



**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
February 2008**

**David L. Parkyn  
President**

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Early in the spring semester I wrote a short message to our faculty and staff to welcome them back to campus following the holiday vacation and to encourage a warm embrace of the tasks before us at the start of a new semester. I believe this message serves just as well to introduce our collective responsibilities as we gather for the February meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Formation and Transformation. These two words are part of our history at North Park. They were used most recently as the tagline for the capital campaign completed just two years ago. These words describe our objective – to *form* student lives in ways which serve the general purposes of an educated citizenry, and then to *transform* student lives through particular commitments.

To think we can *form* students to be good citizens is a bold assumption. This work is not easy, nor is the outcome easy to accomplish.

To think we can *transform* students into individuals of deep commitment is an audacious assumption. To think we can prepare students “for lives of significance and service” is to dream of accomplishing the nearly impossible. Yet this is what we claim to do.

How might we best approach such a bold and audacious task? Together. This is the simple answer. Together. We can be bold and audacious because we work together. Each of us is an educator, regardless of what specific tasks and responsibilities are assigned to us, regardless of which students we meet.

The secret of working together is to know what we ourselves can contribute to this task and to rely on each other to fill in the rest. None of us can do it all well, but each of us can do something well. The secret lies in knowing what we do well and honoring what others bring as a complement to our work.

Parker Palmer says it this way in his book, *Let Your Life Speak* (p. 27).

I am less gifted at building on other people's discoveries than at tinkering in my own garage; less gifted at stepping slowing into a subject than at jumping into the deep end to see if I can swim; less gifted at making outlines than at writing myself into a corner and trying to find a way out; less gifted at tracking a tight chain of logic than at leaping from one metaphor to another.

We need both – those who tinker and those who build on what others have started, those who step in cautiously and those who jump in wildly, those who follow outlines and those who look for a way out, those who carefully study a map and those who discover their own way.

We've now started a new semester. Students are once again on our campus. We've agreed to help them form their lives, and then transform them. Do we have what it takes to fulfill this promise? The courage it takes to shape lives? If we venture alone we will fail. If we venture together we may well succeed.

I do hope that as a trustee you consider yourself to be an educator, and as an educator you are part of the team that works together to bring life to the North Park University mission. Welcome back to campus!

## **MAJOR AGENDA ITEMS**

- In our opening session I will report on our continuing work to identify capital projects for the next fund-raising campaign. This is a complex assignment, one which will require careful consideration by the Board. Collectively we will need to discern what direction we should take and in doing so agree on a decision that is both informed and wise. I expect that the Board's response at this meeting will be to comment on our work-to-date with the goal of a decision at the May meeting.
- We have recently selected the consulting firm of Ter Molen Watkins & Brandt of Chicago to assist us in the very early stages of campaign planning. We will introduce Clyde Watkins and Nora Kyger to the Board, and the Development Committee will have opportunity to meet with them at greater length.
- This is also a timely meeting for the Board to review and comment on our developing strategic plan. This represents work we began last year and have continued during the present academic year.
  - Last year on two occasions we engaged the Board in active discussions about our dreams and hopes for the future of the University.

- During this same year we brought together eight discussion sessions with faculty, staff, and students under the theme of NPU@125.
- During the past two years the University Council has read and discussed two books which have focused our attention on strategic directions for the University. These include Jim Collins' *Good to Great for the Social Sectors* and Alex Kotlowitz's *Never a City So Real*.
- Earlier this year we gathered a combined meeting of the University Council, the Deans' Council, and the faculty representatives to the Board of Trustees to undertake a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for the University.

With these various elements as background information, the senior administrative team has gathered for several day-long planning retreats to draft a new strategic plan for the University. Though still very much a working document we are prepared to use this draft as a discussion point and as a means to solicit input from the broader University community. This draft will be discussed over the next several months by several audiences including the following:

- February 12 – the Council of Administrators of the ECC
- February 20 – combined meeting of the University Council, Deans' Council, and faculty representatives to the Board of Trustees
- February 21 and 22 – Board of Trustees
- March 9 – Executive Board of the ECC
- March and April – various campus-based discussions with faculty, staff, and students

Subsequent to these discussions we will revise the current draft and we plan to present a final version of the strategic plan for approval by the Board of Trustees at the May meeting.

- Each of the Board committees will have important topics to consider. These include the following:
  - The Academic Committee will discuss a recent faculty decision to organize their governance work following a “senate” model rather than a “meeting of the whole.” This change will be incorporated in by-law revisions which will be presented to the Board for approval at the May meeting.
  - The Student Development Committee will discuss findings from recent student focus groups on the topic of student residential patterns and the recent increase in the number of students moving off-campus.
  - The Multicultural Committee will consider revisions to the philosophy statement adopted some years ago.
  - The Development and Campus Development Committee will meet with our campaign consultants.
  - The Enrollment Management and Integrated Marketing Committee will consider the student recruitment and marketing implications of the drafted strategic plan.

- The Finance Committee will review our mid-year budget in light of spring semester enrollment.
- The Seminary Committee will receive an update on the dean search and consider implications of the drafted strategic plan for the seminary program.

