

The Cornerstone

An Update from Concordia University President, Charles E. Schlimpert, Ph.D.



What a Journey

Patti recently mentioned that I seem as enthusiastic about Concordia University today as I did 25 years ago when we first arrived on campus. She's right—I am enthusiastic because this is an exciting time for Concordia as a bright future, built on a solid foundation, continues to unfold before us.

Twenty-five years ago, I moved from being an administrator of a thriving Lutheran high school association in Southern California to a university presidency in Portland. Patti, the boys, and I shared a feeling of eager anticipation as we started a significant new chapter in our lives. The work to be done for Concordia focused on fiscal management and organizational re-structuring. Over the subsequent years, our priorities were clarified and our attention shifted to strengthening academic programs and building enrollment. We have been blessed with highly dedicated people who have advanced these goals so well that we are now in a situation where the demand for a Concordia education has outstripped our capacity to meet it.

My days are now filled with good news and tremendous momentum coming from every corner of the campus. Our core business of preparing leaders to transform society within a Lutheran context drives our vision of the future. We are on firm financial footing. The fulfillment of long-term plans is within our reach. Fresh initiatives from talented, motivated faculty and staff, students and community partners regularly arise. When we broke ground on a new Library and Learning Center on April 11, so many of the hopes and dreams we, and so many others, have had for this place became a reality.

Celebrating Our Success: A Campus Expansion Update

As authorized by the Board of Regents, we broke ground on the new Library and Learning Center at a fabulous celebration on April 11. The new building will house a library with twice the capacity of our current one, increase learning spaces by a third, add 33 faculty and staff offices, meeting spaces, and academic program centers that will enrich our campus and our community. Construction of the building will be completed by August, 2009. As I write, we have raised over \$9.6 million of the \$15 million needed. Just this past month, we received funding from three of Oregon's most respected philanthropic organizations – the Meyer Memorial Trust with a grant for \$400,000, the Oregon Community Foundation with a grant for \$50,000, and the Juan Young Trust, with a grant for \$36,000. These grants endorse the university's success and vision for greater significance, and affirm the partnerships that the university has developed in north and northeast Portland and beyond.

Our foundation board of directors and development staff are busy raising the additional money necessary to complete



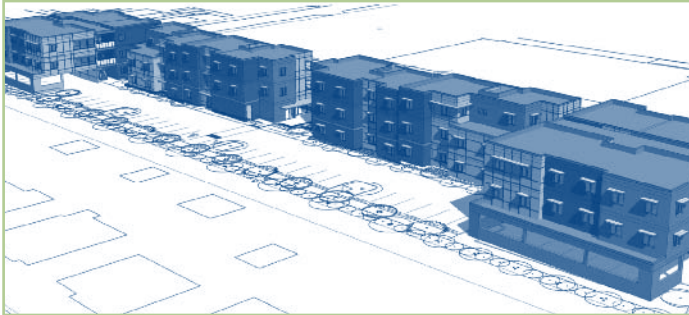
⌘ The April 11th "Groundbreakers" gather for a photo



⌘ Concordia University Choir

this project. I hope you will prayerfully consider how you can help to further advance this campaign. Every gift, no matter the size, is critical to our success and is deeply appreciated. To all of you who have contributed your time, ideas, and resources to this project I say, "Yes. We are making it happen. Thank you." In particular, I want to express our deep gratitude to Mr. George White, our good friend, former chairman of the board of regents and long-standing member, and a Concordia University Foundation director, and his wife, Geri, who have made a generous gift of \$1 million toward the construction of the Learning Center. We are blessed to have such great friends and supporters of Concordia, and we praise God for this wonderful boost to the campaign.

Earlier this month we traveled to Boise to present George with an honorary Doctorate of Law. At that dinner, attended by close friends and family, I surprised George with the announcement that the new building will be named the George R. White Library and Learning Center in honor of his tremendous contributions of time, treasure, and talent to Concordia over the past 25 years. In addition, the campanile planned for the quad will be named for his wife and partner, Geri.



✦ Plans for New Residence Hall

The White Library and Learning Center will be located on the field where our soccer and baseball teams have played for decades. Until we complete the new athletic complex, our home games will be played off campus. The athletic complex, opening in the spring or summer of 2010, will occupy the four blocks north of campus that are currently used for married student housing. The first two homes have been moved, and most of the homes have been deemed reusable. An alumnus is working with the university to acquire the remaining 30 homes and relocate them to support the housing needs of Portland's most underserved working families. As you know, Concordia's enrollment is at a record high, thanks to the hard work of our admissions team, and to meet the growing demand we anticipate breaking ground on a new residence hall along N.E. 27th Street (pictured above) as early as the fall of 2009.

