

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO FACULTY AND STAFF**  
**August 17, 2004**

Making powerful connections . . .

“What’s wrong with Harvard,” the *Chronicle Of Higher Education’s* May 7 article, reported proposed recommendations based on the University’s first curriculum review since 1978. In addition to suggesting the “need for more attention to basic skills like oral and written communications, connections with the rest of a student’s college experiences, first-year small seminar courses and senior-level capstone courses,” the report raised the concern that Harvard’s “direct, educational student-faculty contact is too limited.” Is Harvard realizing the importance of making powerful personal connections?

Last night Harvard professor Dr. Richard Light shared his thoughts with our first-year students, and I quote, “Making powerful connections between what you do inside and outside of classes can have a profound and positive impact on your precious years at college.” Everyone in this theater will make powerful connections throughout your work at Southwestern -- most importantly we hope, powerful connections with our students -- but, also, powerful connections between faculty and staff colleagues, powerful connections with members of Southwestern’s Board of Trustees and Board of Visitors, powerful connections with alumni, and powerful connections with scholars and colleagues at other colleges and universities.

How will these powerful connections make a difference in implementing the objectives set forth in Southwestern’s Strategic Plan for 2010? The four strategic goals we conceived and approved as a community and later approved by our Board of Trustees are:

- Achieve the goal of fostering a liberal arts institution of the highest rank and quality;
- Develop a self-critical, tough-minded community of scholars that maintains rigorous academic standards;
- Actualize our core values at both a personal and an institutional level; and
- Develop an increasingly diverse community of scholars that fosters perspectives which enrich the well-being of humanity.

Our periodic Strategic Plan updates can be found on Southwestern’s web site through a direct link from our home page. I encourage you to review them.

So . . . What about making powerful connections?

## Essence of leadership

Over the next few months the candidates for the Presidency of our country are trying to connect with us. For all of the deficiencies, casting our vote for our country's highest office is still among the most important connections that we as citizens can make. The outcome determines our country's direction over the next four years and beyond.

Concurrently, Southwestern is embarking on new era of leadership. I appreciate and applaud the efforts of search committee chairs, Paul Gaffney and Laura Hobgood Oster, along with the faculty, staff, and students who participated in the hiring process of the newest members of Southwestern's senior staff . . .

- Our national search to identify leadership for the area of student life resulted in the hiring of a dynamic vice president, Gerald (Jerry) Brody. As you'll recall, Jerry comes from Alfred College in New York where he served as Vice President for Student Life. Jerry is joining a student life staff of dedicated, competent, and caring professionals. We appreciate the efforts of our student life staff during this past year and look forward to having Mike Leese serve as our Dean of Students.
- In another appointment, how exciting it is to have an alumnus with 15 years of admissions experience bringing new leadership to our enrollment services. Tom Oliver, a Southwestern graduate from the class of 1989 comes from TCU where he served as Director of Freshman Admissions. Prior to TCU, Tom served ten years at Trinity University; however, he developed his passion for working with prospective students as a student worker in Southwestern's admission office. And now he's back!
- Professor of Sociology, Dan Hilliard, is providing consultation to the Provost as the Senior Faculty Representative from the Brown College of Arts and Sciences. Likewise, Paul Gaffney has completed his first year as the Dean of Fine Arts where among numerous responsibilities he also is directing the renovation of the Alma Thomas Fine Arts Center.

Please join me in welcoming and applauding these colleagues. Each of us has a responsibility to reach out and make connections with these new leaders.

## New system

- Jesse Purdy was recently named to fill the John H. Duncan Chair. The Duncan Chair is one of six Brown Chairs reserved for faculty members who have distinguished themselves as exemplary teachers, scholars/artists, and University citizens. The John H. Duncan Chair is the first of two

term appointment chairs assigned to a current faculty member who has demonstrated all the qualities of a Brown Chair.

- Jim Hunt announced in early June that we are re-directing the Brown Senior Fellows Program and the Brown Visiting Scholars Program. Dr. Helene Meyers, Professor of English, and Dr. Shanon Winnubst, Associate Professor of Philosophy, have been selected to receive Brown Senior Fellowships for the 2004-05 academic year. This new program is designed to give additional time and financial support to senior faculty involved in substantial research and/or creative projects.
- Funds for Brown Visiting Scholars will be used in the future to fund several visiting scholars each year (perhaps as many as four per year). The scholars will be on campus anywhere from two days to a week - depending on their schedule. We may also use these funds to help leverage other lectureships and programs.

#### New faculty

- We welcome nine new tenure-track faculty members this fall, three of these are new positions are funded by the Priddy Charitable Trust – as part of the grant announced in 2002.
- Searches for two new Brown Chairs – biology and music – will begin this fall.

