

REPORT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES May 2013

David L. Parkyn President

Each month I prepare an "occasional communique" for our campus community and the lead story from the April issue provides a good opening for my report to the Board of Trustees. Here's the story:

A number of weeks ago Mel Soderstrom came by my office. He does this occasionally, and nearly always he carries a large envelope with him. He brings a gift in the envelope. We talk for a while, and as he is leaving my office he lifts the envelope toward me and says, "I came across this recently. I think you might be interested in it."

This time the envelope held a single page torn from a 1955 campus publication—something Mel had come across while looking through an old file in his office. The short article featured Betty Nelson who recently had returned to North Park. This school had been her home a decade earlier when she was a student here from 1942-1944. From here she went off to finish college and complete graduate studies.

She returned not as a student but as a teacher. And in returning she quickly realized that more than her role had changed. The name of the school was still the same. It was still in its same location along Foster Avenue. The faculty still included many of the same people. But so much had changed.

Here's how Betty described the change in the campus publication Mel brought to me:

The fact that I now have my office where I used to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner is enough to make me realize that North Park is quite a bit different now than in [my student days].

The article tells us that at first it was hard for Betty to get accustomed to all the "new" in this place. She had come back to teach at her alma mater, but was it really the same school as it had been when she was a student here? Did students still learn and grow here as she had done? Could she still love the school the way she had loved it as a student?

Sure enough, she could. Here's more of what Betty wrote in 1955:

Perhaps it's because so many times a person has to return to a place to discover what's been there all the time, that I have felt a change in my own feeling toward North Park during these years. All of North Park is a growing experience. It is a growth exemplified not just by numbers of students and buildings, but by a rich movement in the understanding of Christian education on the North Park campus!

The same, she says, yet also different. The same, yet better—and always a growing experience.

Betty and I, along with all of us who are part of North Park today, hold to a common philosophy of life at North Park—we build on the past by embracing the future.

Some parts of the past ought never to change. We loved God in the past; we will love God in the future. We loved our neighbors in the past; we will love our neighbors in the future.

Yet, how we love God and how we love our neighbors tomorrow will be different from how we loved God and how we loved our neighbors yesterday. The same, yet also new.

So it is with North Park University, as Betty pointed out so well. In 1955 North Park was enough like it was in 1942 for Betty still to recognize it and love it for what it had been. Yet in 1955 North Park was different enough from what it had been in 1942 for Betty to know it had moved forward in the intervening years.

During my seven years as president at North Park I've discovered this is how we all feel about the university today.

North Park today is enough like it was when we studied here (if we are alums), or when we first came to work here (one, or two, or three decades ago), to recognize it and love it for what it has always been.

And North Park is different enough today from what it had been for us to know it has moved forward. The same, yet different.

I discovered an interesting illustration of this in recent weeks. On two occasions in history a graduate from North Park has been featured on the cover of <u>Time</u>, the weekly news magazine.





On December 4, 1964 the <u>Time</u> cover story was titled: "The Congo Massacre." The cover featured a portrait of Dr. Paul Carlson who received his associate's degree from North Park in 1949, and later completed his undergraduate studies at Stanford University and a medical degree from the George Washington University School of Medicine.

On April 15 of this year the <u>Time</u> cover story was titled: "The Latino Reformation." The cover featured the praying hands of Wilfredo (Choco) de Jesus who received a master's degree in Christian ministry from North Park in 2006.

The same, yet different.

Paul's father had immigrated to America from Sweden at the age of ten with his parents and thirteen siblings. Choco's parents also immigrated to America's mainland, settling in Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood. The same, yet different.

Paul's parents spoke Swedish at home; Choco's parents spoke Spanish at home; when forming their own families both Paul and Choco spoke English with their children. The same, yet different.

Paul traveled to Africa after completing his education, establishing a network of hospitals and clinics in Congo. Choco stayed in Chicago after completing his education, establishing a multi-campus church within and beyond the city limits—at 17,000 members the largest congregation in America with the Assemblies of God denomination. The same, yet different.