## MID-YEAR ENROLLMENT REPORT

Our enrollment report for the spring semester is positive, when compared with enrollment one year ago. The specific numbers both for new students as well as total student enrollment are presented in the table below. There is an important point of caution, however. Specifically, though total enrollment is higher than it was a year ago it is not as high as we anticipated. This is due to two factors. First, new student enrollment for the spring semester is lower than the previous year. Second, retention of students (that is, the percentage of enrolled students who return for the subsequent semester) is lower than we would like it to be. Both of these factors are significant and we will give attention to each during the spring semester.

### Student Headcount Report – Spring 2008

	New Students		Total Enrollment		
	2007	2008	2007	Goal – 2008	Actual - 2008
<b>Undergraduate (Traditional)</b>					
First-Year	16	10			
Transfer	92	59			
Visiting	7	3			
TOTAL			1682	1761	1708
<b>Undergraduate (Non-Traditional)</b>					
College Bridge	5	1			
ESL	14	21			
RN Completion	18	18			
GOAL	39	36			
Ed Certification	14	8			
TOTAL			363	450	426
<b>Graduate</b>					
SBMN	63	54			
MS Nursing	24	27			
Adult Nurse Practitioner	2	0			
MA Education	12	13			
MA Community Development	3	0			
Master of Music	1	0			
TOTAL			653	665	679
<b>Seminary</b>					
Traditional	21	18			
Cross Registered	12	9			
TOTAL			260	260	246
GRAND TOTAL			2958	3136	3059

## MID-YEAR FINANCIAL REPORT

- FY 2007-2008 Budget – A larger than anticipated number of December graduates coupled with poorer historic fall-to-spring retention yielded a spring headcount that is about 50-60 below what was assumed in our budget for traditional undergraduates. You may recall that we had exceeded the budget expectations in the fall for this group and predicted a favorable revenue variance. That favorable variance has essentially been forfeited. That result, however, is mitigated by a corresponding financial aid savings. In fact, a budgeting miscue in the fall, wherein the financial aid budget was not adjusted for attrition to correspond to the expected attrition in student headcount, has resulted in a favorable variance in financial aid. In addition, we can report better than expected revenue in some of the graduate and adult education programs (e.g., GOAL, graduate education and nursing BS completion). Most expenses have been kept within budgeted limits; however, a few expenses (e.g., CTC fees) will be over budget. The net result is actually a slightly better end-of-year budget projection than we anticipated. This is a hopeful outcome as we are developing plans for some summer renovations of Burgh Hall.
- FY 2008-2009 – Work is in progress on next year’s budget. Still in a very preliminary stage, it is apparent that the lower spring enrollment will have an impact on next year’s available revenue. A smaller “eligible-to-return” pool is estimated to take 40 FTE out of next fall’s returning class with an unfavorable overall impact of some \$600,000. As in the past, there is no lack of proposed budget increases. Currently, we have received over \$1.5M recommended increases for a limited pool of discretionary income (especially with the impact of the lower return pool) so difficult decisions will need to be made in the months ahead. We intend to provide a balanced budget for action at the May Board meeting.
- January 1 Salary Increases – During the fall semester we determined that it was possible to provide a general salary increase for all faculty and staff of 3.5% (rather than the budgeted 3.0%), along with promotions and equity increases of 1% for selected individuals. In addition, we reviewed comparative data from our established benchmark group for faculty salaries. Some years ago we set a goal to bring faculty salaries for each rank to the median of the comparison group. We have been able to reach this goal for assistant and associate professors. Salaries for full professors, however, are \$2500 below the median. Based on this information, effective with the new salary year we provided a \$2500 adjustment to the salary of all full professors, in addition to the 3.5% general increase. This adjustment should bring the salaries of full professors closer to the comparative median benchmark. A complete analysis of comparative salaries for 2003-2004 and 2006-2007 is presented in a separate file which accompanies this report.

## CAMPUS SCHOLARSHIP

- Nearly a year ago R.J. Snell's (Philosophy) work titled *Through a Glass Darkly: Bernard Lonergan and Richard Rorty on Knowing Without a God's-eye View* was published by Marquette University Press as part of the Studies in Philosophy Series.
- Early in the fall semester Dennis Bricault (Languages) published his research on *Academic Dishonesty: Developing and Implementing Institutional Policy* (American Association of Collegiate Registrars).
- Late in 2007 Scot McKnight (BTS Department) published two books, including: *The Real Mary: Why Evangelical Christians Can Embrace the Mother of Jesus* (Paraclete Press), and *A Community Called Atonement* (Abingdon Press).
- Early in 2008 Klyne R. Snodgrass' (Seminary) long-anticipated work, *Stories with Intent: A Comprehensive Guide to the Parables of Jesus*, was published by Eerdmans.
- Within a few weeks Hendrickson Publishing House will distribute a new commentary by Jim Bruckner (Seminary) on *Exodus*, as part of the New International Biblical Commentary Series.

