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Linfield Magazine Staff

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Two months and counting

From 1989 to March, 2006, my wife and I lived in a densely populated Chicago neighborhood, just three blocks from the Chicago Cubs Wrigley Field. Not surprisingly, everyone now asks, “How does it feel to move to the small town of McMinnville, Oregon?”

Of course it feels very different. But it also feels comfortable because we are back on a college campus. I’ve spent my entire career serving colleges in one way or another, but for years I’ve done so from an office in downtown Chicago. I feel good here, perhaps because everyone has warmly welcomed us.

There’s been a lot of excitement at Linfield. For example, during my first week I was called onto the dance floor at the annual L’uau, where I got to dance in front of 500 people. When I announced my weekly office hour for Linfield students, I was met with Oregon accreditation officials who were evaluating our teacher education program. They eventually told me that Linfield had earned a perfect score—the most favorable evaluation they had given anyone in a long time.

I entered Linfield’s intellectual life by attending lectures by guests and faculty, most notably our history professor, Dr. Scott Smith. I began to hold personal appointments with each of Linfield’s professors. And I went to my first faculty meetings in years. As I met with alumni these past two months, I was struck by their characterization of what makes Linfield special. They invariably named a particular professor who inspired and challenged them—someone who helped them find their passion. The relationship between professor and student is the center of the Linfield experience. Again and again, that lesson is repeated. It is our bedrock, our foundation.

So do I miss Chicago? Well, I may miss a few friends, and perhaps the pizza, but I am inspired by the people I meet at Linfield, and I feel privileged to join a community that is so supportive, so nurturing and good. There is plenty of work to do here, but much of that work is simply to remain focused on quality, to tell the Linfield story and to enhance the education of our students. In short, I feel that I’ve come home.

—from Thomas L. Hellie, President

Inside Linfield Magazine

In the lab, behind a camera, in a fire station, Linfield faculty and students learn together. In this issue, we explore six collaborative research projects where faculty and students work side by side. This creative and intellectual process challenges both student and teacher. Linfield students are also excelling in the classroom and in the community. We take a look at how Linfield students put complex business practices to work and compete successfully in a global online simulation. You’ll also get a glimpse of the work of students and staff who spent spring break helping the Gulf Coast continue the long rebuilding process. And you’ll find a poignant tribute to Marvin Henberg, who served as dean of faculty for 11 years and as interim president this past year. We look forward to telling more stories of how Linfield College fulfills its mission, of connecting learning, life, and community.

On the covers:

Front: Todd Curtis ’07 uses liquid nitrogen during an experiment to measure the efficiency of a solar cell. (Tom Ballard photo)

Back: Three members of the class of 2006 received Fulbright awards. (Laura Davis photo)