The Evolution of a Leader

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The Evolution of a Leader

A journey through DePaul’s history of distinguished achievement  By Kelsey Schagemann

As the 120th anniversary of DePaul’s founding approaches, it’s clear that the “little school under the ‘L’” has evolved from humble beginnings to become a nationally respected leader in higher education. Our nearly 24,000 students hail from all 50 states and roughly 100 countries. One in three are first-generation college students. When they graduate, they will join an alumni network of more than 176,000.
How did DePaul transform into the largest Catholic university in the nation and one of the top private universities in the country? One thing is certain: It didn’t happen overnight. Instead, this evolution took place through small steps and big leaps, through the dedication and commitment of faculty, through the strategic oversight of the administration and through the talent and inspiration of a diverse student body.

While a full accounting would require a book, this snapshot offers a glimpse of DePaul’s development into the successful leader it is today.

**A Progressive Foundation: 1875-1949**

DePaul’s first few decades saw the university defining its identity by opening its doors to women, expanding educational opportunities and participating in war efforts. It all began in 1875, when Vincentians from the Congregation of the Mission arrived in Chicago from LaSalle, Ill., and opened a church in Lincoln Park at the northeast corner of Webster Ave. and Osgood (now Kenmore Ave.). A few years later, the first archbishop of Chicago, the Most Rev. Patrick Feehan, encouraged the Vincentians to establish a college on a site nearby.

About 70 students were enrolled at St. Vincent’s College during its first year, 1898. Seven faculty members taught the courses, making for a slightly better student-faculty ratio than today’s ratio of 16:1. Tuition for the 10-month term cost $40.

The college grew rapidly, and by December 1907, it adopted the name it carries now: DePaul University. In 1911, in a truly progressive move, the university admitted its first female students into its summer programs; around 1914, the university went fully coed. In 1912, the university expanded to affiliate with the Illinois College of Law and also launched the School of Music and the College of Commerce (now known as the Driehaus College of Business). The latter is one of the 10 oldest business colleges in the country.

Physical and Curricular Expansion: 1950-1979

These boom years brought new campus buildings and new supervision, radio technician training, chemistry and mathematics; and created a special program that allowed freshman and sophomore men to enroll in both regular college courses and those that prepared them for the Navy Officer examination. In the years between the wars, DePaul established the first department of elementary education in the Midwest, reportedly only one of six in the country at the time.

**Increase in Alumni (1910—2016)**

![Increase in Alumni Graph](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Alumni</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>2,700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>26,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>90,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>176,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DePaul Enrollment Throughout Its History**

![DePaul Enrollment Graph](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Students Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>11,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>7,701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>8,745</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>13,356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>15,718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>20,547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>23,110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
courts, a maintenance building and Cortelyou Commons. Meanwhile, DePaul introduced its first suburban campus, the Northwest Learning Center, in Park Ridge, Ill.

DePaul’s curriculum evolved during these years, in part due to the establishment of two new schools. In 1972, DePaul launched the School for New Learning, which was one of the country’s first schools dedicated to adult learning. That same decade, aspiring thespians found a new home at DePaul when the university acquired the Goodman School of Drama, known today as The Theatre School, in 1978.

Earlier in this period, DePaul bucked tradition when it added existentialist and phenomenology courses to the philosophy curriculum in 1964. This departure marked the first major change to undergraduate programs offered by American Catholic institutions in 200 years. It reflected an ideological struggle between Thomism, a type of theology and philosophy typically taught in American Catholic schools, and existential phenomenology, which was growing in popularity among Catholic scripture scholars. A doctoral program in philosophy was launched three years later, and it joined biological sciences and psychology as the first doctorates offered at DePaul. That same year, the university introduced a general education curriculum for all undergraduates. Students took courses in humanities, natural sciences and mathematics, philosophy-religion and social-behavioral sciences. These students were an increasingly diverse group. During the 1960s, the number of African-American students grew from approximately 150 to 500. The still-active Black Student Union was established in 1968.

**Diversity and Leadership: 1980-1999**

The later years of the twentieth century saw DePaul positioning itself as a leader in Chicago and nationally. Community involvement, diversity initiatives and innovative courses and programs took center stage. In 1980, DePaul had the second-largest enrollment of African Americans and Hispanics among private universities in Illinois, with 18 percent of students identifying as people of color. Efforts to...
increase these percentages intensified when DePaul joined Loyola University and Mundelein College to form the Hispanic Alliance in 1982. The alliance focused on improving educational opportunities for Hispanics in Chicago; for example, it created the Hispanic Women’s Project in 1985 to focus specifically on higher-education access for Hispanic women.

