

A PRESIDENT'S VIEW

Perspectives of Rev. Robert L. Niehoff, S.J.
President of John Carroll University

John Carroll makes bold move to support affordable education for students from lower-income families



The affordability of a university education is a national crisis. It is something that college presidents do lose sleep over. The leadership of John Carroll University has come up with a plan that I believe is an important step in dealing with that crisis. The issue is complex and we will need to take many steps before we can justly conclude that we are close to solving this problem. But every journey does begin with one step and it was gratifying to see that Cleveland's daily newspaper recognized the importance of the step John Carroll recently took.

The *Plain Dealer* editorial's headline read: "John Carroll's bold gambit." The paper's editorial board understood that our new tuition assistance plan for qualified students from lower-income families was a bold move. The editorial's last paragraph elicited a vigorous nod from this president: "Now area high schools must ensure that word of John Carroll's commitment reaches potential students. The possibility of such a large student subsidy puts the college within reach of many who might not have considered it earlier; aggressive marketing is the next link necessary to ensure that they think of John Carroll now."

Aggressive marketing. Point well taken! John Carroll University needs to get the word out boldly, and this publication that you are reading – our very first *A President's View* – is but one instance of the communication we intend to do to spread the word that this university is very serious about making college affordable to qualified students in Ohio.

For those of you who missed the media coverage, I'll review the particulars: John Carroll is offering to pay almost all of the tuition, room and board of Ohio students whose family income is less than \$40,000. The students must meet all of the university's high academic standards for admission, file the appropriate financial assistance forms, be a dependent of their family and perform 30 hours of community service per year. As regards qualifications, I am encouraged by the information that the early applicants for this initiative have exceptionally high ACT and GPA numbers. For the yearly renewal of their assistance package, they must make satisfactory progress toward their degree. This plan will not diminish the academic quality of our student body at all, but we do expect that it will enable us to enroll students who otherwise would have great difficulty becoming part of our university.

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John Carroll
UNIVERSITY
The Jesuit University in Cleveland

“As university president, I’m always proud to share John Carroll’s student, faculty and staff accomplishments with the greater community. Our Jesuit, Catholic mission is paramount to why we are here and why we serve. Below, are some recent accomplishments that strengthen our mission.”

SUCCESSES & ACHIEVEMENTS

Successes

MASTER PLAN CONSULTANTS CHOSEN

 Sasaki Associates of Watertown, Massachusetts, has been selected to be John Carroll’s master planning consulting firm. The selection of the international planning and design firm follows a national competition that began in late October and involved eight national firms in its initial stages. Cleveland’s Osborn Engineering, Ohio’s oldest engineering firm, will be Sasaki’s partner on the project.

The consultants’ work will entail a review and plan for five areas of the university: academics, housing, recreation/athletics, student services, and administration/parking.

In what is expected to be a ten-month planning period, the two firms will work to help prepare a campus master plan with five- and ten-year horizons, a plan that will be sufficiently flexible to accommodate adjustments to changing circumstances. The planning period, to be completed before the end of the calendar year, will consist of three phases: investigation, analysis, preparation of the master plan and supporting documents.

The consultants’ work will entail a review and plan for five areas of the university: academics, housing, recreation/athletics, student services, and administration/parking. The organizational schema, which will support the university’s mission, will be the conceptualized expression of the best way to physically serve John Carroll’s present core activities and the changes envisioned over the next decade.

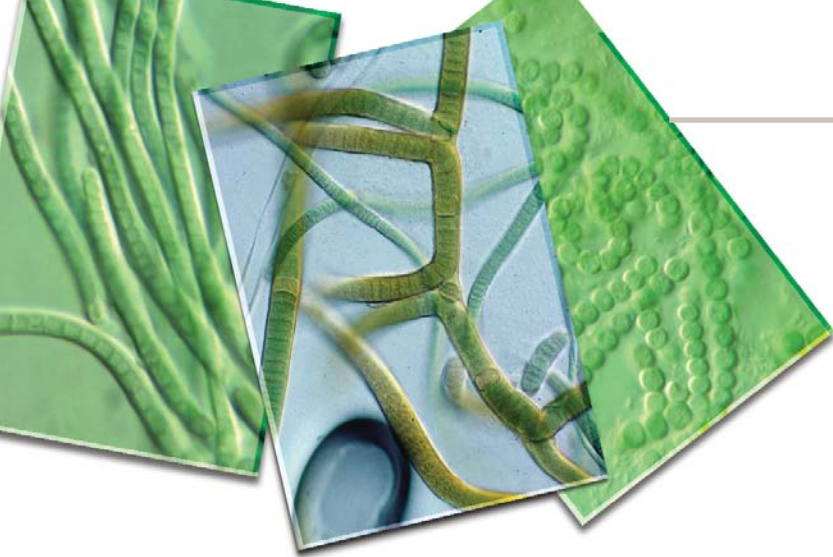
The plan is intended, said President Niehoff in a message to the community on January 18, to: “deliver a setting that is culturally dynamic, encourages participation, enhances social interaction, and appeals to our students, faculty, staff, visitors, and the larger community. During the

