Campaign Leaders Foresee a Bright Future for the University

The $175 million Campaign of Commitment is being steered by a talented team of business leaders, alumni, regents, and others who are deeply committed to the University and believe strongly in its future.

“I see the University headed toward greater and greater accomplishments and more recognition nationally and internationally,” said Harry Jack Gray, honorary chair of the Campaign of Commitment. Gray, a life regent of the University, is the retired chairman of United Technologies Corporation. “We need to provide the additional funds for the University to continue expanding and improving itself.”

Gray and other friends of the University were appointed last fall to the Campaign of Commitment Steering Committee, which is charged with overseeing the campaign’s progress and assisting with its design, organization, and implementation. Peter Eio, the retiring president of LEGO Systems, Inc., and a vice chair of the University’s Board of Regents, was named chair of the Campaign Steering Committee.

In addition to Gray and Eio, the Campaign of Commitment Steering Committee includes:

University President Walter Harrison
Nancy Botcheller, the parent of both a current University student and a University alumnus
Richard J. Cardin, a 1962 graduate of the College of Arts and Sciences and a newly appointed member of the Board of Regents
Alison G. Coolbrith, a 1965 graduate of the University’s Hartford College for Women (HCW), a vice chair of the Board of Regents, and chair of the HCW Board of Trustees
Arnold C. Greenberg, chair of the Board of Regents
Peter G. Kelly, a member of the Board of Regents
Christopher Larsen, a former regent and former member of the governing boards of the Hartford Art School and The Hartt School
Millard H. Pryor, Jr., a member of the Board of Regents
Belle K. Ribicoff, a life regent
W. Stephen Jeffrey, vice president of external relations for the University

The steering committee also includes several other University staff members and a fund-raising consultant.

Both Gray and Eio said that they have been extremely impressed by President Harrison’s leadership over the past three years and that they have tremendous confidence in his vision for the University’s future. They said they took on leadership roles in the Campaign of Commitment because they feel strongly that this vision should be supported financially.

“President Harrison has a very clear vision of where he wants to take the University, and he is putting a tremendous amount of energy into achieving those goals,” Eio said.

Money raised through the Campaign of Commitment will support such critical needs as student financial aid; capital projects, including new and expanded facilities and campus improvements; cutting-edge technology; and competitive compensation for faculty and staff. To date, the campaign has raised more than $60 million.

Over the years, Gray and his wife, Helen, have been among the University’s most generous benefactors. Gray said he feels very comfortable with his new role as honorary chair of the campaign. “We’ve been major contributors to the University for some time,” he said, “and we are more convinced than ever that it’s a University that should be supported.”

Gray attributed his ever-growing enthusiasm for the University to a number of recent developments, including an upgrade in the institution’s bond rating; the accreditation of the Barney School of Business by AACSB—The International Association for Management Education, a highly selective accrediting organization; record-breaking undergraduate enrollment, an indicator of the University’s growing reputation; and the construction of the University of Hartford Magnet School and related campus improvements.

Eio acknowledged that the campaign’s $175 million goal is an ambitious one and that reaching it will not be easy. “It’s a challenge, there’s no question about that. It’s going to be quite a task, but we’ve gathered such a good team and made such a good start,” he said. “I think it’s a very important initiative for the University to ensure its future goals are met.”
Throughout his four years at the University of Hartford’s College of Engineering, Edward Paradise ’78 was a commuter student, who made ends meet by working and getting loans and scholarships. He never dreamed that some day he would be in a position to provide scholarships to a new generation of promising young engineering students.

But as Paradise sees it, he is living the American Dream—and he wants to share it with the University that helped him get started on the road to success. Paradise, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering, today is a top executive with Cisco Systems, the worldwide leader in networking for the Internet. He serves as vice president and general manager for Cisco’s Service Provider Technology and Mobile Wireless Business Unit, based in Research Triangle Park, N.C.

Paradise recently made a commitment to the University of Hartford to establish the Paradise Family Foundation, an endowment that will provide multiple scholarships each year for students in the College of Engineering.

“This commitment from Ed Paradise represents a major step forward for the College of Engineering,” said Alan J. Hadad, dean of the College. “All too frequently I am told by prospective students or their parents that the University of Hartford is their first choice, but that their limited resources have forced them to select another institution.”

“Ed Paradise’s gift will allow us to supplement our financial aid awards to academically talented but financially disadvantaged applicants to the College of Engineering, and thereby enable them to attend.”

