

April 30, 2009

THE PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE – A BRIEF ESSAY

We claim at North Park that students who study with us will experience an education that **“seeks to form and transform the whole student (intellectually, socially, and spiritually).”** This is the sixth of our seven educational ideals.

The first five ideals draw attention to the basis for a North Park education, the ends toward which a North Park education is directed, and the method through which these outcomes are achieved. With the present ideal the focus is shifted directly to the individual student and the breadth of interests the student brings to the learning context.

At North Park we assume responsibility for educating the whole student, the individual in the full complexity of what it means to be human. Jesus embraced the fullness of being human when he was asked, as a teacher(!), to identify the greatest commandment. He replied: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all you soul, and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:39). These three aspects of being human are reflected in the concluding phrase of the University’s Vision Statement: “. . . where faith, learning, and service meet.”

Just as loving God to the fullest requires all of one’s being, so at North Park we hold that education should embrace our whole person. We are people of intellect (mind), we are people of faith (heart), and we have a social nature (soul). A good education addresses the fullness of our being.

Our commitment is to form and transform the whole person—to mold and remold, shape and reshape, direct and redirect the student’s personal essence in heart, mind, and soul—toward becoming the person of God’s intent. We embrace the responsibility to graduate students who love God and serve their neighbor as broadly as humanly possible—in heart, soul, and mind.

The formation and transformation of students toward these purposes is powerfully influenced by the character of our learning community and the presence of a corresponding institutional culture at North Park. In turn, the integrity of this learning community and the vitality of our institutional culture rest on the values, actions, and contributions—the character—of its various members. The learning community molds us, and we in turn shape the learning community. We form the culture of this place and we also are transformed by this same culture.

Reaching this educational ideal requires an intentional learning community and a distinctive institutional culture. Such a commitment to educating the whole student does not succeed by chance; it must, rather, be part of the very fabric—the agenda—which pervades, brings color to, and adorns all of who we are and the full breadth of what we do. We form and transform students not by virtue of how we describe ourselves but rather as a direct outcome of who we are, individually and collectively. We form and

transform in heart, soul, and mind because as members of this community we ourselves have been (and continue to be) formed and transformed intellectually, socially, and spiritually.

RECOGNITION OF NOTE

Students, faculty, and staff gathered on Monday, April 27, in Anderson Chapel for the University's annual Honors Convocation. Though focused primarily on students who this year have obtained considerable academic merit, the occasion also featured presentations to several members of the faculty and staff.

Professor Liland Horten gave the Convocation address. This long-serving and deeply loved member of the North Park community encouraged students, faculty and staff alike with carefully chosen words garnered from his years of observing students who leave North Park transformed by their years in this place, and prepared to serve others even more diligently than did their mentors in this place of learning.

Though he has been part of the North Park community for less than a full year, Terry Lindsay (Dean of Diversity and Multicultural Programs) was presented with the Student Association Service Award. This annual award is given to a staff member who actively engages with students and embodies the mission of the University. Most of us don't achieve this type of student recognition over many years; Terry has garnered it in his first year!

Finally, the 2009 Zenos Hawkinson Award for Teaching and Campus Leadership was presented to a very surprised Dennis Bricault. This award is given to a faculty member who has made a significant contribution to teaching and leadership at the University in several areas including effective classroom teaching, campus leadership, student mentoring, pioneering instructional methodology, and creative course development. Dennis is well recognized as a caring teacher, especially for those learning a new language, and he is honored as well for his involvement with student learning outside the classroom.

The rest of us are honored to be part of this community because it includes such dedicated colleagues. We thank them for including us in their company!

SPECIAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Wesley E. Lindahl (SBNM) has recently published his book, *Principles of Fundraising: Theory and Practice*, with Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

THE NEXT THREE WEEKS

We all know the routine at the end of the academic year. It links the successful completion of a period of learning with great celebrations for students, family, and friends. As members of the University's faculty and staff we're all invited to the party. Indeed we should be eager to attend the party as it reflects the outcome of our vocation as well, seen most clearly in the transformation of student lives during their years in our presence.

Please join our students in these moments of celebration:

- Friday, May 8, 4:00 p.m. – Nursing Pinning Ceremony in Anderson Chapel
- Friday, May 8, 8:00 p.m. – Baccalaureate Service at Queen of All Saints Basilica
- Saturday, May 9, 10:00 a.m. – Undergraduate Commencement in the Gymnasium
- Saturday, May 9, 3:00 p.m. – School of Adult Learning and Graduate Commencement in the Gymnasium
- Saturday, May 23, 10:00 a.m. – Seminary Commencement in Anderson Chapel

POST-COMMENCEMENT CAMPUS EVENTS

The annual Symposium sponsored by The Axelson Center will be held on campus this year on Wednesday, May 13. This event brings several hundred people to campus each year for a day-long series of plenary sessions and special interest workshops for people in the nonprofit sector. The Alford-Axelson Award for Nonprofit Managerial Excellence is also presented during the symposium to two organizations that embody exemplary management practices. Members of the campus community are invited to attend these sessions, with registration through the Center's web page.

On May 17-19 the Ignite '09 Collaboration, sponsored by Salter McNeil Associates, will be hosted on the North Park campus. This conference brings together faculty members from colleges and universities across the country to consider pedagogy for addressing topics on racial and ethnic diversity. The conference is open, at no cost, to a limited number of faculty from North Park. Further information and registration materials are available from the Provost's Office.