DePaul rose to national prominence with several other high-profile initiatives. In 1982, the university was the first in the country to establish a Center for Church/State Studies, which was housed in the College of Law. Three years later, the College of Law launched the Health Law Institute, which was one of the first programs of its kind in the United States; the master’s degree program in health law was the only one of its kind in Chicago at the time. Also in 1985, the School for New Learning introduced the first competence-based master’s degree program in the nation.

At the College of Commerce, generous donors enabled improvements in student learning and faculty excellence. A $1 million gift from the Charles H. Kellstadt Trust established a Center for Market Analysis and Planning, which integrated state-of-the-art marketing research into curriculum and programs, while a $1 million gift from the Dr. Scholl Foundation established the university’s first endowed chair, in the department of finance.

During the 1990s, DePaul turned outward as it sought solutions for both international and local issues. For example, the College of Law founded the International Human Rights Law Institute, the first such center in the Midwest. The institute’s then-president, M. Cherif Bassiouni, now the institute’s president emeritus and emeritus distinguished research professor of law, was nominated for the 1999 Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to create the International Criminal Court.

The College of Commerce also strengthened its international scope. Thanks to a $9 million gift from The Kellstadt Foundation, the Kellstadt Graduate School of Business was established in 1992. One of its premier offerings launched two years later: an 18-month international MBA program in marketing and finance, the first such program in the country. This program dovetailed nicely with the Center for International Business, the result of a $500,000 gift from the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation.

Domestic outreach strengthened ties between DePaul and its vibrant urban home. When the university purchased the Goldblatt building (now the DePaul Center) from the City of Chicago, the deal included the establishment of the $2.5 million Mayor of Chicago Leadership 2000 Scholarship Program to offer financial support to Chicago students committed to engaging in community service during their college years. The launch of the Monsignor John J. Egan Center in 1995 also offered a place for students and faculty.

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to brainstorm innovative solutions for critical urban problems through partnerships with local organizations. Lastly, the introduction of Discover Chicago brought freshman students into contact with the people and institutions of Chicago through weeklong exploratory courses on topics such as jazz, public art and murals, and ethnic neighborhoods.

As DePaul grew in stature, the university also grew in size. Enrollment increased more than 50 percent in the 15 years leading up to 1998. That year, with a fall enrollment of 18,565, DePaul officially became the largest Catholic university in the country, a distinction it retains to this day.

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The DePaul Résumé

DePaul’s students, faculty, colleges and schools have garnered many impressive awards and honors through the years. Here is a roundup of select accolades bestowed on DePaul itself.

One of the top 10 comprehensive universities in the Western and Midwestern states, according to a poll of college and university presidents. *(U.S. News & World Report, 1987)*

One of seven finalists for College of the Year *(Time magazine and The Princeton Review, 1997)*


One of the most diverse universities in the country *(The Princeton Review, 2003)*

One of the best universities for social responsibility and public service *(The Princeton Review, 2005)*

Most diverse student population *(The Princeton Review, 2006)*

One of the top 25 undergraduate entrepreneurship programs *(Fortune Small Business, 2007)*

Named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll with distinction for exemplary service to disadvantaged youth *(Corporation for National and Community Service, 2008)*

One of the top 25 service learning programs in the country *(U.S. News & World Report, 2009)*

Named a green college *(The Princeton Review, 2010)*

Higher Education Excellence in Diversity award *(INSIGHT into Diversity Magazine, 2014)*

One of the best places for women and diverse managers to work *(Diversity MBA Magazine, 2015)*

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Our Connected World: 2000-2017

With more than a century of success under its belt, DePaul entered the new millennium poised to capitalize on its strengths, find new opportunities for development and growth, and continue to lead the country in social justice initiatives. The past 17 years have been a heady time, with the introduction of new majors, schools and programs; a comprehensive fundraising campaign; and collaborations with unique partners.

Looking back, it’s incredible to see how far technology has come in just a short time. In 2000, DePaul was one of the first universities to host a virtual open house, with 20 chat rooms staffed by deans, administrators, students and parents. That same year, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (now the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences [LAS]) created an Interdisciplinary Science and Technology Center to explore the growing role of technology and science in people’s daily lives. Also in 2000, the first online courses were offered; two years later, the School of Computer Science, Telecommunications and Information Systems (CTI), known today as the College of Computing and Digital Media, launched its first master’s degree programs that could be completed entirely online.

