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A DEAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Economist Peter Blair Henry is teaching an evolved version of finance at Wall Street's favorite business school. BY TOM HUDDLESTON JR.



AMERICAN VOICES

PETER BLAIR HENRY DEAN, LEONARD N. STERN SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

WUNDERKIND

Henry was the Stern School's youngest dean, accepting the job a few days before his 40th birthday.

BOARD MEMBER

He is on the boards of Citigroup and General Electric and served as an economic adviser to Barack Obama's 2008 presidential campaign.

STAR ATHLETE

A varsity football player at the University of North Carolina, Henry was also a finalist in a campus-wide dunk contest.

VENTURE IN 2010,

when Peter Blair Henry came to New York University's Stern School of Business, a top institution famous for its close Wall Street ties, the Street itself was in a shambles. Henry's goal: expand Stern's focus beyond New York banking and toward the larger world of business.

"The world needs finance more than ever, but it needs the 21st-century version of finance," Henry says. Specifically, a more globalized and tech-savvy version.

The good news for NYU: Henry seems well-suited for the job. Born in Jamaica, where he later served as a consultant to the island nation's central bank, the former Rhodes Scholar is a respected global economist with a focus on emerging markets. At Stern he has pushed the school to tackle broader macroeconomic issues like global infrastructure development, while also embracing entrepreneurship and the fintech revolution.

Under Henry, Stern has also increasingly come to see diversity in the business world as an imperative in the modern era, with its diverse global consumer base. The school has boosted the number of scholarships it offers, including the number of full rides for undergrads, from zero to 35; many go to first-generation minority students.

It's not charity. "If we want to have a productive, prosperous economy," he says, "doing this is not a nice thing to do—it's something we have to do." ■

○ PASCAL PERICH