

## From the President

Todd Parnell '69



We live in a community called Drury. People in high functioning communities come together in times of challenge. They partner to solve problems. They find ways to put the community's interests above their own.

The past nine months have clearly been times of challenge. At Drury we have come together to weather the effects of unprecedented global financial turmoil and bring closure to a difficult but rewarding academic year. When facing uncertain circumstances in the dark days of late 2008 and early 2009, we tightened our belts, instituted a hiring freeze and protected our liquidity. People did not complain about doing more with less. They just did it for the benefit of our students. When I asked community constituencies what they valued most in these troubled times, their wishes were straightforward: They wanted the truth about what was happening at Drury in the context of the world, they wanted to protect members of the Drury community, and they preferred pay cuts to layoffs of their colleagues.

We have communicated our financial challenges every step along the way, consistent with the open book philosophy we espouse on campus. We have frozen salaries to avoid layoffs. We have cut

expenses that do not directly affect the quality of our academic offering or student services. We have served students and each other well while meeting our budgetary goals.

We have also met a \$1 million Mabee Foundation challenge to allow us to proceed with the first major capital project on campus in five years. An amazing gift from the O'Reilly family led the way, and significant commitments from CoxHealth and the Pitt family, the latter allowing us to pursue a LEED Gold event center, carried us far enough to begin construction. The O'Reilly Family Event Center marks the first in a series of steps to improve campus infrastructure and generate momentum into the future.

The coming years will no doubt be challenging as well, with uncertainty the watchword. We will stride forward into this future cautiously, focused on academic excellence, student services and financial stability. That said, we will keep our heads up and eyes open, seek opportunity and be alert to the possibilities.

We live in a community called Drury.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "T. Parnell". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a light-colored background.