Each of these books gives witness to the exceptional scholarship and enduring Christian commitment of these faculty members. Our students are studying in the company of some very fine faculty members, and the church (both Covenant and beyond) and the broader academic community is being well-served by the research and writing which takes place on our campus. This is an accomplishment worth celebrating!

## NEW AND CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- Dan Gooris, Director of Security, reports that students have been using the newly instituted security escort service. Security personnel have conducted 56 escorts since the fall, with 46 of these across the campus and 10 to-or-from off-campus locations. This service adds to the confidence of our students living in an urban environment.
- During the fall semester a group of representative staff (student development, residence life, physical plant, IT, etc.) was gathered to work on a targeted renovation plan for Burgh Hall that can be completed during the three-month summer period between May 15 and August 15. We intend to use funds retained from last year's reserve and some funds generated in the current budget as a starting point for funding these improvements. However, the desired renovations will be more costly than the funds available so we will need to consider alternative funding. These improvements are designed to address needed upgrades in this building, changes

which we have noted for some years and which students comment on regularly as well. Simply put, the renovations are long overdue.

- With assistance from an external consultant, we held two focus groups with select students to better understand student response to on-campus residential options and the recent increased popularity of off-campus alternatives. A report is forthcoming and will be discussed by the Student Development Committee.
- As I noted in communication with the Board in January, we recently reorganized several components of the Development Office. Many of these changes have already been implemented and others will be introduced over the course of the semester. We expect to achieve several goals through this reorganization:
  - Coordinating the work of “university advancement” across various work units (development, external relations, enrollment, and alumni relations)
  - Having strong and capable people in place
  - Articulating clear expectations for personnel performance, giving individuals the support and professional development opportunities required to be successful, and holding individuals accountable for their work performance.
- The External Relations office is preparing a new design for the home page of the University website. One significant change will be a greater focus on off-campus visitors to the site, with clear links for prospective students, alumni/ae, donors, and other interested parties. The website continues to grow in importance for all audiences, but this is especially the case for prospective students. We continue to add video elements to the undergraduate admission website, with the most recent being a video about applying for financial aid through use of the FAFSA form.
- To attain a better understanding of our current and potential donor pool we have contracted Grenzebach Glier & Associates as consultants in wealth screening. This group has worked successfully with educational, medical, social, religious, and cultural organizations for over 20 years. GG&A will assist us in developing a research data base which will give the University the ability to build a model through which we will be better able to identify potential donors, explore gift capacity, and determine probability of a gift. We anticipate that the data base will be organized by mid-March with research and accessibility for NPU staff by the end of March.
- Major University events have been held in several locations during recent months, and others are planned for the coming weeks.
  - The Gospel Choir anchored several events in Kansas during October.
  - The University Choir visited the Twin Cities in January.
  - Dinner events were held in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Oregon, and Washington in early February.
  - The University Choir will tour northern California during spring break.

- Events are scheduled for Denver, Phoenix, Fort Myers, Grand Rapids, Detroit, Omaha, and Des Moines through the rest of the spring semester.
- The University's most recent Chicagoland advertising and branding campaign was launched in December and January. Selective photographs of this year's billboards are attached to the end of this report, and others are included in a report presented with materials prepared for the Enrollment Management and Integrated Marketing Committee.

We've received considerable positive response to this campaign. One example is a note from a 2006 graduate. He wrote: "...I must share my overwhelming approval for the new line of ads currently running. The simple and concise messages better represent North Park by commenting on the core identity of this institution. The three slogans [used in this campaign] ... accurately describe my North Park experience and present the university in a way that is both faithful to its history and heritage and marketable to a wider population.... My satisfaction and contentment with the new messages are confirmed each time I see them."

- Personnel searches are underway in a number of areas. These are always important tasks, and this year they combine both faculty positions and administrative assignments. The open positions include the following:
  - Faculty
    - Biology
    - Clinical Psychology
    - Director of Nursing Graduate Program
    - Nurse Practitioner Faculty (graduate)
    - Theology
    - World Missions (seminary)
  - Administrative
    - Dean of Diversity and Intercultural Programs
    - Dean of Academic Life (seminary)
    - Dean of the School of Education
    - Dean of the School of Music
    - Director of Career Planning and Development
    - Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Research
- I recently accepted a three-year appointment to the Executive Committee of the Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities.
- In early January Linda and I attended the President's Institute sponsored by the Council of Independent Colleges. This annual meeting is a valuable professional development opportunity for us and also provides a venue for meeting colleagues from other institutions. In this year's program Linda chaired a presentation session and served as Master of Ceremonies for a dinner event.

Certainly other things occupy much of our time on campus. Classes meet each day, meals are prepared, teams practice, choirs rehearse, students are advised, new courses are prepared, research and writing is completed, students are recruited, donors are visited, and sidewalks are cleared of snow. This is the real work of this place. As is our custom at each Board meeting, when we gather on Friday trustees will have opportunity to greet members of our staff at an afternoon reception. Please thank them for their good work.

May God's caring hand be upon you as you travel to the campus, and may God's guiding spirit be with us as we gather.

