

**REPORT TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
May 2009**

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President**

This has been a most interesting year at North Park! Challenges, especially of the unexpected variety, have been abundant. But we've also accomplished a number of things and have received a few unexpected blessings along the way as well.

The challenges, of course, have required exceptional attention. These are time-consuming and exhausting, so many in our campus community have been both busy and sometimes quite tired. The accomplishments also don't come easily, but their achievement leads to celebration. And unexpected blessings...well, we simply rejoice when they come to us.

Earlier this week I returned, tired, from an overnight trip and quickly drove from the airport to a concert venue. The North Park University choirs and orchestra were joining with their peers from Northeastern Illinois University in a performance of Johannes Brahms' *Ein deutsches Requiem*. 110 vocalists, 55 instrumentalists, and two soloists. (Did I mention that the two soloists, soprano and baritone, are both graduate students at North Park?!)

More tired than I wished to be I slipped quietly into the seat reserved for me. Though personally weary I knew this would be a good night – a great piece of music performed by “my” students gathered on the stage in front of me. And it was there, in the musical majesty of the concert hall that I heard the refreshing, and ever-restful, words from Psalm 84, placed in the fourth movement of this magnificent work of art:

How lovely is your dwelling place,
O Lord of hosts!
My soul longs, indeed it faints
For the courts of the Lord;
my heart and my flesh sing for joy
to the living God.

Later that evening as I returned home, now refreshed in spirit if not in body, I turned to the rest of the psalm which ends with this affirmation:

A day in your courts is better

than a thousand elsewhere.
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than live in the tents of wickedness.
For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
he bestows favor and honor.
No good thing does the Lord withhold
from those who walk uprightly.
O Lord of hosts,
happy is everyone who trusts in you.

A year of challenge, yes. But also a year in the dwelling place of the most high—North Park University in the heart of Chicago. Here, in this place, God bestows favor and honor and so our hearts and our flesh sing for joy.

MAJOR AGENDA ITEMS

The central focus of the spring meeting of the Board of Trustees is closely linked to two pieces of business to which we have given a great deal of attention during the spring semester. I will discuss both of these in substantial detail during the opening session of our meeting, committees will have occasion to deliberate further on each of them, and then in the business session we will collectively determine an appropriate course of action for these items.

- Annual Operating Budget. We have known since early in the academic year that there would be particular pressures on our fiscal year budget. We “went public” with these pressures during the fall semester by speaking often with our campus constituency and writing detailed messages to our faculty and staff. This communication was well-received and provided the campus community with an appropriate understanding of our decision to withhold expected salary and wage increases for this year. We also requested all budget managers to reduce operating expenses by 5-10%. These actions have served us well in working toward a balanced budget at year-end. The finance committee will receive a detailed report on our current budget and on where we expect to end the fiscal year (June 30).

Of even greater challenge, however, has been our work toward developing a budget for FY '10. Due to both a decrease in projected revenue (caused by both a potential enrollment decline, especially in the undergraduate program, and decreased value of the University's endowment) and increased expenses in selective expense categories, we are alert to a projected shortfall in the FY '10 budget when compared with the current year. Consequently, we have had to give careful attention to budget management and to identifying ways to reduce expenses. The challenges have been considerable.

Throughout the process of budget preparation the senior administrative team has set direction and has involved senior budget managers in evaluating potential expense reductions. We have also undertaken considerable effort to apprise the campus

community of the challenges. This has involved both written communication from me, as well as open forums for faculty, staff, administrative personnel, and seminary personnel. Each of these forums has included a presentation from Carl Balsam and opportunity for discussion.

Throughout our work we have endeavored to achieve the following objectives:

1. To produce a balanced budget – this will allow the University to be positioned for a sustained economic downturn.
2. To achieve desired student enrollment – this requires providing adequate support for marketing and recruitment activities, and maintaining a competitive and accessible price point for all programs.
3. To provide adequate compensation for faculty and staff – this will allow us to avoid too deep a slippage in our benchmark position.
4. To emerge from these challenges as a stronger institution.

We will present a balance budget for the Board to consider, and in doing so we will also inform the Board of the various implications of this budget. The proposed budget requires some changes in personnel, careful control of new initiatives or increased spending levels for continuing programs, selective modification of customary curriculum delivery, and selective program reductions and organizational consolidations.

