

## Setting Our House in Order: Spiritually, Academically, Financially

In my first year as President of Ottawa University I am awed by the enormous potential of my Alma Mater. I am impressed by the dedication, commitment and quality of a very special faculty. I am grateful for a "can do" administrative team. And, while competition for quality students will continue to rise, the 12.1% increase in enrollment this year over the same period last year indicates to me that we have not been realizing our "fair share" of the market. We can, and will, do even better.

The theme for this report is "Setting Our House in Order: Spiritually, Academically, and Financially." The theme is appropriate and we are on target. We have taken the following steps, among many others, in our efforts to "Set Our House in Order."

- (1) There is a strong commitment toward improving the quality of life on campus. Adult supervisors now serve as Resident Directors in all of our dormitories. We expect soon to employ a person who will serve as University Chaplain with specific responsibilities for counseling and religious life activities. We will continue to work hard at improving retention and toward the development of an admissions program that will attract "graduates" and not just students.
- (2) The teaching-learning process is the heart of any academic program. The quality and make-up of our faculty is important. Our academic program and concomitant services must be of high quality. We will continue to refine our academic offerings in keeping with our mission as a liberal arts college. We must better understand changing requirements for employment of our graduates. We are planning several meetings with professional groups and business organizations in order to help us identify the needs of the liberal arts graduate in the work world. Our graduates are still highly employable and are filling significant positions — even in the technical fields. The current North Central Association (our accrediting agency) study will assist us in this important process.
- (3) It is essential that we maintain our physical facilities. A new roof has been placed on the Myers Library. A number of structural repairs have been made to Centennial Hall, Mowbray Union and the Administration Building. Painting and other minor repairs were of high priority this past summer and an annual painting schedule is underway in all of our dormitories.
- (4) We are on the cutting edge of the future and must

begin a deliberate and sustained effort to build a substantial permanent endowment — both general and specific. One of the more popular endowment areas is that of student financial aid. During the past three years almost \$300,000 in gifts has been designated for named, endowed, student financial aid. I encourage you to inquire about this important program if you are interested.

- (5) We have, through strict financial management, balanced our operating budget for the second year in a row. It is important that we continue that practice.
- (6) Our two satellite centers, Ottawa University Phoenix and Ottawa University Kansas City, continue to grow and to provide a valuable service that is compatible with the mission of OU. Efforts are being made to underscore the "oneness" of our total educational enterprise while recognizing the uniqueness of each Center's purpose and delivery system.
- (7) Ottawa University is a Christian College related to the American Baptist Churches/USA. We are grateful for that relationship and for the high level of support the University enjoys from its Baptist constituents. We are seriously engaged in seeking a better understanding of what it means to be a Christian, church-related college and how we can best demonstrate our institutional commitment to the Christian faith — without apology or reservation. We will continue to increase our activities in the local church through the Church Relations Office, through personal visits, pulpit supply, choir performances (both mini-tours and the annual Spring Concert Tour), through Mission Teams and through the Admissions Office.
- (8) Ottawa University alumni are becoming increasingly involved in the life of the college. The alumni leadership is planning many more chapters throughout the U.S. during the 1983-84 year.

What has been, is now, and will be in the future all come together in the Decade for Achievement program. Ottawa's distinctive 118-year contribution to educational excellence must be preserved and passed on to future generations. It is the responsibility of all of us who have a concern for the University to see that it takes place.

— Wilbur D. Wheaton  
President