#### Class of 2008

This past weekend we welcomed approximately 396 new students as first-years or transfers. Their average SAT score of 1259 was among the highest we have ever seen and consistent with the past few years. Minority representation in the class is 20%, one of the highest percentages of any entering class in Southwestern's history.

#### Paideia

The Paideia Program continues to evolve and is an example of an initiative advancing an entire institution. Everyone is benefiting from the Paideia Program – through increased financial resources – through increased faculty – through increased student self-discovery and self-confidence – through enhanced personal connections. The Paideia professors have met throughout the summer and are enthusiastic about continuing their work with the inaugural Paideia scholars, as well as beginning the journey with the newest Paideia class. One Paideia scholar wrote, “I’ve now formed the habit of reflecting about classes and

events, and it is starting to feel natural.” Another said, “I’m learning more about new perspectives from people with whom I might otherwise have had nothing in common.”

### The U.S. Economy

The Dow Jones industrial average, a barometer of our national economy, has recovered to a large degree, but the economic recovery is often described as “anemic.” The June 25 *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported, “Americans gave more money to charities in 2003 than they did in 2002, but education, including higher education did not benefit from the increase in generosity.” However, within that framework Southwestern had its third highest fundraising year in 2002-2003 and its sixth highest fundraising year this past fiscal year ending June 30. We met our annual fund goal, which included a 5% increase over last year’s goal, and this year we added \$10 million to the campaign nucleus fund, which now totals \$38.5 million. Our campaign leaders will continue their aggressive work this fall during the quiet phase of our fundraising campaign.

### Board of Visitors

Powerful personal connections are also taking place through our Board of Visitors, which we inaugurated last fall. This distinguished group of regional and national leaders is providing new networks for visibility and engagement by serving as advocates and advisors for Southwestern. Their first campus meeting focused on an understanding of the liberal arts, followed by a second meeting emphasizing Southwestern’s history and teaching philosophies. Last year during my remarks, I profiled several Board of Visitors members as I shared my excitement for this new program. Today, I’d like to share several additional profiles:

- Jack Blanton is president of the Scurlock Foundation and former chair of the Houston Endowment, Inc.. The University of Texas’ Jack S. Blanton Museum of Art bears his name as the former chair of the U.T. Board of Regents and longtime advocate and patron of the arts in Texas. As a teaching museum, the Blanton Museum of Art is an important center for scholarship, research, and professional training in the visual arts.
- Margarita “Margie” Diaz Kintz served in 2001 as one of Southwestern’s nine national advisors who came to campus to critique our Strategic Plan for 2010. She is former director of the Intel Foundation and founder of the Kintz Group in Austin.
- Admiral B. R. Inman is a former Southwestern University Trustee. He holds the Lyndon B. Johnson Centennial Chair in National Policy at the University of Texas. He is a retired naval admiral and former deputy

director of the CIA. Bob and Jack thoroughly enjoyed attending Bob Synder's Middle East politics class when they were on campus during last spring's Board of Visitors meeting.

We look forward to having the Board of Visitors back on campus September 20 for an insiders look at the Paideia Program.

### Powerful connections

Each year, we question how we at Southwestern are connecting our education to the world's realities. Providing our students with increased life-changing inter-cultural experiences is one way. But, we must also encourage students to expand their thinking through the study of and interaction with a variety of lecturers, artists, and scholars. Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, Tony Kushner, will certainly engage and challenge us as during this year's Writer's Voice. We are grateful to Lynne Brody and the a. Frank Smith, Jr. Library staff for making this annual event one which this campus eagerly anticipates.

Powerful connections take place each academic year through the scholarly work of our faculty and students. Dr. Thomas Howe engaged three students in a semester-long project building a scale model of the villa "San Marco" for use in the "In Stabiano" exhibit currently at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. These students traveled with Dr. Howe to the archeological site that is unearthing Italian villas that have been buried for nearly 2000 years. And the connections continue, our Washington, D.C. alumni will gather at the Smithsonian exhibit in late September to observe the work of these students and their faculty mentor, Dr. Howe.

In the natural sciences, Dr. Fay Guarraci was awarded an National Science Foundation grant in excess of \$170,000. In addition to funding necessary equipment for her behavioral neuroscience program, this grant also provides support for students to engage in research through an environment mirroring that found in the scientific laboratory of a major research institution. Dr. Guarraci says, "The scientific training and mentoring that students will receive using this new equipment will make them competitive for careers in neuroscience and in the biomedical sciences."

Each of you could share similar experiences of your powerful connections with our students. These connections are the essence the education that defines Southwestern University.

## Recognition of Service and Leadership

It has become a tradition for me to end my remarks each year with recognition of service and leadership.