CTI also led the charge in establishing a global exchange program of students and faculty with the Brazilian university Unisul, Universidade do Sul de Santa Catarina. Both schools were considered leaders in different areas of information technology, so the five-year partnership proved mutually beneficial.

DePaul’s community service minor, introduced in 2001, emphasized the university’s Vincentian roots. Harrison I. Steans made a $5 million gift that same year to establish and endow the Irwin W. Steans Center for Community-based Service Learning, which connects DePaul students with community organizations, integrates service work into academics and supports faculty scholarship. Meanwhile, the Vincentian Mission Institute, established in 2007, is a multiyear training program that brings together lay leaders from DePaul, St. John’s University and Niagara University to learn strategies for strengthening each university’s Catholic and Vincentian identity.

In 2011, Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J., an advocate for the abolition of the death penalty and the author of “Dead Man Walking,” donated a collection of her personal papers and materials to the university’s archives. This gift recognized DePaul’s ongoing commitment to social justice.

DePaul’s dedication to serving the underserved has a physical embodiment in the Center for Access and Attainment. Established in 2008, the center brought together the Community Outreach Program, the federal TRIO programs and other initiatives designed to boost...
the enrollment, retention and academic success of low-income students. The year before, DePaul was the only university in Illinois to receive the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Teaching, of course, is at the core of DePaul’s leadership, and the past two decades have brought exciting new courses, programs, majors and schools into the fold. Highlights included the introduction of the country’s first comprehensive digital cinema program in 2004; the program proved so successful that it helped lead to a new school within a newly named college. In 2008, CTI became the College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM). Today, CDM houses three schools: the School of Cinematic Arts, the School of Computing and the School of Design, which launched in 2015. The School of Cinematic Arts continues to be at the forefront of filmmaking, thanks in part to a partnership with Cinespace Chicago, the premier television and film studio in the Midwest, which provides dedicated space for DePaul, including three soundstages, classrooms and editing labs (see page 22).

The College of Commerce also underwent a name change. In 2012, Richard H. Driehaus (BUS ’65, MBA ’70, DHL ’02), a philanthropist and investment pioneer, made a $30 million gift to enhance the college’s academic programs. This gift is the largest the university has received, and the college was renamed the Driehaus College of Business in recognition of its benefactor’s exemplary generosity.

Meanwhile, DePaul launched two new colleges in the past 10 years. The College of Communication evolved from a department into its own college unit in 2007, quickly generating many accolades for its student groups, including the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System’s Abraham & Borst Award for Best College Station in the Nation for Radio DePaul.

The College of Science and Health (CSH) developed out of several departments in LAS, including biology, chemistry, physics, nursing and psychology, in 2011. CSH also introduced a new degree in health sciences and established a relationship with Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science in North Chicago, Ill. The Alliance for Health Sciences gives CSH students opportunities to participate in accelerated degree programs and research collaborations (see page 19).

Other “firsts” for DePaul during these years included leading higher education in Chicago by offering a real estate

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**Pop Quiz**

**How well do you know your DePaul trivia? Take this quiz to find out!**

1. **Why are we known as the Blue Demons?**
   (Hint: The answer is elsewhere in this magazine!)
   a) It’s based on a popular song from the 1920s.
   b) It’s a play on the “D” uniforms worn by male athletes—“D-Men” became “demon” over time.
   c) It’s a tongue-in-cheek response to other schools saying DePaul is too Catholic.
   d) It was a way to differentiate ourselves from the Red Demons at a rival university.

2. **What does the school color blue signify?**
   a) Friendship
   b) Vincentian personalism
   c) Loyalty
   d) Honor

3. **When was the quarter system introduced?**
   a) 1898
   b) 1912
   c) 1950
   d) 1967

4. **What was the original name of the student newspaper, The DePaulia?**
   a) DePaul Poll Parrot
   b) DePaul Talks
   c) The Weekly Journal
   d) DePaul’s Dutiful Digest

5. **What is the university motto?**
   a) “It is not enough to do good; it must be done well.”
   b) “Love is inventive to infinity.”
   c) “I will show you the way of wisdom.”
   d) “Charity is the paradise of communities and the soul of virtues.”