- Campaign Readiness. One year ago, at the spring meeting of the Board of Trustees, we agreed to move ahead in testing the University's readiness to launch our next fund raising campaign. Prior to this decision we had received a report on the feasibility study completed by our campaign consultants which suggested it would be appropriate to initiate a campaign of a certain size.

Early in the fall semester I appointed new leadership in the development office. This required some time for the office to be evaluated and reorganized and for new working relationships and leadership standards to be implemented and accommodated. Additionally, in the fall of this past year the financial markets tumbled downward placing challenges before many people and certainly before individuals and families who might be expected to be lead donors in the campaign. Losses in the investment markets have also impacted the University's ability to contribute auxiliary funding to support campus facilities projects which might be part of the campaign.

So we faced some early challenges, yet we moved ahead. We developed a working case statement for the campaign, and with this document in hand during the spring semester Mary SurrIDGE and I gave considerable attention to the potential campaign, making some 60+ visits with potential major donors over roughly a two month period. Our purpose was quite simple: to determine whether the potential campaign, as described in the case statement, could "find traction" and thereby attract the philanthropic spirit of friends of the University. We needed to test this with both our faithful and continuing donor base as well as with individuals who may hold potential

for offering financial support to the University but have not yet given evidence of such a commitment.

As the Board meets we will provide a summary of this work-to-date, review our findings and recommendations, and seek the Board's guidance regarding the immediate future of the campaign.

BACCALAUREATE AND COMMENCEMENT PROGRAMS

Spring is the time for celebration as the academic year comes to a close. Our Baccalaureate Service will be held on Friday evening, May 8, at Queen of All Saints Basilica in Sauganash. The Undergraduate Commencement is scheduled for Saturday morning, May 10, and the School of Adult Learning and Graduate Commencement will take place in the afternoon on that same day. Two weeks later the Seminary Commencement will be held on Saturday morning, May 23.

Honorary degrees this year will be presented to two individuals:

- Phyllis Tickle, renewed author and speaker (undergraduate commencement)
- Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (seminary commencement)

As is now our tradition, members of the Board are invited to attend the baccalaureate service and participate in the undergraduate commencement ceremony and we're delighted that a good number will be able to do this. Thanks for adding to the celebration!

HONORABLE MENTION

A number of our students and faculty members have achieved significant accomplishments over recent months. Especially to be noted are the following:

- Riley Clark, a senior with a double major in Spanish and Business, has been granted a Fulbright Student Award by the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board and the United States Department of State. The award is also sponsored by the Fulbright Garcia-Robles Commission in Mexico. This award provides a grant to cover Clark's full expenses for a year-long professional business experience working and studying in Mexico. This is the second consecutive year that a graduating senior from North Park has received a Fulbright Award.
- Linda Parkyn also received an appointment as a Fulbright Senior Specialist. In this capacity she is leading a project in applied linguistics at the *Universidad Nacional de Agricultura* in Catacamas, Honduras. For four weeks in late April and May she is joining the UNA faculty to design and implement a four-year second language curriculum in English to be required of all students as part of the requirements for their undergraduate degree.

- Kristy Odelius (English) has published a book of poems, *Strange Trades*, with Shearsman Books.
- Wes Lindahl (School of Business and Nonprofit Management) recently published a textbook on fundraising, *Principles of Fundraising: Theory and Practice*, with Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
- Soong-Chan Rah (seminary) published *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity* with InterVarsity Press.
- Jim Bruckner (seminary) has been awarded a Lilly Theological Research Grant for 2009-2010. The award will provide summer research support for his continuing work on a book-length project “Human Health and Ancient Narrative: The Old Testament as a Shaping Resource for Health Care Vocations.”
- Through the efforts of Anne Jenner (library) North Park has received a \$15,000 grant from the Barbro Osher Pro Suecia Foundation to digitize the *Swedish-American Historical Quarterly*, a scholarly journal published by the Swedish-American Historical Society since 1950.
- David Horner, former president of North Park University from 1987 to 2004, was inaugurated on March 7 as the new president of the American College of Greece. Carl Balsam represented North Park at the inauguration and spoke briefly in the program. Angelyn Balodimas-Bartolomei from our faculty in the School of Education also attended the ceremony; she received her undergraduate degree from the American College of Greece and recently published a guide to the city of Athens.

