

Founders Day Program

November 11, 2003

Introduction of the Program: (Dr. William F. Stepp, Vice President for Institutional Advancement)

A warm welcome to all of you and special thanks for joining us for this festive celebration – Heidelberg College Founders’ Day. I note that we are in good company as I picked up the Advertiser-Tribune and saw the headline announcing the New Riegel Café is also celebrating its Founders Day.

For Heidelberg College this tradition that dates back nearly a century and a half and recognizes visionaries like Jeremiah Good and William Lang (Tiffin’s first Mayor). Both men had a common goal—creating a literary institution to deliver cultural, educational and economic value to the citizens of Tiffin. A goal that we continue to meet and enjoy as citizens of Tiffin.

Today is also special in the life of our Nation as we honor our veterans and their families. Heidelberg alumni have been among those who we honor for their sacrifices and dedication to preserving the values that we attach to freedom. I ask you to join me in a moment of personal reflection as we remember those who have served and those who continue to serve. THANK YOU.

Perhaps you are thinking “Stepp is a rather unusual choice to be emceeding this event given his short tenure at Heidelberg. I want to assure you that I have been around Heidelberg long enough to know that it is a special place. As a fireman on the B & O railroad in the mid-‘60s I was the one who interrupted your classes by blowing the train whistle at the main crossings. I believed that it was a special place then and continue to believe that it is special. Not because it has outlasted the many mergers in the rail industry, nor because of its beautiful buildings and grounds (with the possible exception of the tin gym). Because of its people. Many of you have worked here much of your adult life; you are second and third generation families of Heidelberg. So I am starting to appreciate the richness, commitment and vitality that each of you adds to the spirit of Heidelberg.

On this Founder’s Day we honor those who have given so generously of their time and talents to make Heidelberg college the special place that it is. So it is fitting that today we honor you, Heidelberg’s faculty, retired faculty, staff, retired staff and our many friends for all that you have done and continue to do for the ’Berg.

Here with us today to lead this celebration are former interim president, Director of Graduate Studies and favorite son of Heidelberg Dr. Jim Getz, Director of Legacy Gifts Jenni Miller and Heidelberg’s 13th president Dr. Dominic Dottavio to honor you and to help us celebrate the past, the present and the future of Heidelberg College.

And the past shall be first ... who better to speak to it than a man who has seen Heidelberg's past as a student, retired from more Heidelberg posts than most of us will ever hold and helped to position the college in preparation for our future...Dr. Jim Getz.

The Past ... (Dr. Jim Getz, former Interim President, current Director of Graduate Studies)

Founded in faith, Heidelberg College started with five students and two professors. Over the years, it's touched the lives of more than 15,000 alumni. My association with Heidelberg began in 1954 as a student and then continued as a faculty member and administrator. During this time span of almost 50 years, I have witnessed first-hand, Heidelberg's progress.

When I came to campus we still had WW II housing and buildings used for classes. The first dorm room for Dave Baker and me was in "T" Dorm ... located about where our college bookstore now stands. We saw the return to college of the Korean War veterans and just a few years earlier the impact of the WW II veterans including faculty members.

I saw the construction of King Hall, Krieg Hall, Brown Hall. Miller Hall and the Hoernemeann Dining Area. We enjoyed the building of Beeghly Library, the Gundlach Theatre and the addition to the Music Conservatory as well as the purchase and renovation of College Hill School (now the Aigler Building).

Many, many programs were initiated during this period including Title IX and the development of Women's Intercollegiate Athletics.

Bobby sox, white bucks and beanies gave way to blue jeans and sandals and today sweats jogging shoes and ballcaps. But under beanies or ballcaps, many things have remained the same: bright young minds eager to take in the Truth.

These bright minds have been served by faithful faculty and staff --year in and year out. Many dedicated men and women left their mark on the hearts and minds of students and colleagues alike.

Think back with me to some of our memorable mentors:

- Lucille Christman's meticulous bookkeeping as the registrar..and Annette Kluley's caring smile in the Health Center
- English prof and Dean - Fred Lemke's tip of the hat and walk to the YMCA
- Dave Noss and Leon Putnam challenging students to think deeper
- Frank Kramer's classic sense of humor
- Bob Oleson's knowledge of student pranks.
- Archie Thomas' gravelly growl at committee meetings.
- Ruth Bacon and Leanne Wolff's challenges that their students grow up and go on to great things.
- Paul Hoernemann and Ted Turney's concern for the welfare of the athletes
- Percy Lilly's love for the leaves and trees that grace this campus...Howard Hintz, Art McQuate, Dave Baker and George Barlow's genuine concern for the environment

- Pop Behens, Henry Gibson, Ferris and Dorothy Ohl - and their influence on the music students
- Bill Steele and Mel Casler's teaching of advanced math.
- John Kohlmeinin, Karl Klopfenstein and Ken Davison's ability to make history live
- K. B. Barnes, John Groce and Dick Cordell's stinking up the science hall
- And finally, who could forget Miss "O" and her ability to get us all through Spanish!

