

October 22, 2008

To The Campus Community,

I hope you all are looking forward to this upcoming weekend as much as I am. As a community, we will welcome to our campus parents, trustees and alumni from across the country. In addition to the many special events and activities planned for the weekend, we also will officially launch the Campaign for Connecticut College, a \$200 million comprehensive campaign.

Through the Campaign, over the next several years, we will continue to enhance our educational programs with increased support for academic departments, faculty scholarship, student-faculty research, interdisciplinary learning, international opportunities, new approaches to student advising and more. We will support excellence and diversity in our faculty, staff and students with increased financial aid, expanded professional development programs, and new initiatives to attract and retain diverse students, faculty and staff. And we will move our aggressive campus renewal program forward with continued facilities enhancements.

At the same time, we also are working to advance our leadership position in the sciences with a new life sciences building that will foster increased opportunities for research and collaboration.

It's customary to "go public" with a campaign when you are halfway to goal. We are beyond halfway, with more than \$105 million in gifts and commitments. These gifts have already had a tremendous impact on our College. We see it in the new classrooms and common rooms, in the start of the new fitness center, in new walkways and plaza spaces, and in the overall renovation of our historic buildings. We see it in the increases in financial aid that help us bring qualified students to this College, regardless of their ability to pay. We see it in new support for faculty research and teaching, in new staff development programs and in the momentum that has re-energized this College. As part of the upcoming weekend, we will be celebrating the donors who have made possible all of these important advances.

We do face some uncertainty as we embark upon the public phase of this Campaign during one of the most difficult economic periods in recent memory. But this launch – and, indeed, the Campaign itself – is an important investment in the College's future. We will manage our way through this economy very carefully, with a close eye on the pressures that could affect us. Fortunately, Connecticut College is in a very strong financial position and we are very strategic and purposeful about where we spend our money. These factors will serve us well as we manage through this difficult economic environment.

I spoke about the economy and its impact on the College at the recent faculty meeting and at an all-staff meeting Oct. 10, and I will continue to do so. I also plan a discussion with trustees about it over the coming weekend. The situation changes daily, and warrants careful attention. I plan to discuss the economy at upcoming faculty meetings, and I am working to schedule another all-staff meeting in November or December. I also intend to send a separate e-mail shortly that will have more specific information on the economy's impact on the College.

This week, you should receive a copy of The President's Report, a publication highlighting many of the achievements of the 2007-2008 academic year. These achievements are considerable, and every member of this community can take pride in all that we have accomplished together. This publication also provides highlights of the Campaign.

Already this semester, the College has welcomed our first class of Science Leaders, hosted a number of distinguished speakers and conducted an important campus conversation about the use of alcohol. In addition, a number of faculty members and students – and the College itself – have been featured by prominent news outlets, including The New York Times, USA Today, The Washington Post, The Los Angeles Times and The Associated Press.

I hope to see you during the weekend, or even before that at the “Spirit Week” events planned by the students.

Sincerely,
Lee Higdon