

## 759 Million Thank You's

By Joel Seligman

ON OCTOBER 21, I HAD THE HONOR OF ANNOUNCING the public phase of our \$1.2 billion comprehensive capital Campaign. For a University of our size, this is a truly amazing aspiration. I was particularly delighted to also announce that our alumni and friends already had provided or committed \$759 million to our Campaign—some 63 percent of our goal.

My *Meliora* Moment is the opportunity to thank so many who have worked so hard in the years that led to the public announcement. For me, the two most important words in the English language are thank you.

Thanks to an extraordinary Board of Trustees, led by Ed Hajim, each of whom has made a commitment to our Campaign. The Board and other volunteer leadership have provided over 30 percent of Campaign gifts and commitments to date. We were deeply inspired by Ed and Barbara Hajim's \$30 million commitment to the Hajim School of Engineering and Applied Sciences; Rich and Martha Handler's \$25 million commitment to undergraduate scholarships; former Chair Bob Goergen's greater than \$20 million in lifetime support for our University; Ernie and Thelma Del Monte's \$10 million commitment to neuro-medicine; and many other pivotal leadership gifts from our Board.

Thank you to our Campaign leadership, especially trustees Rich Handler and Cathy Minehan, who are cochairing our Campaign; our Campaign Cabinet of Ed Hajim, Rick Aab, Larry Bloch, Bernie Ferrari, Gail Lione, Phil Saunders, Tom Sloan, Bob Witmer, and Honorary Chair Bob Goergen and the many other Board and non-Board members who have assumed Campaign leadership positions. We have established volunteer leadership in each school and many programs as well as Regional Cabinets in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Texas, Chicago and the Midwest, Boston, Florida, the Delaware Valley, Washington, D.C., and four separate Cabinets in Metro New York. We have also organized special initiatives to lead our Annual Fund,



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Athletics, Diversity, Entrepreneurship, Estate and Planned Giving, the George Eastman Circle, the Memorial Art Gallery, our River Campus Libraries, and Scholarships. Our faculty and staff campaign will be led by Kevin Parker, Paul Burgett, and Lissa McAnarney.

Thank you to our friends like Tom Golisano, whose most recent \$20 million commitment will make possible dramatically improved pediatric care at the new Golisano Children's Hospital, and Phil Saunders, whose \$10 million commitment to clinical and translational research portends notable advances in neuroscience.

Thank you to the University's senior leadership. Our Medical Center and schools are a cornerstone of all we hope to achieve. Let me express especial thanks to our academic leaders: Ralph Kuncl, Brad Berk,

Raffaella Borasi, Rob Clark, Rich Feldman, Peter Lennie, Doug Lowry, Joanna Olmsted, Kathy Rideout, Mark Taubman, and Mark Zupan.

Each member of my Cabinet has now made or is finalizing a Campaign commitment.

Thanks to our faculty and staff whose careers here are the human foundation on which all we seek to achieve is built.

Thanks to our students for their faith in us. Thanks to the members of the George Eastman Circle, now over 1,920 strong, who have made five-year commitments of at least \$1,500 per year and helped us double the size of our Annual Fund in five years, one of the fastest growth rates among our peers.

Thank you to more than 100,000 individual donors who have contributed to our Campaign in one way or another since it began on July 1, 2005.

Thanks especially to Advancement, led by Jim Thompson, and including Jonathan Schwartz, Cynthia Beach-Smeltzer, Francine Cronin, Rob Gibson, Jeff Gillooly, Matt Haag, Frank Interlichia, Jack Kreckel, Eric Loomis, Joe Meister, Erin Moyer, Jennifer Patterson, Becky Wehle, and Kevin Wesley. Jim and his entire team have poured blood, sweat, toil, and tears into this Campaign, and their efforts have been decisive.

On October 21, as one university we launched the largest Campaign in our history.

We call our Campaign *The Meliora Challenge*. We share a dream: to be one of the leading universities of the 21st century, a community leader and builder, home to outstanding faculty, students, and staff.

Let there be no delusions. Our aspirations truly do aim high. They are not easy, automatic, or yet achieved.

But the history of our University is the history of Ever Better. We accept *The Meliora Challenge* because our University, our faculty, students, staff, alumni and friends have never settled for good enough. As scholars, teachers, clinicians, performers, we have the talent to move the world. This Campaign will help provide the resources to reach our potential. **R**