Last spring we dedicated the Joe S. Mundy Hall in memory of Joe Mundy, class of 1964 and member of Southwestern's Board of Trustees for 13 years. As I have mentioned before, Joe was an accomplished man, a modest man, a caring man. He was passionate about his family, his service to his alma mater, and to his friendships at Brookwood Community – a residential environment for adults with special challenges. Joe's prudent leadership was reflected as chair of our facilities committee during the nineties when a significant portion of the existing campus facilities were renovated or constructed.

The Joe S. Mundy Award was created as a memorial to the leadership legacy of Joe Mundy for faculty and staff whose service to Southwestern is recognized as exemplary. Last year, I announced the Mundy award recipients, and they were: Sherri Adrian, John Delany, Julie Cowley, and Josie Rodriguez.

Today, it is my honor to announce this year's recipients of the Mundy Award, and I will be reading words from the nomination letters:

Glada Munt – *In Glada's nearly 30 years of service to Southwestern, she has worn her heart on her sleeve and Southwestern's logo proudly. Her love, dedication, and commitment to serving the University are evident in everything she does. While she serves on committees and boards, both on campus and nationally, she lives and breathes the core purpose and core values of Southwestern University. I have the utmost respect for her and admire her sharing of herself and caring for this place she calls home. Glada is an example for all of us, and I strive to be more like her in all that I do."*

Lynne Brody – *In her 14 years at Southwestern, Lynne has brought the library forward by leaps and bounds in terms of collection resources, service orientation, physical environment, and work climate. She continues to inspire a staff that has not grown significantly in size in the past 10 years to do more each year. Lynne has made the library into one of the best-managed units on campus and a strong, progressive presence in the academic and intellectual life of the University. One special example of a program that has grown out of her leadership is the writer's voice series, now entering its fifth year. Her humane, respectful, and cooperative management style, her artful, proactive leadership, the connections she has forged with libraries, consortia, and individuals off campus, and the respect she has earned from faculty, administrators, and librarians on campus all add up to show her to clearly be exemplary.*

Joe Lepage – *Joe has served Southwestern University with distinction for over 23 years and reflects Southwestern’s core values in his daily work. He goes above and beyond when there is a problem that requires physical plant attention, including coming out late at night during ice storms, electrical outages, water line breakages to help ensure the safety and comfort of everyone on campus. Joes serves on many Southwestern committees and represents the University well to the outside community. He has picked up toys and delivered them for “poker runs for Harely-Davidson” to needy kids in the Georgetown area. He also spearheaded an initiative to adopt a portion of a Georgetown highway and has been known to be out cleaning up that highway during the heat of the summer. To say Joe has a positive outlook would probably be an understatement. He has a great attitude about work, Southwestern and people in general. And last by not least, he takes good care of the people who work for him – just ask them.*

Jesse Purdy – *One colleague says, Dr. Purdy has made extraordinary and exemplary contributions to Southwestern University on a consistent and sustained basis. He is recognized as a leader and moral authority among the faculty, being highly respected for his insight and integrity by students, faculty, and staff alike. He has a vision for the institution and he works tirelessly and passionately to bring this vision to fruition.*

Another colleague adds, *Southwestern is lucky to have a faculty member who represents the University so well to the larger academic community. Most of all, though, I would like to express what a tremendous influence Dr. Jesse Purdy has had on me, as a teacher, scholar, and member of the Southwestern community. Since the day I set foot on campus, he has been there for me without fail, offering advice, encouragement, cheerleading, and a supportive shoulder and ear. I cannot imagine what my career would be like if it were not for his influence; perhaps the best way that I can show my gratitude for what he’s done is to ‘pay it forward’ by taking younger colleagues under my wing the way he did for me. In short, he is an outstanding role model (for younger and older faculty alike) within the University and beyond, and as such is very deserving of the Mundy Award.*

Congratulations to Glada, Lynne, Joe, and Jesse for the personal connections that have contributed in so many ways to our Southwestern family.

### Closing remarks

Typically, at this time I recognize members of our community who will be retiring during the academic year. We find ourselves in the unique situation this year of no faculty retirements. Jim Hunt, you must be pleased. However, after a collective 22 years, first in the business office and now as editorial assistant,

Kay Patterson will retire, as well as Marty Kelley who has given twelve years to our custodial services. Kay and Marty, we sincerely appreciate your dedication and wish you both the very best (applaud).

Looking out over this theater I see the heart of Southwestern University. You inspire me. You motivate me through your teaching and scholarly articles, through your work in various offices, and through the education our students receive here because of you. You are making powerful connections that will change our students' lives.

Let's continue to make Southwestern University a place where students leave transformed.