



P.C. ROSSIN COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & APPLIED SCIENCE

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THE FREEDOM TOWER -- AND ITS TIES TO LEHIGH UNIVERSITY

For a brief few days, the nation's greatest debate did not center on affordable health care, same-sex marriage or the questionable talent of Miley Cyrus. It centered instead on height, as in, which state now lays claim to the country's tallest building. The battle pitted New York City with its nearly-completed [Freedom Tower](#) and Chicago's [Willis Tower](#), known by most as the Sears Tower.

The Freedom Tower took the crown this month after the Council determined that its antenna was technically a part of the entire structure, thus capping it at a patriotic 1,776 feet. This makes it 47 feet taller than the Willis Tower. (And by comparison 322 feet taller than the Empire State Building. The world's tallest building is still the Burj Khalifa in Dubai at 2,722 feet.)

But for many, the most surprising aspect of the debate was that there existed an institution whose job it was to decide these things at all. That institution, the [Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat](#), began at Lehigh University.


Founded in 1969, the CTBUH had a mission to spread information and share research on tall buildings and sustainable urban environments, maximizing the international interaction of the people who created them. A not-for-profit supported by architects, engineers and construction professionals, they quickly became the world's leading body on skyscrapers.

Read the full story on the council in the [Lehigh University News Center](#).

Related Links

- [Rare Air: Origins of the Council On Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat](#)

- [Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat](#)
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- [Faculty Profile: Dan Frangopol](#)

 Freedom Tower

At 1,776 feet, the Freedom Tower in New York is now recognized as the tallest building in the United States.