nearly year-long planning exercise, there will be substantial opportunities for comment and critique by university constituents, local public officials and the university’s neighbors. Sasaki’s services will include an informational web site dedicated to our campus master plan; the site also will provide constituents with opportunities to express written comments as the planning process progresses.”

JOHN CARROLL AUTHORS MAKE AN IMPACT

John Carroll faculty members have recently published books that are making an impact with readers and award-granting bodies. Dr. Steven Hayward of the Department of English last year won Italy’s Cavour Prize for Emerging Novelists for his *The Secret Mitzvah of Lucio Burke*. His departmental colleague, Dr. George Bilgere, was awarded the prestigious May Swenson Prize for his volume of poetry, *Haywire*. In late fall, Bilgere was also named the recipient of the Ohioana Helen and Laura Krout Memorial Poetry Award. The award goes to an exceptional Ohio poet who has made a significant contribution to poetry. In the fall, Fr. Donald Cozzens, a priest of the Diocese of Cleveland who is writer-in-residence in the Department of Religious Studies published *Freeing Celibacy*, which is attracting a strong response throughout the Catholic world. In early winter, Dr. Thomas Nevin of the Department of Classical and Modern Languages and Cultures published *St. Thérèse of Lisieux: God’s Gentle Warrior* through Oxford University Press. Sociology’s Dr. Susan Long was awarded the 2006 Francis L.K. Hsu Book Prize by the Society for East Asian Anthropology for her book, *Final Days: Japanese Culture and Choice at the End of Life*.





BIOLOGY'S JOHANSEN EXTENDS INTERNATIONAL REACH

Dr. Jeff Johansen of the Department of Biology has recently been working in his laboratory with graduate students from several countries of the former Soviet Union, from the Czech Republic and Bohemia. Johansen and his students have discovered five new species of algae in recent years.

CARROLL NEWS NAMED BEST TWO YEARS IN A ROW

The Carroll News was named the best weekly newspaper for overall excellence in Region Four by the Society for Collegiate Journalists, the oldest national collegiate journalism organization. It was the second year in a row that the university newspaper took this honor. The judges said, "The staff knows its audience, focusing on student-related articles."

JCU FORENSICS TAKES NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Last spring, freshman Chris Schroeder and junior Sean McClure teamed up to bring John Carroll the national championship of the American Debate Association (ADA) in the novice division. University debaters beat the forensic entry from the University of Michigan to take the national championship of the ADA in 2002.

BOLERS GIVE 2.5 MILLION

John '56 and Mary Jo Boler have once again made an extraordinarily generous gift to John's alma mater. The Bolers recently informed us that they are giving \$2.5 million to support our strategic initiatives for the university. The Itasca, Illinois-based industrialist told me: "In my opinion you should have discretionary funds available to you to use to meet opportunities and challenges as they occur. I have great confidence in your financial judgment, and know that you will use these funds to good effect."

MISSION & SERVICE

Mission

LEARNING COMMUNITIES CONVENED

A number of faculty learning communities have been recently organized. One is the *Peace Building and Human Rights Learning Community*; a second is the *Poverty and Solidarity Learning Community*; a third is the *Entrepreneurial University Learning Community*. Each of these three is committed to a year-long slate of activities and discussions. In addition, seven smaller groupings have been convened with the intention of meeting four times a year to explore particular topics. These groupings, also called *Sustenance Learning Communities*, are devoted to exploring the following topic areas: Economic Growth and Social Change in China, American Studies, Hate Crimes, Caring Faculty, Leadership, The Role of the Intellectual in the 21st Century and Online Learning. In varying ways, these ad hoc faculty groups meet: to foster interdisciplinary collaboration; to work collaboratively to produce new programs; to support faculty research; and to address issues of general concern to the community and its mission.

