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A View from Melrose

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Linfield 2020:

Navigation in a flattened world

“20-20” stands for perfect vision. The year 2020 is less than 15 years away.

Two years ago, the Linfield faculty retreat focused on “Linfield 2020” and professors addressed questions such as, “what should be our priorities? What should the college look like? What will our students need?” Among other things, faculty agreed that, “We want to be known as a great teaching college that supports and celebrates vital research conducted by both faculty and students.” They said that, “We want to be known as a place where the study of the liberal arts and the pre-professional comprehensive B.A. programs are well integrated.” And, “We want to be recognized as a place that nurtures a vibrant community.”

I couldn’t agree more. And I believe that the future of the college will be grounded in those three principles. It is further essential that we continue to bring the world to Linfield by increasing our geographic and ethnic diversity, not only in the student body, but also in the faculty. We need to increase the national awareness of Linfield as a quality college and we need to continue to strengthen international studies.

Students at Linfield already get a rich education, full of experiential learning and collaboration. But we have the potential to do even more – to coordinate faculty-student research that will link theory to practice; to organize our internship programs so that students can assist area businesses, non-profit organizations or schools while also learning from them; to deepen our connections to our local area which will, ironically, make us more attractive and interesting to those far away who are just beginning to learn about Linfield. We can provide a global learning laboratory here at Linfield, and we can also enable our faculty and students to test what they have learned here during their study abroad.

So what will Linfield College look like in the year 2020? I can’t make any promises, but I have many ideas that I hope to present for serious discussion. More importantly, we need to create the vision together. Here are some ideas for 2020.

We will be well known regionally and recognized nationally. Our student body and faculty will include people from many states and nations, from a wide variety of ethnic, economic and social backgrounds. They will come to Linfield for many reasons, but especially because of our international programs, our academic excellence and our emphasis on applying theory to practice. Student-faculty research teams will be lauded for their contributions to the



President Thomas L. Hellie shares a laugh with students at the activities fair during orientation. The fair provides an opportunity for new students to learn more about clubs and organizations on campus.

non-profit sector, the education sector, the business sector and the environmental sector, in the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Our pre-professional programs will be notable for their integration with the liberal arts. We will have new science facilities, Northup Hall will house several academic departments and Pioneer Hall will have been renovated. We will have remodeled our current facilities or secured new ones in Portland. Our athletic teams and facilities will continue to be a model for the NCAA, providing the best possible opportunities for excellence in competition while assuring the primary importance of academics. We will be a place where our students – whether in nursing or business, theatre or chemistry – find themselves called to service, a place where they not only come to study a discipline, they also come to discover themselves.

Let us aim high at Linfield. If we’re now the best comprehensive undergraduate college in the West, maybe we should look even further as we set our sights, design our programs, plot our future and create a bolder vision.

I look forward to refining these ideas with our alumni, faculty and students. Let’s aim high and strive to become better. For our students today, for Linfield 2020, we can do no less.

– Thomas L. Hellie