Meanwhile, the University Bookstore has moved two blocks from campus to the neighborhood commercial area on the corner of 30th Avenue and Ainsworth Street. The bookstore will continue to serve as the place for textbooks and CU gear, but will also house a coffee shop and an array of other merchandise. The new bookstore is a perfect synthesis of our vision to integrate Concordia's academic mission with the community.

Down the hill, just north of campus, the Concordia University Throw Center is just about ready for athletes who compete in the javelin, shot put, discus, and hammer. It is our intention that Coach Mac Wilkins will have Olympic hopefuls (including one or more Concordia students) training there in June for the Olympic track and field trials in Eugene this summer. Be sure to keep your eyes open for news about our students and coaches as they attempt to qualify for and compete in the U.S. Olympic Track & Field Trials.

All of this physical growth was celebrated over two days when more than 900 friends, students and neighbors gathered for two wonderful events in celebration of the next phase in Concordia's future. At the Gala Reception on April 10, and at the Groundbreaking Ceremony the next morning, we honored those who have led us to this extraordinary place. Concordia's strong ties to the community were a central theme of both events. Portland

Mayor Tom Potter presented a full-ride scholarship that was created in his honor, to a deserving Jefferson High School senior, Cinthia Hernandez, who will be a freshman at Concordia this fall. In his remarks he noted that "Concordia is truly a partner in our community making a difference in the lives of others."



✦ Scholarship recipient Cinthia Hernandez and Mayor Tom Potter

Watch as we transform our Portland campus and create a community-centered gathering place for students, faculty, and neighbors alike. You can view the construction live at www.cu-portland.edu/giving/success.

Academic Excellence Abounds

It only seems like we are in the real estate development business. The activities of our faculty and students remain at the core of our mission. Our good friends at the Oregon Community Foundation recognize our value as educators and awarded \$30,000 in scholarships this past fall to five students in the nursing program through the S.I Jagger Blount Fund. Academic excellence is a hallmark of the work Concordia faculty members provide for our students each day. From the Shakespeare Authorship Conference, which brings leading scholars from around the world to campus, to the 100 percent passing of the nursing board exams by our first class of nursing graduates, to our College of Education graduates who are highly sought after – academic preparation, grounded in the liberal arts and Lutheran tradition, is the foundation of education and instruction at Concordia University.

Steve Braun, Ph.D. New Dean of the School of Management



We found that the perfect replacement for Ann Widmer was a colleague with a long history of building bridges between academic theory and professional practice. Steve Braun has taught here since 1987, and his accomplishments include founding the CEO Roundtable, a popular annual event that brings a FORTUNE Magazine editor and national-level CEOs to Portland for a lively luncheon discussion and raises

scholarship funds for students residing in our neighborhood. As a professor, Steve teaches business strategy and entrepreneurship. His principal research at University of London's Imperial College involved the study of new ventures undertaken by 60 entrepreneurs and the role government business assistance programs played in their success. Steve has served as senior advisor to me and the Concordia University Foundation Board of Directors, and I am grateful to call him friend and dean.

Murdock Research Scholars

Concordia science students have a successful track record of earning scholarships from the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust. These scholarships create opportunities for superior undergraduates majoring in life sciences to join a team of research professionals. This year, two Concordia student scholars, May-Lynn Chu, chemistry major, and Angie Woolhiser, biology major, are working with faculty at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU).



May-Lynn is partnering with Dr. David Farrell at OHSU, studying whether the fragments that remain after blood clots dissolve increase the risk of heart disease. May-Lynn plans to pursue advanced studies in medical research, and she is applying to schools that combine M.D. and Ph.D. programs.

Angie is collaborating with Dr. Virginia Brooks at OHSU to study how insulin sensitivity might regulate short-term blood pressure fluctuations. Angie says, "My education up until this research experience had been about trying to understand what others have already learned. I really wanted to experience what I could learn from exploring something new." Angie came to Concordia with an interest in medicine and thought she should be a physician's assistant, but professors Chuck Kunert and Rici Hallstrand saw greater potential in her, "They said I should study pre-med, so I figured if they thought I could, I should go for it." Angie is in the process of applying to medical schools.



Professors' Impact Extends Beyond Our Classrooms

English Professor Dan Wright, Ph.D. consulted with the troupe of actors performing in Portland Center Stage's production of *The Beard of Avon*, a play about the Shakespeare authorship question. Dan also presented a fascinating pre-performance lecture on the subject to a lively audience at Portland's Gerding Theater. The 12th annual Shakespeare Authorship Studies Conference was held on campus in April.



