



Gov. Cuomo tells the audience of more than 1,000 that the new College of Staten Island will be "New York's most exciting and attractive campus."

Lamberti called the ceremony a "remarkable moment," because the creation of the new campus was accomplished without displacement and because it helped "redeem a dark moment of our past."

"Twenty years ago," he said, "this was a tomb."

During that time, stories in the Advance cataloged the abuse of retarded patients at the school, revelations that ultimately led to its closing and the movement of mentally retarded persons from large institutions to group homes.

The changes in treatment of the mentally retarded were evident even before ceremonies started.

A delegation from a group home run by the Association for Children with Retarded Mental Disabilities stood outside the tent that served as an auditorium for the day. On their arrivals, Cuomo and Koch detoured from the path to the tent to shake hands with the adult residents. At one point, Koch reached out and wiped a tear from a fearful young retarded woman.

"Don't cry," he said. "No one is going to hurt you."

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