Paradise and his family decided to establish the endowment as a family foundation so that his two children, both of whom are college students themselves, can take part in awarding the scholarships. Renee Marie Paradise, 18, recently completed her freshman year at Harvard University, where she is majoring in biochemistry. Edward Joseph (Eddy) Paradise, 20, recently finished his junior year at The Georgia Institute of Technology. He is following in his father’s footsteps as an engineering major.

“Establishing a family foundation gives the kids an opportunity to sit on the board and decide how to allocate the money,” said the elder Paradise. “I wanted them to be able to see folks who are less fortunate and help them. The idea of helping college students appealed to them.”

Paradise grew up in New Britain, Conn. While attending the University of Hartford, he married his high-school sweetheart, Barbara, who today works as a medical technologist for the University of North Carolina.

After graduating from the University of Hartford in 1978, Paradise got a job with IBM, which had recruited on campus. He worked at IBM for 15 years, rising to a senior management position. In 1993, with the technology revolution in full swing, Paradise joined Cisco Systems as manager of a hardware engineering group, and he quickly rose through the company ranks.

In the late 1990s, as the scope of the Internet mushroomed, so too did the value of Cisco’s stock, and Paradise soon found himself in a financial position that he had never envisioned. “As the market grew, I wanted to give something back,” Paradise said. “Cisco gave us the ability to do things like this [establish an endowed scholarship fund].”

Paradise credits the University of Hartford with giving him a strong educational foundation, and said he especially benefited from the University’s small size and the close relationships between students and faculty. He still is occasionally in touch with one of his former teachers in the College of Engineering, Associate Professor John Froehlich.

“It was a great college experience,” Paradise said of his years at the University.

Senior Signature: The Tradition Continues

For the second year in a row, graduating seniors have left their signatures on the University of Hartford in the form of $25 gifts to their new alma mater.

The Senior Signature program, which began with the Class of 2000, encourages graduating seniors to make gifts to the University of $25 each. Those who contribute have their names engraved on a senior class plaque.

The newest plaque, commemorating the gifts of the Class of 2001, was unveiled on May 17 on the outside wall of University Commons. One hundred twenty-five members of the graduating class made gifts to the University this year, matching the number of students who participated in 2000.

Amy Valentine, a member of the Senior Class Planning Committee and one of
the organizers of this year’s Senior Signature campaign, said it was gratifying to be able to make a gift to the University and to have her name engraved on the senior class plaque.

“The experience I’ve gotten here [at the University] was absolutely wonderful,” said Valentine, who majored in physical therapy. “The University definitely helped me out a lot in terms of financial aid and scholarships, and it’s nice to be able to give back to the school.”

The ultimate goal of the Senior Signature program is to encourage students to continue to support the University after they graduate, and to become active and involved alumni. Valentine and other students said they definitely plan to make future gifts to the University, once they find jobs and get settled.

For many years, the University has led the region and the nation in the academic achievements of its athletes. Now its academic advising program will become even stronger, thanks to a four-year, $100,000 grant from the Phoenix Foundation.

The new grant will create the Phoenix Foundation Academic Center in the University’s Sports Center. In addition, it will support a number of academic advising programs over four years.

“The University of Hartford athletes traditionally rank among the nation’s leaders in the category that matters most, their academic success,” said University President Walter Harrison. “The Phoenix Foundation recognizes this, and this grant will ensure that our athletes will continue to succeed in the classroom as well as on the court or field.”

Robert W. Fiondella, chairman and chief executive officer of Phoenix, said UH athletes “are a special group of young people who are working hard academically, while balancing the demands of a rigorous game schedule and work in the community. They deserve this support to help them succeed.”

The grant will enhance the instructional technology available to students, supplying computers and workstations to student-athletes. Enhancing the University’s technological capacity is a major goal of the University’s 10-year, $175 million Campaign of Commitment.

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**Campaign Total Continues to Grow**

Total contributions to the $175 million Campaign of Commitment continue to grow steadily, thanks to the generosity and conviction of our loyal regents, alumni, parents, friends, faculty, and staff. As The Observer goes to press, the total raised to date has reached over $60 million. “We look forward to increasing that total substantially in the coming months,” said Linda Platzer, executive director of development.

The Campaign of Commitment will have a profound impact on the future of the University and its students. Money raised through the campaign will support such critical needs as student financial aid; capital projects, including new and expanded facilities and campus improvements; cutting-edge technology; and competitive compensation for faculty and staff. The major components of the campaign are as follows:

- **Endowment Support** $63 million
- **Facilities** $57 million
- **Annual Program Support** $55 million

Check out the fall issue of The Observer for more detailed information on the objectives of the Campaign of Commitment.