

DEAN'S MESSAGE



Dear Alumni and Friends:

May 23, 2002 was a very important and immensely exciting day in the history of our School. It dawned clear and crisp, and nature continued to provide one of those exhilarating, sparkling days of spring with which we are occasionally graced in the Mid-Atlantic region. The buzz of animated conversation was palpable as I left the front door of Hayden-Harris Hall and turned left toward the site for our new building. It was still more than a half-hour until the announced time of the groundbreaking ceremony, but it was clear that the crowd would be in the hundreds and not be contained in the spacious tent erected the previous day.

I quickly encountered UMB President David J. Ramsay and other University officials already there, as well as Drs. James Bramson, executive director of the American Dental Association; David Johnsen, president of the American Dental Education Association; Richard Valachovic, ADEA's executive director; Eli Schwarz, executive director of the International and American Associations for Dental Research; Ron Carter, president of the Maryland State Dental Association; and MSDA's executive director, Ms. Elza Harrison-Dunning, along with many faculty, students and alumni. The event obviously had meaning well beyond our School, into the campus, state and the nation.

The good spirits seemingly continued to elevate as prominent Baltimore business figures, like Mr. Peter Angelos and Baltimore's mayor Martin O'Malley joined the milling crowd. Soon Delegate Howard "Pete" Rawlings, chair of the Maryland House Appropriations Committee, and Governor Parris N. Glendening also arrived and the ceremony convened. President Ramsay spoke of how integral the Dental School is to the mission and efforts of the University of Maryland, Baltimore and what the new building will mean to the campus environment. And the Mayor and the Governor reflected on how much the School means to the city, its surroundings and the State, with leadership activities in oral health care including access to care for the most underserved. Delegate Rawlings reminded everyone that the new dental school building is the most expensive academic capital project the State of Maryland has ever undertaken.

As I walked toward the pit for the "digging" part of the ceremony after the speeches, and hefted a shovel full of dirt along with President Ramsay, the Mayor, the Governor and Delegate Rawlings, I couldn't help but think that if all our alumni and friends had been able to be here, had seen, heard and felt the pride in our School and the expressed appreciation of its value to the University, the city, and the state, as well as the national implications for dentistry that are inherent to this significant project, raising the remaining necessary funding would be a snap. So pretend that you were — visit our website to watch the construction proceed, view photos of groundbreaking, and help make the world's first dental college the newest. Go online to www.dental.umaryland.edu.

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