



# community

## 'Block Party' an opportunity for students, residents to focus on good things

By Kathryn Fletcher

"Where are you from?"

"I grew up around here — as a kid, I called Binghamton 'the city.'"

"I'm sorry."

Yes, in 2004, as a freshman at Binghamton University, I received condolences for having spent 18 years of my life in "Greater Binghamton."

I cannot claim to have disagreed with some of their criticisms, but nevertheless, I took each expression of sympathy as an insult and was reminded of a famous quote by Benjamin Franklin: "Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain, and most fools do."

There aren't enough jobs ...

There aren't enough opportunities

...

There is nothing to do in Binghamton ...

All common complaints I've heard on many occasions; they can never be proven accurate. As these statements are relative to an individual's perspective, I have a simple request for those who have a tendency to see the glass half-empty: A community's

## GUEST VIEWPOINT

image is a reflection of its people, so please bite your tongue.

On the other hand, to the optimists, to those who take pride in calling this area home: A community's image is a reflection of its people, so please *speaK up!*

Among the many whose efforts are fueled by good will and forward thinking, the Catalysts for Intellectual Capital 2020 (CIC2020), a student-led economic think-tank at Binghamton University, could use your help in creating positive first impressions.

On Sept. 19, CIC2020 plans to showcase what makes Greater Binghamton great. An event that will attract local residents and the Binghamton University population to Court Street in Downtown Binghamton, the Binghamton Blowout Block Party (B<sup>2</sup>P) will offer a variety of food, live music and comedy performances, games, competitions, art and other exhibits, raffles, tours and dancing on the street.

The event aims to bring together the community and university, high-

lighting what each entity has to offer. By providing support as sponsors, contributing performers, offering items for raffles and giveaways, hosting special activities, and simply setting up booths to feature their offerings, local businesses and organizations are getting involved in a variety of ways.

In working with the City of Binghamton, Southern Tier Celebrates, the BU Student Association, and many other key entities from both the community and university, CIC2020 expects the B<sup>2</sup>P to not only provide a fun and exciting experience, but also to promote the formation of relationships that lead to future collaborative endeavors.

If you would like to assist these efforts, please contact [cic2020@gmail.com](mailto:cic2020@gmail.com). For those interested in showcasing your businesses or organizations, it is not too late to participate in the event.

Forms for interested sponsors, vendors, performers, and other participants are available at [www.cic2020.org/B3P](http://www.cic2020.org/B3P). I welcome you to take part in this opportunity, raise the pride in our community, and prove there is no need to deliver apologies for living in Greater Binghamton.

Kathryn Fletcher is director of the Catalysts for Intellectual Capital 2020.