In this season of thanksgiving, we are counting our blessings here at the University of Pikeville. What a year this has been! University status, a record enrollment and national recognition on both the academic and athletic fronts have put us on the trajectory to becoming one of the premier institutions of higher learning in Appalachia.

Dear Alumni & Friends:

In October, Judi and I attended the Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars’ Annual Gala in Washington, D.C., with Dr. Nancy Cade, professor of history and political science, Dr. Tom Hess, dean of our undergraduate college, and several UPIKE students and alumni. From internships to attending the Democratic and Republican national conventions, Dr. Cade’s work with The Washington Center provides our students with opportunities to experience the American political process in the heart of the nation’s capital.

Homecoming Week was a great success and enjoyed by students and alumni alike. The celebration featured a spirited pep rally and parade, a fireworks show that lit up the Pikeville skyline, the crowning of the Homecoming king and queen and Bears’ football action. During the Homecoming festivities we also honored the contributions of 15 educators who were inducted into our Distinguished Educators Hall of Fame. Booth Auditorium is now home to a lasting tribute to past and future Distinguished Educators. In other exciting news, Gov. Steve Beshear announced more than $650,000 for the Appalachian Rural Dental Education Partnership, a collaborative effort between the University of Pikeville, the University of Kentucky, Morehead State University and the Appalachian Regional Commission. The goal is to design and implement a program to increase the number of practicing dentists in Appalachia through enhanced training, recruitment and education.

From the window of my office I can watch construction on the Coal Building, the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine’s new home. Each passing day brings us closer to realizing the dream, and the endless possibilities, that this state-of-the-art facility will bring. More importantly, this endeavor will ensure that our commitment to students, and the people of Central Appalachia, continues for many years to come.

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Record Enrollment
The University of Pikeville welcomed 1,841 students this fall, including 308 in the Kentucky College of Osteopathic Medicine (KYCOM). With consecutive record enrollments, UPIKE is becoming the “University of Choice” for students in Central Appalachia.

KYCOM ranks among top 10 least expensive private schools
U.S. News & World Report ranked KYCOM fourth in affordability among the 10 least expensive private medical schools in the nation, following Baylor College of Medicine, Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine and Mayo Medical School. (Source: U.S. News & World Report “Short List”)

Medicine in the Mountains
Since 1997, nearly 700 physicians have graduated from KYCOM. Sixty percent are serving primarily in rural healthcare facilities in Eastern Kentucky and other regions of Appalachia. U.S. News ranked KYCOM fifth among medical schools producing the most primary care residents, the second straight year the medical school has earned the distinction.

At the University of Pikeville, student success is at the heart of everything we do. The liberal arts tradition is both a field of study and a set of values that make this institution a special place. Quality educational programs at the undergraduate, graduate and professional degree levels are helping transform UPIKE, making it a “first choice” among students in Eastern Kentucky and Central Appalachia.