge ahead.

Karen made the Global Centers what they are. She is why we did this. We pledge to honor her memory by continuing her rich, rewarding, and urgently necessary work.

**PRESIDENT LEE C. BOLLINGER,  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY**

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