Paul lived a life of significance and service. Choco lives a life of significance and service. The same, yet different.

In 1949 and again in 2006 the faculty and staff of North Park congratulated Paul and Choco on completing their studies. In this same manner, in four week's we'll gather with

family and friends of our students to celebrate the completion of their studies at North Park.

We can't imagine where these graduates will lead and serve in the coming years, any more than we could imagine the future for Paul or Choco on their day of graduation. Nonetheless, through the coming years we'll discover more of significance and more of service in the life of each graduate.

The same, yet different.		

The Difference a Year Makes

One year ago when we gathered for our spring meeting much of our agenda was devoted to a single question: Are we ready to build? We determined the answer was yes, and with the full support of the Board we moved forward with plans to build the Johnson Center for Science and Community Life.

The next time we met, in October, we broke ground to officially mark the beginning of construction. We had a great celebration, and since that time the campus has been filled with the wonderful noise of construction.

When you visit the campus in two weeks I know we'll have a hard time bringing your attention together to begin the meeting. Everyone will be crowded against the north-facing second floor windows of our meeting room for a good view of the construction site.

The great news is that we're on schedule. As you'll see when we tour the construction site the concrete walls of the garden level are completed, the infrastructure that gets buried in the concrete floor of this level is finished, and the floor is about to be poured. Erection of the steel framework will begin in mid-May and will be completed before the end of the summer.

In addition to touring the construction site we will invite you during our meeting to join with the campus community as we all "sign" one of the steel beams. We'll be inviting graduating seniors, all current students, faculty and staff, trustees, and anyone else who wants to leave their mark on this important new building, to sign a message on the beam. Sometime in the weeks ahead, this beam will be lifted into the building's steel structure and become a permanent part of the campus.

Additional Projects: Foster Avenue, Magnusson Dining, and Others

The project to improve the campus "front yard" along Foster Avenue is well underway also. Throughout the winter our property on the corner of Kedzie Avenue was home to a large, heated "tent" which covered the construction site of the new campus sign, allowing for masonry work to proceed through the cold weather. When the tent came down just a few weeks ago, and when the little blue "lego" that marked our place on the corner was removed, we gained a renewed sense of pride in our school. As this project is completed in the coming weeks, extending from the east entrance of the gymnasium on Kedzie Avenue, then west along Foster Avenue to Anderson Chapel, the front of the campus will be presented to the public in a renewed and refreshed manner. This will be complemented by a streetscape project to be undertaken by the city beginning also in May, which will provide new curbs, sidewalks, planters, trees, and light poles on both sides of Foster Avenue between Kimball and the water channel just east of Holmgren Field.

A second project is a significant renovation of the University's dining room in Magnuson. Work began in December and January with the replacement of all the windows over the Christmas break. And the project will be re-activated on the day following commencement as the all of the furniture is removed, new surfaces are installed, the long narrow space is sectioned for more defined dining venues, lighting is improved, and the servery is improved. Overall, this will create a much more attractive and comfortable dining experience for our students.

In addition, we have partnerd with the city on two important city-based projects. The first involves improvements to River Park that serves as a practice location for our soccer teams and as the home field for our track and field competitions—all while the park continues as a public, neighborhood facility. The second project is a new venture—a partnership with the city to build a new boathouse on the North Branch of the Chicago River not far from the campus. This will be a public facility but will also provide a home for the Viking rowing team.

100 Years

This past Sunday I traveled to Minneapolis to participate in a service to commemorate the centennial anniversary of our sister school, Minnehaha Academy. This was a great celebration (and reminded me that in just three years we'll celebrate North Park's 125th anniversary!). I was pleased to join with so many whose lives that have been shaped by both Minnehaha and North Park.

A number of alumni from North Park attended the service, including Ted Anderson who in 1935 journeyed from Minneapolis to Chicago for his final year of high school at North Park Academy, and then completed the junior college program. From here he studied at Northwestern University and then Princeton University. For most of his career Ted was

on the faculty of Stanford University and continues to live on that campus with his wife, Dorothy.

