

president's column

Dear Friends of Austin College,

It goes without saying that this is a unique time in history, when we all are affected by a severe economic climate. I am hopeful that our economy will make a full recovery soon, but in the meantime, we are making the necessary adjustments at Austin College to meet this challenge.

During these times of recession, we must be prudent in our actions to control costs without negatively impacting the quality of the experiences our students have on this campus. We are fortunate in that we have been able to maintain strong programs and

strong financial aid packages that assist students to have positive educational experiences in a residential liberal arts setting.

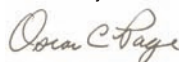
A good example of the success we have met this year is in our current freshman class. We track the success of each class from semester to semester, and I am pleased to tell you we retained 96.8 percent of the freshman class from the fall semester to the spring semester. This is the highest fall-to-spring retention we have had since 2002 — and the second highest in the last 10 years. In addition, we are on a record pace with applications for admission and with deposits from those who want to be a part of the new freshman class in fall 2009.

Today's economic challenges are greater than many of us ever have experienced. Nonetheless, I still ask alumni and friends to place Austin College high on their list of charitable support even during this difficult time and make a gift to the Annual Fund this year. We need gifts of all sizes to enhance the Annual Fund so we will have adequate resources to support our scholarship program.

Austin College has a rich history of providing significant financial support for its students. Scholarships have made it possible for many of our alumni to complete their degrees at Austin College, and now it is my hope that our alumni will increase the level of participation in the Annual Fund in order to help strengthen the scholarship program. With your gift, the Annual Fund will increase and you will have made it possible for some young man or woman to attend your *alma mater* and receive an outstanding educational experience similar to yours.

I have great faith in our alumni and know in times such as these, you always have stepped forward. Thank you in advance for your support, which will make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students.

Sincerely,



Oscar C. Page
President