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The 2017 footprint of DePaul’s Loop Campus.
The 2017 footprint of DePaul’s Lincoln Park Campus.

**Mural Project Showcases DePaul’s History**

Brother Mark Elder, C.M., an artist, adjunct faculty member and service learning coordinator in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, thought the pillars underneath the CTA’s Fullerton ‘L’ station could use some sprucing up. Last year, he collaborated with students in his mural class to design and decorate several of the support columns with portraits of individuals who are important to DePaul’s history. Additional columns will feature other significant events and groups in the university’s past. “The art will make the space look nice, but the process also prompts a dialogue,” Elder notes. “People get so excited when they’re doing something as one unified community. There’s a natural, earnest bonding that occurs from the making of community art.”

Featured groups and individuals include the following, with more still to be named:

- Legendary men’s basketball coach Ray Meyer led the Blue Demons to many victories...
degree at the undergraduate level, launching the nation's first BA in Islamic world studies with a focus on the study of Islam as a worldview and a civilization, designing the first MS and MA in digital cinema degrees in the Midwest, and creating a master's in sustainable urban development.

Sustainability was the word when McGowan South and McGowan North, named after Monsignor Andrew J. McGowan and William G. McGowan respectively, were completed. These science buildings were both certified LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold for superior resource efficiency, as were Arts & Letters Hall and the new Theatre School building. The DePaul Art Museum was designated LEED Silver.

All of the LEED Gold buildings were built as part of the Many Dreams, One Mission Campaign, a highly successful fundraising initiative completed in 2014 (see page 14). More than 40,000 generous donors raised more than $333 million in support of academic programs, facilities and scholarships; indeed, the scholarship goal of $100 million was exceeded by $7 million, an incredible achievement in recognition of the 86 percent of DePaul students who receive financial aid in the form of scholarships, loans and work study.

Building on the momentum of the Many Dreams, One Mission Campaign, DePaul's future looks bright. More than 90 percent of 2015 undergraduate and graduate degree recipients were employed, continuing their education or not seeking employment within six months of graduation. As they head out into the wider world armed with the tools to be critical thinkers, creative doers and service-oriented professionals, they often look back at the faculty, classmates and courses that set them on a path to success.

In fiscal year 2016, more than 8,500 alumni supported DePaul, raising more than $9 million in annual giving.

During his long tenure, including winning the National Invitational Tournament (NIT) in 1945. In 1979, the Blue Demons reached the Final Four in the NCAA Tournament. That same year, Meyer was elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame, making him only the fourth active coach to be so honored at that time. In the fall of 1979, Meyer earned his 600th career victory, and when he retired in 1984 after 42 years, he had a 724-354 record.

Benjamin Hooks (JD ‘48, DHL ‘77), a civil rights activist and the first African-American criminal court judge in Tennessee, was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor, in 2007.

Mabel “Dolly” Staton (EDU ’55) leapt into history as a 19-year-old long jumper who finished seventh out of 160 contestants in the 1952 Helsinki Olympics. Read more about Staton at depaulmagazine.com.

Sister Mary Teresita Frawley, S.P., Sister Mary Clemenza Leahy, B.V.M., and Minnie Daly were the first women to graduate from DePaul. Srs. Frawley and Leahy were the first nuns to do so, in 1912, while Daly was the first laywoman, in 1914. Read more about Daly at depaulmagazine.com.

Known as “Mr. Basketball,” George Mikan (LAW ’49) led the Blue Demons to their NIT victory in 1945, the first and last time a DePaul basketball team has won a postseason tournament. After graduating, Mikan joined the National Basketball League, where his impressive athleticism and height made him one of the 10 best centers ever in NBA history, according to a 2016 ESPN article.

The Rev. Francis X. McCabe, C.M., served as DePaul’s third president from 1910 to 1920, a period of great enrollment growth thanks in part to his efforts. The student body grew from approximately 200 to 1,500 during his tenure. McCabe is also remembered for bringing history, life and culture into the curriculum. During the student protests of 1968, students rallied for equal treatment on campus and better representation of minority voices in the classroom. In May, the newly formed Black Student Union delivered a list of demands to then-President the Rev. John R. Cortelyou, C.M., who subsequently created a University Committee on Human Relations. Starting later that year, more courses incorporated African-American history, life and culture into the curriculum.

Visit depaulmagazine.com to see a photo gallery of this community art project.