NEW AND CONTINUING INITIATIVES

- On the first Monday after Easter all members of our faculty and staff gathered for the University’s annual professional development day. The day began with a community-wide continental breakfast and orientation to the day’s activities. Subsequently, the schedule for the day featured a series of elective workshops. Topics in the workshops varied from teaching to mentoring, advising to recruiting, and supporting diversity to fostering spiritual well-being.
- We recently received the good news that the University’s Athletic Training Education Program has been re-accredited by CAATE, the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education.
- After months of careful work and extensive preparation we unveiled the University’s redesigned web site. This gives a “new look” to how we communicate in this medium with both internal and external audiences. Equally important, the web site is now facilitated by a new content management system which allows wider participation from campus offices in maintaining web content. Preparing and

launching the new web site was a cross-team project with a heavy load carried by our external relations staff and information technology team.

- During the spring semester we rolled out ConnectED Emergency Contact Software. This emergency notification system permits students and campus personnel to be notified by text message, phone call, and/or email in case of a campus emergency.
- The All-Academy Alumni Reunion took place over the weekend of April 17-19 with over 300+ alumni participating.
- The long-planned and long-awaited riverbank restoration project (behind Anderson Hall and Magnuson Campus Center) is scheduled to start the week following commencement. It will take all of the summer, and then some, to complete this project. Funding for the project is shared in part by North Park, with the project directed by the Army Corps. It is important to note that this project is not related to the flooding of the river this past fall. This project has been planned for nearly eight years. It will restore the riverbank but it will neither improve nor deteriorate flood protection.
- Work is nearing completion on our efforts at flood recovery in the Magnuson Campus Center with the project to be fully completed in early July. University expenses related to flood recovery will total \$2.4 million. Fund raising from friends of the University has provided some support for these expenses. We also initiated an application for a FEMA-based Small Business Administration loan but this has proven to be a non-starter. We have also applied for a Department of Education disaster relief grant for \$300,000. And more recently we have collaborated with staff members in the office of our newly-elected District 5 Congressman, Michael Quigley, in an effort to secure appropriations funding toward the flood recovery expenses. It will be some time before we receive responses on both of these federal programs.
- In a variety of Chicago-based initiatives:
 - Park North residents hosted the Pritzker High School College Prep Leadership Conference entitled “The Leaders of Tomorrow Learning Today.”
 - 52 students have participated in Chicago-based internships during the spring semester.
 - Members of the University choirs and orchestra joined their peers at Northeastern Illinois University for a performance of Brahms’ Requiem. The ensemble included 110 voices and 55 instrumentalists. The two soloists for the performance were graduate students at North Park.
 - Community Service Day was held on Saturday, April 25, with collaboration from University Ministries, Student Development, and the Student Association.
 - The first meeting of the Chicagoland Council was held this semester with leadership provided by Dan Tepke. This group is comprised of volunteers who partner with the University President to advance the mission, identity, and place of North Park in the Chicago community. Several council members

- have already helped in a number of ways: with public relations initiatives, with contacts in the Korean-American Chamber of Commerce, with Chicago's public radio station, and with the Chicago Economic Club, among others.
- We launched our spring Outdoor Advertising Campaign which aims at cultivating institutional recognition in the Chicagoland area.
 - We continue to receive exceptional financial support from the Kern Foundation for full-tuition scholarships in the seminary. Seven new students have been named for these scholarships for the coming year, with potential for two more awards. These awards cover full-tuition for three years leading to the M.Div. degree.
 - The second annual Honors Symposium was held in late April, featuring honors research presentations from students in several academic disciplines.
 - The undergraduate and graduate faculty have elected members to a Senate. During the coming year these individuals will determine the procedures under which the Senate will govern, with full implementation of this governance model during the 2010-2011 academic year.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECTIVE

Pictures are worth a thousand memories and with this in mind the University has collaborated with Arcadia Publishers to prepare a volume in The Campus History Series. This 128-page paperback provides over 200 photographs and brief chapter introductions covering the history of North Park University. The book was edited by alumnus John E. Peterson with support from Anne Jenner in the University Archives. The book will be released on May 11, with pre-release copies available during the commencement weekend. John Peterson will join the Board of Trustees at the reception for graduating seniors on Thursday afternoon.

THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM

The founders of North Park University chose to leave a mark, a word of advice, in the walls of Old Main. Intended for future generations of North Parkers, these words speak to me each morning as I walk into this building.

Chiseled into the concrete, in Swedish, are words from Psalm 111:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
All those who practice it have a good understanding.
His praise endures forever.

May we discover God's wisdom and direction for North Park University as we meet.