Letter from the President: A Fond Farewell
FROM THE PRESIDENT

A farewell

As my tenure as DePaul’s 12th president comes to an end, I feel blessed for the time and journey we took together. While the last couple of years have been difficult, our university community, in true Vincentian spirit, rose to the challenge. We did what Blue Demons are known for—channeling that inner grit and rolling up our sleeves to get the job done.

DePaul introduced new academic programs to meet student, workforce and societal needs. The Grace School of Applied Diplomacy, for example, prepares students for a wide variety of professions that require knowledge and skills in mediation, conflict resolution and bridge building. The program is dedicated to transforming the practice of diplomacy for students with a demonstrated passion for international relations. The university also launched a master’s program in speech language pathology and concurrently opened the DePaul Speech and Language Clinic on the Lincoln Park Campus. This free, donation-based clinic is the first of its kind in Chicago. It addresses a specific need in our community, and all will be welcome regardless of a patient’s ability to pay. This fall, we also will admit our first students into our bachelor of science in nursing and master’s in occupational therapy programs.

At a time when private higher education faces increasingly strong headwinds, DePaul welcomed an increasing number of academically talented and diverse students. For three years in a row, through our joint efforts, we enrolled the most diverse, largest, and among the most academically prepared freshman classes in university history. Students of color now represent 43% of overall enrollment, another university record.

To help all our students feel right at home and build community, we created new traditions. The Blue Demon Welcome, also known as student convocation, is one example. The annual Christmas tree lighting is another. And my personal favorite, the midnight pancake breakfast. My wife, Jo, and I have many happy memories of serving students endless plates of eggs, bacon and pancakes at the late-night breakfasts held during finals week. All these traditions help our students build connections within the DePaul community, keeping them on track to complete their degrees.

Throughout my time at DePaul, the mission always has been my guide. I deeply believe in serving all students, with special attention to the marginalized—including the economically disadvantaged, first-generation college students and immigrants—to help them reach their full potential. I will forever be grateful to our alumni, donors, faculty, staff and friends who joined with me in that commitment to our students and their success.

Over the last two and a half years, donors committed more than $188 million—an unprecedented record for our university. DePaul’s endowment doubled from $492 million to over $1 billion in four and a half years. The number of donors—and the number of student scholarships—continues to increase. Because of our collective community, including alumni, donors, faculty and staff, DePaul students will continue to experience the transformative power of education.

Thank you for everything you do to make our university stronger. Thank you for upholding our Catholic, Vincentian and urban mission. Thank you for giving Jo and me the opportunity to spend the last five years with you in service of our students and the communities they represent.

I’m proud of what we were able to do here, as a community gathered together for the sake of the mission. Go, Blue Demons!!!!

A. Gabriel Esteban, PhD
President

“God allows us to give rise to the practice of two beautiful virtues: perseverance, which leads us to attain the goal, and constancy, which helps us to overcome difficulties.”

—St. Vincent de Paul to Guillaume Comaire, June 15, 1650

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