

UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL

From Head of School
Chuck Webster

Welcome to the Annual Report for the 2007-2008 school year. Annual Reports present the preceding year's financial outcomes, a list of contributors, and the best ones tell stories that illuminate the life of an institution. I hope you will read all of this report, our first posted on-line. I especially hope that you will track the visual images which help create a delightful, compelling look at a learning community comfortable in its own skin, proud of its achievements and cognizant of the opportunity to create a preferred –future version of itself.

This is the value proposition at the center of a range of relationships at University High School: that in self-consciously learning to make sense of one's experience, to better understand the meaning of one's choices and values and assessments, we become more purposeful and more effective learners. Student/teacher relationships rich in adult investment, high-quality feedback, respect and authentic role-modeling create context for the kind of self-improvement that makes for more satisfying lives, and allows students to set and meet increasingly higher expectations. Please enjoy the relationships captured in this year's Annual Report.

One of the central relationships at University has been the one with the Walls family – John, Rhonda, Jenna and Katie; Tim, Lori, Nick and Grant Randle (Lori is John's sister); and Jim and Charlene Walls (John and Lori's mother and father). The Walls' extended family are all intensely present in the life of University High School. Jim Walls proudly wore his University High School sweatshirt during his recent hospital stay – he is now home and well – and the Walls are part of University's history. Jim Walls dropped by the White House several times during the first months of our first school year in the fall of 2000, deciding during that time that his oldest granddaughter would attend University.

The Walls and Randle families represent University at our very best. We would be a less effective, less gracious place without them. So it is with real pleasure that I announce that John Walls has accepted the offer to become University High School's next athletic director. John is a connector – he brings people and resources together to benefit others, cares deeply about how things are done, and he creates contexts in which relationships and communities succeed and thrive. He brings dignity – a great old-fashioned idea – to everything he does, operates with integrity, and is respected by all who know him. Let the next chapter of the Walls-University relationship begin.

We have been in an extensive search process over the last three months for additional faculty that has involved fourteen students and most faculty and administrators. When Mike Hagan was hired almost two years ago to be University's business manager, he was struck by the amount of deliberation in his hiring process that spanned more than six weeks. Nothing has changed. We began this year's process when Jamie Napier and I interviewed 33 potential candidates in Chicago in February. This year's candidate pool has been the widest and deepest yet, and we have made five

new faculty appointments. Student committee members have handled a variety of complex issues with real insight and confidence. This particular aspect of University life – students sitting on hiring committees – is a succinct, highly effective expression of the student-as-stakeholder model, and a great learning experience.

The five new faculty members form a very impressive group. Our Language Arts faculty welcomes two new members in the coming year; two new instructors will join the math faculty; and one new Spanish teacher will join the faculty.

- Kip Robisch has been an assistant professor of English at Purdue University, where he earned his M.A. and Ph.D. and won several excellence-in-teaching awards. His wife, Patricia Henley, a professor of creative writing at Purdue, had one of her novels considered for a national book award. Kip's new book, *Wolves and the Wolf Myth in American Literature*, will be published by University of Nevada Press this summer.
- Derek Thomas' B.A. is in English and Art History from Brown University. He completed his M.A. in Humanities from the University of Chicago last spring and has been an instructor for Princeton Review since September. He attended Buckingham Browne and Nichols, an independent high school in Boston. Derek's father is an English instructor at Buckingham Browne after a teaching career at Davidson College and Boston University.
- Jennifer Cox graduated Magna Cum Laude from Southern Indiana and received her M.S. in mathematics from Indiana University, Bloomington. Jennifer has won numerous academic awards throughout her college career. She currently teaches at Herron High School, the gifted magnet school in Indianapolis, where she is chair of the math department and the varsity cross country coach.
- Stacey Summit graduated this year from Butler University with a range of honors including a Lilly Community Foundation Scholarship, a 2009 Butler University Top 100 Student Award, and membership in Mortar Board, Blue Key and Alpha Lambda Delta Honor Societies. Stacey has completed several major internships, including one at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama and another at the Nature Conservancy in Indiana. In addition, Stacey was the point guard on the North Knox basketball team which reached the 2A State Semi-final game in 2005. Stacey will be an assistant basketball coach for the girls basketball team next year.
- Spanish teacher Moises Gomez-Pastor comes to us from Normal, Illinois where for the past two years he served as a graduate assistant in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Illinois State University. Moises has an M.A. in foreign language pedagogy from Illinois State, and a B.A. in English studies from the University of Alicante and the University of Glasgow. Moises, the recipient of the Montserrat Viarrehla Excellence in Teaching Award, is a native Spanish speaker who has also studied French, German, Greek and Latin.

Please enjoy the Annual Report.