

From the President

It's difficult for me to review this past year without taking a peek into the future. Such are the times at Ottawa University. This past year has provided us with many great accomplishments, such as bestowing the first Master's degrees to 16 graduates in the spring. But the biggest development of the academic year — as it turned out — came from a study of technology-enriched curriculum conducted during the spring semester.

That study, done by a group of administrators, faculty and staff with the added expertise of IBM Corp. executives, resulted in the Application Transfer Study (ATS) report. This in turn was developed into the University Wide Information Network (UWIN) plan, which called for \$3.5 million to catapult OU into the 21st Century as a leader in technology-enriched curriculums across the entire liberal arts spectrum. But, that's not all. The year also brought the announcement that Ottawa University's grant application to the U.S. Department of Education for \$2.5 million over a five-year period to improve information networking had been approved. In retrospect, it all happened so quickly.

It also couldn't have come at a better time. This exciting venture into the future will begin as the University celebrates its storied past. Ottawa University turns 125 years old on April 21, 1990. That 125th Anniversary will bring on quite a celebration, with two full weeks of activities on the main campus. But, possibly even more importantly, we will truly be able to look ahead to the next 125 years with increased hope that our mission will be advanced, which is the cornerstone of all we do.

But what about the UWIN plan? How will it take us from out of the pack of four-year, liberal arts institutions and onto the cutting edge of the educational field? Much of that has been written about on other pages of this Taup Talk and a lot of the "nuts and bolts" are still in the early stages. But the concept that has all of us so excited is already in place. UWIN is about computers, but it's not the machines that make this effort so unique. It's the "marriage" of that technology with what we've been doing for 125 years — providing a solid liberal arts education — which has left us in this enviable position.

Our mission is — and always has been — to provide the best quality education in the Christian heritage which is the very foundation of our college. By integrating the technological revolution into our curriculums, we are assuring that our students will have the best possible education when they graduate from Ottawa University. They will be fully equipped for our modern, technology-filled work world. That's what we've strived for and that's what we will always maintain as our objective.

But the UWIN plan even goes beyond the student in what it

will mean to the University and it also comes at the best of times. The computer network will be a vital link in another of our major emphases. We have made it clear that Ottawa University must come together as one. Sometimes we lose sight of the fact that those instructors in Phoenix, Ariz. are just as big a part of our college as those on the campuses in Ottawa or Kansas City or even our Far East programs across the ocean. We are a whole and none of our parts is more important than the others.

UWIN will be a vital tool in our "one University concept." Each of our campuses will be linked, via computer, in a way that will speed communication and decision making. There will be electronic mail and other such features which will make conversing with Dr. Sherwin Snyder in Phoenix as easy as it was when he was down the hall in Ottawa. Obviously, the possibilities of such a system are endless. We're all very excited about those prospects.

But as with any of the monumental tasks undertaken by the University in these 125 years, it won't be easy. The grant money of around \$500,000 each year is a big step towards making the project a reality. But, that grant money is spoken for. It is to be used to address needs outlined in the grant application. We're fortunate that many of those areas addressed in the grant are also areas for improvement in the UWIN project. However, there are many other areas — at least \$1 million worth — that aren't mentioned in the grant.

That includes, but is not limited to, the "links" we've talked about with the different campuses. We're challenged as administrators, faculty, staff, alumni and students to come up with the remainder of the money. As a University, we're committed to the plan and it will come about.

But that's not all. We need to continue to upgrade our campus. Other projects in the very near future include: renovating Ward Science Hall — now estimated at about \$2 million; completing our energy savings project by placing the last two buildings on their individual heating plants and closing down the energy-hungry central heating plant; and some overdue general maintenance of roof, sidewalk, parking lot repair and building upgrading.

So you see, we'll need help from all of our "parts" to make this dream a reality. I know it will happen. The "Ottawa Spirit" will again be called upon and it will again answer that call.



Wilbur D. Wheaton, President