These individuals and scores of others whom I could have named have given years, even decades of their lives in service to educating our students and their total development. The result? Heidelberg has graduated thousands of students with a special sense of who they are and what they could make of their lives. Many individuals from the past have made their indelible mark on Heidelberg's heritage. Their outstanding efforts form a foundation for today's undertakings...

And now, I present to you, the Present – as observed by Jenni Miller

The Present (Jennifer Bacon Miller, Director of Legacy Gifts)

This moment, this day 153 years from the date of our founding, is a critical one in Heidelberg's history. Because as we launch into the biggest capital campaign ever undertaken by this College - to keep us competitive - we need 2 things: First, unprecedented levels of funding and support and second, superior faculty and staff to show that Heidelberg is worthy of the support.

Lest you reach to protect your pocket from being picked – today's focus is not the former - the funding. The task before us is monumental, but funding will come more easily because we already have the latter, the second thing we need: superior faculty and staff to show that Heidelberg is worthy of the support.

There are big things, of course, that show this to be true: Heidelberg's consistent and ever-improving ranking by U.S. News and World Report among best Midwestern universities and best value institutions. Recent re-accreditation of both the Education and Music Departments, Bill Reyers' being named as one of Ohio's top 100 professors. I could continue but classes resume at 12:30! These things show the state, nation and world that what's going on here is extraordinary.

But we who work here know there's much more going on behind the headlines that makes Heidelberg a special place. Because you care about what you do, you work to make this place a little better for all of us, students, faculty and staff alike. We see the little things that count together to make a community:

- Terri Magers arranging a tasty potluck in the mailroom
- Gary Dickerson setting up a soup lunch or happy hour at Shellshuckers
- Rhonda Winkler uniting us to support the United Way
- Steve Velasquez teaching two-left-footers to trip the light fantastic

- Mary Dazey and Dennis Shultice – and all the dedicated ARA waitstaff putting on yet another delicious spread, like today – never with fanfare, always with flair!
- John Rinehart not only cleaning our offices, but helping decorate them with colorful gourds he collects each fall
- Pat Page cheerfully and accurately answering every question under the sun, tracking down students anywhere, anytime
- Jenny Shetterly grilling for the Homecoming football tailgate party – in the rain, no less!
- Jan Younger and Vicki Ohl setting up special speakers and dinners on and off campus
- Amy Berger baking mountains of cookies
- Karen Miller and Nancy King not only keeping all the balls in the air in the President's' and Dean's offices – but keeping the pretzel and candy dishes full...

And these are just a few people in our Heidelberg family. And just a few of the things they do – we haven't begun to examine what all these folks do in their day jobs for Heidelberg!!! Secretaries, VPs, department chairs, clerks, professors, coaches, directors, administrators, instructors, landscapers, fundraisers, librarians, cooks, dishwashers, committee members, advisors ... every single person in this room is valued because of the TOTAL contribution they make to Heidelberg College: generously giving of time and talents to make this a better campus for everyone. Your unflagging devotion forms the heart of Heidelberg today.

And now, President Dottavio with his sights set on our future:

The Future (President F. Dominic Dottavio):

It is humbling to think of the past of Heidelberg and all the people who gave so much of themselves to this College. It is encouraging to consider the present and all the dedicated women and men in this room and who unselfishly serve this school, day in and day out. It is inspiring to contemplate our aspirations for the future.

Decades ago, another president looked to the future of Heidelberg with young faculty like Henry Gibson, Ferris and Dorothy Ohl, Ken Davison, John Groce, David Noss, and Leon Putnam.

Since then, hundreds of their students have graduated and gone on to influence thousands of others through their inspired teaching and performances, through their selfless service to their communities and to Heidelberg College, and through the impact they have had on their chosen fields.

Another president took a chance on up-and-coming financial and business professional, Jeannine Curns, who continues to guide Heidelberg's business and economic well-being.

I am glad to share in the benefit of Jeannine's expertise, as well as the experience and conscientious efforts of each of you in this room. The future of Heidelberg College is right here, right now!

We are grateful to all of you from Krammes who make our lives comfortable each day while also providing the care necessary to assure that our buildings and grounds will be available for many years to come.

As you look around at the room, you will see familiar faces who have been faithful to Heidelberg through many years ... Martin Reno, Barb Gabel, Ruth Wahlstrom, Barb Tucker, Dave Weininger,....

What's more, I'm glad to be president as we face our future with bright and dedicated more recent additions like John Fuller, Lori Grine, Marc O'Reilly, Sheryl Gannon, Jim Troha and so many others who are helping to shape a promising future for today's and tomorrow's Heidelberg students.

So what will that future look like? Let's get a glimpse...

I don't know about you, but I find it hard to think of the future without taking technology into account. Everything is electronic, it seems – to travel we use e-tickets, to buy something - eBay, to correspond – email. So it seems fitting that the future of Heidelberg College may best be described by a few “e-words” of our own: Equilibrium, Enrollment, Engagement and Experience.

Equilibrium: Financial equilibrium – something critical to each one of us here. We all hope to see Heidelberg become the College we want it to be: one on sound financial footing, outstanding facilities, fair and adequate salaries, exceptional academic offerings, and staffing levels to serve our students well. But we are not there yet; we still have challenges to face.