This was the second time I had seen Ted in just a few weeks. In mid-March I joined with the Gospel Choir at South Bay Community Church in California, for the opening service of their west-coast spring break tour. Ted and Dorothy drove across the bay to visit with the choir that day, noting that it was 75 years ago that Ted joined the University Choir on its spring break tour during his second year at North Park.

Now approaching its 101st year Minnehaha Academy is under the very capable leadership of Dr. Donna Harris who also serves on the University's Board of Trustees.

Institutional, Enrollment, and Seminary Planning

Throughout the spring semester we have given attention to three continuing planning opportunities.

- (1) Based on draft documents completed through the fall semester I visited with over 25 small groups on campus, representing individual work units, to discuss the University's overall trajectory. This opportunity provided for campus-wide inclusion in this process, and for good insight into modifications to the drafted documents.
- (2) Simultaneous to this broader discussion, a group of about 20 individuals has assumed responsibility for enrollment planning, working in conjunction with consultants from the Noel-Levitz group. The group has met for several two-day sessions during the spring semester, in addition to much other work assigned to four small task forces, and the group is scheduled to continue this work through the summer. A key aspect of this project most recently has been to carefully coordinate the work of the enrollment project with the insights and trajectory identified through the more broad institutional planning project.

I will report on the intersection of these two projects when the Board gathers.

(3) Additionally, Dave Kersten has organized a small group to facilitate planning within the seminary, an effort that is also coordinated with the work of the seminary faculty in curriculum review and redesign. While this work is ongoing—still very much in draft form—Dave will report on this work-in-progress with the Seminary Committee.

FY '13 and FY '14 Budgets

I'm pleased to report that through the careful work of many we've managed this year's budget to what we anticipate will be a positive year-end balance. The Finance

Committee will review our year-to-date summary as well as a projection through year-end.

During the final months of the school year the senior leadership team is also addressing questions pertinent to establishing a balanced budget for the coming year. This involves a deliberate effort to "re-size" in a number of areas, balancing the need to provide adequate resources to support our educational program while working within the limitations of our anticipated revenue for 2013-2014. We will confirm a proposed budget in mid-June and conference at the time with the Finance Committee and Executive Committee to present this budget.

Senior Leadership in Student Life

With the resignation of Andrea Nevels as Vice President for Student Development and Dean of Students I considered potential adjustments in reporting structures to improve support for campus life and student co-curricular engagement. One part of this involved separating the vice president assignments from those of the dean of students. Corresponding to this I invited Elizabeth Snezek to assume a modest redefinition of her administrative portfolio and accept appointment as Dean of Students. I'm very pleased she agreed to this modified assignment. Elizabeth will be meeting with the Student Recruitment and Retention Committee.

The second major component of the change was to identify a renewed position as Vice President for Student Engagement who will serve (in partnership with the Provost) as the co-chief learning officer of the University. Areas of supervision are now more extensive than was previously the case and will include:

- Student Life (residence life, health and counseling services, student enrichment, parent and family relations, and student wellness)
- Office of Career Development and Internships
- University Ministries
- Office of Diversity and the Collaboratory for Urban and Intercultural Learning
- Office of International Study

In collaboration with and supported by the Provost and the Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing, the vice president will lead university-wide initiatives for student persistence and retention.

Perhaps of most immediate importance, beginning in 2014 the vice president will lead the Center for Student Engagement to be located on the main floor of the Johnson Center. In this new venue, most of the program areas under the vice president's supervision will be located together in this dynamic central campus location offering opportunity for improved interoffice collaboration, increased student involvement, and enhanced student engagement with high impact learning activities.

The search for this appointment is well underway. The senior leadership team has interviewed candidates and two individuals will be visiting the campus the week before the Board meets. I will update the Board as the search progresses.

Closing

I look forward to our time together, to the helpful leadership you will provide for our work at North Park, and to the encouragement you offer each time we meet. Blessings to each of you.