ANNUAL IGNATIAN DAY, JANUARY 12

Ignatian Day, the university community's annual gathering to reflect on the university's mission, was held on campus on January 12. This year's keynote speaker was Dr. John Neafsey, Psy.D., a practicing clinical psychologist and a faculty member at Loyola University Chicago. Dr. Neafsey is a volunteer therapist at the Marjorie Kovler Center for the Treatment of Survivors of Torture and is the author of *A Sacred Voice Is Calling: Personal Vocation and Social Conscience*.



CARROLL-CLEVELAND PHILOSOPHERS' PROGRAM WINS INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM

The Carroll-Cleveland Philosophers' Program (CCPP), a pioneering effort to teach philosophy to central city young people, has been awarded the American Philosophical Association/Philosophy Documentation Center Prize for "Excellence and Innovation in Philosophy Programs." CCPP, now in its eighth year, has been celebrated at recent conferences in Glasgow, Scotland; Paris, France; and Cambridge, England.

Bold Move CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Under the terms of this initiative, the university will cover all but \$3,500 per year in tuition; students will need to pay the remaining amount with federal loans. Our goal under this initiative is to have students graduate with under \$20,000 in loan debt. Eligible students living in university residence halls will be expected to provide about \$2,000 toward their room and board – the expected family contribution under federal aid guidelines. Since the university's tuition, room and board are now \$33,000 per year, John Carroll will be investing about \$80,000 per student during his or her undergraduate career.

Investment is the key word. My academic area is finance. I think I have some understanding of the promise that moves us to make long-term investments. I have been president of this university and a citizen of this state for 18 months, long enough to have a rather acute understanding of how urgent it is that wise long-term investments in our region be made by all of the

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institutions we represent.

well produce rocket scientists, microbiologists, entrepreneurs, teachers and all manner of skilled and committed people destined to bear a large share of the burden, as we work our way back to a more vibrant regional society.

I cannot think of a wiser long-term investment than one in the young people of this area. Seeing the wisdom of that is not, as they say, rocket science, but the investment itself may

I view this initiative as central to John Carroll's mission of service. I view it as a restatement of our commitment to the people of this region. The initiative should also be seen as a response to Ohio's current economic climate. There is no denying that the most important fuel for the economic engine of this region is knowledge. We will fall far behind if we are unable to form a large contingent of young people who have, as we say at John Carroll, the knowledge and the character to lead and to serve. We expect that many of the students who come to us under the terms of this initiative will be among the first of their families to graduate from college. We are aware of the need to make college more affordable for Ohio students, and in so doing to strengthen Ohio's economy. We believe that in making this possible we will plant seeds that will result in a welcome harvest for the region.

Families with a total household income of less than \$40,000 constitute a larger category than the officially designated poor. We are determined to serve the poor, but it is also our intent to reach out to that broader population for whom the affordability of a higher education is a daunting challenge. We are mindful of the needs of all John Carroll families and will continue to use our financial aid packages to facilitate the goal of affordability. Thirty-three thousand dollars a year is not a modest amount. As is the case with health care, the costs involved in higher education are inherently difficult to control. A university in the mainstream of American higher education must spend large amounts to provide competitive faculty salaries and state-of-the-art technology.

John Carroll has its financial challenges and I think we're facing them squarely. I came to the university with ample experience as a cost-cutter and cost-manager, and we are in the process of strengthening financial health. That mission is to serve the people of this region in a wide variety of ways, but most especially by giving our young women and men the tools, so that they can go into the world and change it for the better.

The Jesuits, my religious community, made in recent years, what we call our two "preferential options:" an option to devote a goodly portion of our energy and resources to serving the poor and women. Both options came out of our considered understanding that the pursuit of justice in the world required us to do more for those most in need. We hold to these commitments.

We at John Carroll have made another preferential option: one for an excellent and affordable education. The leadership of our university, an important part of the Cleveland area for 121 years, is united in our conviction that this investment is the best thing we can do to serve our region and be faithful to our mission.

We are going to do our utmost to make similar bold moves as we go forward. In regard to the affordability initiative, we are proud that we have joined Harvard and a very small number of higher educational institutions that are – dare we use that word again – boldly addressing what is probably higher education's most critical issue. It's nice company to keep.

Peace,