Across the board, educational institutions have suffered a drop in contributions. And while we cannot control the economy, we can make certain we are good stewards of the funds entrusted to us.

A number of you are faithfully serving on committees and task forces to help determine the optimal use of our resources. It is a difficult and complex task – but necessary to give us an accurate view of how to move Heidelberg forward. Solid facts are a necessary precondition for good decision-making. The process of doing this right takes more time than any of us would like, but the cost of moving too precipitously could be even greater.

Thanks to all who serve for your dedication to the task; and for all who will be affected by the outcome, thanks for your patience and understanding of the size, complexity and importance of the undertaking.

We can be good stewards. Indeed, we must be. We can build and grow our endowment and other revenue sources. And we will.

One of the most important parts of financial equilibrium, is having the proper enrollment at Heidelberg College. Thus the second “E” I would like to address is student enrollment. This is not an area to be left to chance.

We can be purposeful, strategic and deliberate about how we enhance enrollment and retention at the college. Heidelberg’s future will be stronger once we have assured ourselves we are attracting the right kind of students, retaining the great majority of them through to graduation, and aiming for a student body of the right size for who we are and who we want to be.

Having the right mix of graduate and undergraduate students, minorities and international students, and students that represent our diverse disciplines and academic programs will not only be good for our economic health, it will also be good for our students and our community.

Indeed, our future is entwined with the future of our community. That is why it is so important that Heidelberg be engaged with people and businesses in town and nearby – and that is why we have our third “E” – Engagement.

Back in 1850, Tiffin won Heidelberg from other would-be suitors – Worthington and Tarleton, Ohio - by coming up with the \$11,030 necessary to support the College. For the past 15 decades, Heidelberg has returned the favor many times over by pumping millions of dollars into the Seneca County economy.

Not only that, we’ve educated graduates who loved this place so much they stayed here to live and serve. This give-and-take relationship with Tiffin has recently been beautifully described on Proftalk by Education Professor Carl Stein –

As education professors we are incredibly blessed by working daily with our graduates in the area schools. We literally encounter the class of ’93, ’94, ’95, ’96, ’97...each week. We consistently modify our lesson -content and methods- based on their feedback. I observed this week, at one area elementary school, that in one hallway alone, I had taught every single teacher, either at the graduate or undergraduate level....I commented to my wife, "that's it...buy the cemetery plots, the Stein's World Tour stops here in Tiffin" ... I simply cannot replace the strength that is embodied in nearly a decade of relationships.

Each year, scores of Heidelberg students, staff and faculty enrich this community in countless ways – from benefiting local schools to enhancing the cultural arts through musical concerts, theatrical performances, TV and radio programming and first-rate lectures, to service offered by students, faculty and staff – helping to clean up around town, build houses, rebuild lives from broken homes, fund cancer research and support many other worthy causes.

It only makes sense that in the future, Heidelberg will continue to enrich Tiffin and Seneca County. By doing so, we enrich the experience we can offer our students. And if you are paying attention, this brings us to our fourth “E” – Student Experience.

As my daughter, Adrea, can attest, Heidelberg students do not suffer for too little to do around here. Her larger problem is finding the time to do all that she would like to do. As of right now, our students have their choice of over 60 student organizations to participate in.

Why? Because you have agreed to act as advisors, coaches and mentors to keep these opportunities available. You advise the chemistry club and psychology clubs or one of over a dozen honorary organizations, help produce the Kilikilik or other student publications, assist with cheerleading or intramurals, and enrich our students' experiences through dozens of other activities.

Heidelberg students can do these things because you care enough to give of your time. You are a primary reason why 'Berg students can laugh and play and serve – and in the process, learn - as they do. Our future depends upon your continued enthusiasm and help in creating a memorable Heidelberg experience!

I am privileged to work with faculty and staff of your caliber of excellence.

Together, we will forge a future that honors Heidelberg's heritage and builds on today's successes.

Together we will chart a new horizon that holds Heidelberg's finances in equilibrium, enrolls the optimum number of appropriate students, engages with our supportive, surrounding community and provides experiences to enrich future generations of Heidelberg students.

And now I would like to ask one of our newest staff members 2003 grad Ryan Allen - representing the future of Heidelberg College - to help put in place the final piece of Heidelberg's old flag:

An old flag, a new recruit, a roomful of faithful servants of our students! What could be better for the future of Heidelberg ?

And since I have our newest staff member at my side, I would like him to stay here, and be joined by our oldest faculty member present. Would retired music professor Henry Gibson please come forward.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and Heidelberg College, I would like to present to you, on behalf of all those who have served Heidelberg College, the 2003 Founders Day award, honoring faculty and staff past, present and future.

Would you please accept this award on behalf of your colleagues and share it by passing it from person to person, desk to desk throughout this and the coming years? A

permanent plaque honoring Heidelberg's faculty and staff will hang in College Hall.
Congratulations!

Thank you all, for all you do for Heidelberg College.