⌘ Professor Dan Wright and guest

Theology Professor Herb Hoefler, M.Div., Ed.D. is Concordia University's expert in world missions. He regularly travels to South Asia where he interacts with Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus as the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod mission area director in India and Sri Lanka. The major objective for Herb's most recent trip in January was to contact scholars to meet with our Concordia University System students on the planned visit in August as part of the "Appreciating India" course. He also uses these trips to increase understanding and respect for Christians. In a recent e-mail update, Herb shared with us one such opportunity to address a Muslim group in Nagpur, India:

"In my presentation, I used the portion of the Muslim "shahada" (confession of faith) that states "God is God." I presented ten dimensions of that profound confession of faith and how Christians approach that same confession. It gave me an opportunity to

explain some areas of great misunderstanding and disagreement among Christians and Muslims: the Trinity as a dimension of the unity of God, the Incarnation as a work of the almighty character of God, Judgment Day as an event of celebration, obedience as a response of love, service to others as service to God, grace as the fundamental attitude of God, humility as the basic character of spirituality, etc. I appealed that we all listen to and learn from each other so that we can work together in confidence and solidarity for the good of the world. I pray I was of use to the Spirit of God."

Center for Applied Lutheran Leadership

Our partnership with the Northwest District of the LCMS continues to bear great fruit. Concordia University Director of Church Relations, Jim Pressnell, is working closely with Steve Henderson, Director of Stewardship, to fulfill the unanimously approved resolution from the 2006 Northwest District Convention establishing the creation of the Center for Applied Lutheran Leadership (CALL) as the special mission emphasis for the 2006-2009 triennium.

The purpose of CALL will be to provide programming, enhance leadership, and establish partnerships to help create vibrant, healthy congregations. We will achieve these results through continually addressing the questions, "What does it mean to be Lutheran in the 21st century in the Pacific Northwest?" and "How can Lutherans live out our faith relevantly and effectively?"

Alumni Weekend

We had a lot of fun last October when scores of alumni returned to campus for our annual reunion. A particular highlight was honoring Kim Peterson '85 who was the founding executive director of the Carole Sund Carrington Foundation. The foundation works alongside law enforcement on missing person cases all over the country, handing out millions of dollars in reward money to help solve the crimes. We also inducted five former Concordia athletes into the Hall of Fame: Anna (Gomez) Dillard '00, Christy (Harper) Olson '00, Richard Schmidtke HS '63, JC '65, Doug Wolvert '96, and Dr. Julie Rowland.



⌘ Alumni and friends enjoying one of many events held during Reunion Weekend.

Concordia Law School in Boise

The Board of Regents recently approved the University's intent to explore offering a degree-granting law program through the establishment of the Concordia University Law School in Boise, Idaho. And we will now move forward in a national search for a dean pending the Board's final approval of the project. Over the course of the next 12 months, the dean will be charged with building the law school from the ground up.

Boise is a wonderful city, consistently rated among the top places to live, play, and work. I know this for myself having traveled to the city for many years to meet with Concordia alumni and supporters. Several months ago a few Boise residents, who are also Concordia volunteers and supporters, approached me about an un-met need in Boise for a law school. After surveying the landscape we decided to move forward and explore expanding our mission to both the arena of law education and to the geographic area of Boise. We have done a significant amount of research over the past months and we look forward to a closer relationship with Boise.

Boise is one of the few major metropolitan areas in the country without a law school. A Concordia University Law School would support the needs and aspirations of college graduates and the business, legal, and public policy communities of the entire state.

We believe that a law school could be a wonderful extension of our mission to prepare leaders for the transformation of society—and the Boise community has made it clear to us that they would welcome a law school whose graduates are ethically-minded and integrity-based. We have already had conversations with Legal Aid about our law students reaching out into the community to provide legal services to those who cannot access or afford those services. While we have not finalized our plans, we do know that all Concordia students are charged with carrying out our mission and serve the communities they love.

We hope that you will keep track of our discussion and progress at www.concordialaw.com.

Concordia Triumphs at Ethics Bowl

On March 8, Concordia students strutted their stuff at the Oregon Independent College Foundation's Annual Ethics Bowl. Under the coaching of Asst. Prof. Michael Thomas, Concordia students Rocky Esposito, Katy Lawson, Adam Leyrer, Kristine Pugsley, and Zach Saltz took the title, beating out schools such as Willamette, The University of Portland, Lewis & Clark, and Reed.

In Closing...

As we broke ground on the new George R. White Library and Learning Center, it was a time of reflection, a time to honor our rich history that is marked by a commitment to transformation, and a time to rejoice in the blessings that God has so richly bestowed upon us. As much as things change in our physical appearance, they stay the same in terms of our commitment to faith, academic excellence, and sharing the love of Christ through service to others.



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