

Chairs' Corner – October 2005
Hurricane Katrina – Student Resource Center

TO: UW Foundation, Campaign Cabinet, Deans, Development & Alumni Staff
FROM: William H. Gates, Chair, and Orin C. Smith, Vice Chair, UW Foundation

Dear Friends,

Universities run on knowledge and ideas. But, like everything else, they also run on human feelings and connections. And this is a good thing, as old and new bonds between the UW and the Gulf Coast are reminding us.

On Saturday, August 27, Mark Emmert was about to fly off to a ceremony at Louisiana State University, where he was chancellor before coming to the UW. An ominous weather forecast canceled the trip and the ceremony. But throughout the next two days, as Louisiana braced for and then endured Hurricane Katrina, Mark was on the phone with friends in the region. The devastation, which shocked all of us, was especially personal for him. So almost as soon as Katrina had passed, he issued one of the country's earliest invitations to displaced Gulf Coast students: They were welcome at the University of Washington until their own schools could reopen, and their tuition would continue to go to their hard-pressed home universities.

Almost 100 students—from Tulane, Xavier, Loyola, Dillard, the University of New Orleans, and the University of Southern Mississippi—have now found their way to the UW, many with little more than the clothes on their backs (and those shorts and sandals were designed for a very different climate). About half the students have Puget Sound roots or ties, but the rest are from New Orleans or elsewhere in the country.

The University has taken these fugitives to its heart, and so has the surrounding community. The Katrina Student Resource Center, in Mary Gates Hall, serves as a welcoming entrance to the UW and a one-stop source of help and information. Staff people have worked overtime to guide students through admissions and registration, academic advising, housing, and financial aid. Offers of housing and donations of clothing, household items, and supplies have flowed in, both from individuals and from firms like the University Book Store and REI. Cash donations, including an anonymous \$100,000 gift, have enabled our Hurricane Katrina Scholarship Fund to meet students' immediate needs. (Visit <http://depts.washington.edu/uwassist/> for more information on needs and ways to help.)

After trauma and upheaval, these students are very grateful for the UW's warm welcome. "People have been great," says Tulane engineering student Adam Shackleton. "They've made this time much easier. I feel very indebted."

Adam and his New Orleans family rode out the storm at his grandmother's house in Baton Rouge. Then he salvaged a few things from his apartment near Tulane, cleaned

out his refrigerator, fed his absent landlady's cats (a job now taken over by his father), and headed for Seattle with two roommates. One had family in Edmonds, but the three came also because Adam's parents, both LSU alumni, knew that Mark Emmert was here.

Adam is already immersed in three demanding courses, and the three friends found a furnished apartment in a Laurelhurst home. They feel very lucky—but still displaced. "I'm thinking of this as my semester abroad," Adam says gamely, noting that southerners seem a bit like "foreigners" in the Northwest. "People don't understand us when we talk. And it's cold!" When Tulane reopens in January, he'll be there.

Meanwhile, Mark Emmert is just back from his delayed trip to Louisiana. Seen up close, he told us, the disaster is overwhelming. "People there are struggling. Everybody in Baton Rouge still has a houseful of people. It's going to take a Herculean effort, and a very long time, to rebuild. But what the TV coverage missed is all the everyday heroism—the strength of people's personal commitment to helping their friends and neighbors in need." That spirit, we're glad to report, is also alive on this campus.

Bill and Orin

Looking Back

- As of September 30, 2005, our **total Campaign giving since July 1, 2000, reached \$1,488,278,445** toward our Campaign goal of \$2 billion.
- The September Report of Contributions Notes is attached and contains fundraising details.

Looking Ahead

- **Friday, January 27, 2006**, Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee; 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting.
- **Friday, April 28, 2006**, Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee; 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting. Washington Weekend April 27-29, 2006.
- **Friday, September 8, 2006**, Foundation Board Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee, 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting.
- **Friday, September 8, 2006**, Fifth Annual Recognition Gala, Suzzallo Library.
- **Friday, January 26, 2007**, Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee; 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting.
- **Friday, April 27, 2007**, Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee; 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting. Washington Weekend April 26-28, 2007.
- **Friday, September 7, 2007**, Foundation Board Campaign Cabinet Meeting, 8:30 a.m. coffee, 9:00-11:00 a.m. meeting.
- **Friday, September 7, 2007**, Sixth Annual Recognition Gala, Suzzallo Library.