

Chairs' Corner – June 2008
Campaign UW – Chairs' Reflections

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

Dear Friends,

On June 30, the good ship Creating Futures will tie up at the dock after its eight-year voyage. We have already entered the harbor. The horns are tooting, the streamers are swirling, and the weary, triumphant crew is trying to remember how normal life might be lived.

Like the privateers of old, we have brought home a treasure ship—except that this treasure, instead of being plundered, was freely and generously given, in thousands of different ports of call. Most of which, in fact, were in our own back yard (straining our metaphor, which we will now abandon).

You all know the main facts and figures—the \$2.6-billion total, the fact that every component of the campaign has met or exceeded its initial goal. In the coming weeks, you will have a full report. So in this message, rather than give you a grand, collective summing up, we wanted to speak to you in our individual voices about the experience that you and we have all been through together.

From Dan. The goal seemed huge. We were just coming out of the dot-com bust, and right before we made the final decision to go, there was 9/11. But we had good advisers, and they told us it would be a stretch but there was a pretty good chance we could succeed. And we saw that the UW was in international competition for faculty, for research, even for students, and if we wanted to keep getting better this was the way to do it.

Bill had agreed to chair the campaign. My response, as I recall, was, “Good grief, Bill, you’re crazy!” So he asked me to be on the campaign executive committee. Early on, he told us all that we were now on the 20-yard line and had 80 yards to go, and that became the measure everybody used. When we finally crossed into the red zone, it was a big moment. Bill worked very hard on this campaign, meeting with people over and over again, as you have to do to secure a donation. He was definitely not a chair in name only.

I myself got involved with the College of Engineering and the Evans School. It was fascinating to see the enthusiasm at all levels—schools, individual departments, volunteers, faculty, staff. You depend, ultimately, on the passion of the donors, and there is such a huge variety of things at the UW that you can almost always find something to engage that passion.

The most visible result of the campaign is the great buildings—high points for me were the new law school and the new computer-science building—but I think the real strength has been the focus on endowed chairs and scholarships. There is new support for hundreds of faculty members and thousands of students, and that is going to put us on a whole new level.

The message of our huge success, I think, is this: Don't slow down. This isn't done. We've proven to ourselves that we can meet a very significant goal and be right up there among the top public universities in the country. We've set ourselves a new standard.

From Orin. One of the most inspiring things, for me, was the success of the Students First initiative and the UW's commitment that financial need would not prevent a qualified student from pursuing a UW degree. As a result, we now have the ability to provide one of the best educations this country can offer to those brilliant young people who, because of the circumstances of birth, have had little reason to hope for such a possibility.

I was also inspired by the large number of faculty, staff, and students who contributed so generously to the campaign. And I was amazed to see their extraordinary efforts to ensure that campaign goals were fulfilled—efforts that matched the passion and commitment of the donors. This has created a tremendous amount of good will that we can build on to make the UW even better.

In fact, I believe the campaign has given us the opportunity to be, not just one more public university, but one of the world's greatest institutions for advancing the frontiers of knowledge and imparting it to each new generation.

From Bill. Needless to say, I have a lot of really wonderful memories from the campaign, and it is not easy to get these down to a small number. But, taking a pretty arbitrary approach, here are a few.

The first is not an event but a series of events: meetings with the development staff. These occurred often—sometimes with large numbers and sometimes just with those connected to a particular unit. I always looked forward to these meetings, because I learned right away that these folks were a joy to work with. They were always on top of their agenda—always prepared to talk knowledgeably about needs and prospects. I never left those gatherings without feeling encouraged by what the troops were doing, in terms both of their plans and of the long list of solicitations to which they were committed. The intelligence and energy were so very impressive—and they explain why every unit did such a great job of reaching its fund-raising goal.

Another event that will always be a warm spot in my recollections has to do with a particular gift. This was a solicitation I made to a friend for some significant scholarship funds. It was a big setback when he explained that he was so impressed with the manner in which another institution was managing its scholarship funds that he was giving that

institution priority in his contributions. This was certainly not the only disappointment of its kind I had encountered, but it was a big one.

Then, however, Mark Emmert announced the Husky Promise/Students First program. This so impressed my friend that he called and made a very large anonymous commitment to that program. This was a great joy. In many ways, the funds coming in for scholarships have the deepest meaning for me, and this big gift, representing a reversal of views about how the UW was doing on scholarship promotion, was a huge lift in the final stage of the campaign.

There is no way I can recount here all the over-the-top work done by campaign volunteers. With apologies for seeming to slight the wonderfully effective jobs done by all hands, I feel compelled to single out a couple of special stories.

Nobody looking for easy paths to glory would put chairing the School of Social Work campaign at the top of the list. Like a few other schools, this one had the special characteristics of very few well-to-do alums and a goal that was quite ambitious. Well, Lynn Mowe and Susan Potts, who are tremendously enthusiastic about the work that social-work scholars do, were willing to step up to the challenge and chair the campaign. They were extraordinarily diligent, nose-to-the grindstone campaigners. In the end, they brought in more than double the school's goal.

Then there is the School of Medicine, whose target was just about one half the original goal of the entire campaign—a few bucks short of one billion dollars. Jeff Brotman took on this one, with a solid list of campaign lieutenants. Again, persistence and a great cause paid off—their last dollar over the goal came in virtually as the end bell was ringing.

Speaking of bells, possibly our most unusual gift came from Dr. Gordon Peak: a donation to replace and endow the nearly forgotten bells given to the University in 1912 by the Blethen family. Some of you will recall that these bells were lost when the old bell tower on the north end of the campus burned down in 1949. The new bells, called "change-ringing bells," were installed in the tower of Gerberding Hall and were first heard a couple of weeks ago. This is a marvelous emBELLishment (sorry) of our campus and a wonderful restoration of sounds that gave it special character for many decades. We are all much indebted to Dr. Peak for this thoughtful and very generous gift.

There are literally hundreds of quite special people whose work in the campaign deserves mention. There is no room here to tell all those stories, but for me all those pieces, to say nothing of the grand finale, will warm my memory from now on.

Deepest thanks to all,
Bill, Orin, and Dan

Looking Back

- **Total Campaign giving since July 1, 2000, has surpassed the \$2.5 Billion goal. As of May 31, 2008, \$2,625,259,984 has been received.** What a voyage!
- The May Report of Contributions Notes is attached and contains fundraising details.

Looking Ahead

- **Friday, September 26, 2008.** Foundation Board & Campaign Cabinet Meeting, and Recognition Gala & Campaign Celebration.