

Residential Commons Steering Committee Update

November 2004

M. Lee Pelton, President

I am writing to provide you with an update on the work of the Residential Commons Steering Committee. As you may recall, the charge of the Steering Committee is three fold:

- To develop specific plans for the addition of new housing for upper-class students at the planned Kaneko Commons, the first of five residential commons
- To develop planning for locations, student composition and funding sources for future residential commons facilities
- To develop aspects of the residential commons program at existing residential facilities

The first charge was to be completed no later than the end of the fall term, while the second and third is to be completed no later than the end of the spring term. I am pleased to report that the Steering Committee is slightly ahead of schedule and has completed the first of its three planning obligations. It has developed and approved a design program for the Kaneko Commons.

The design program includes the construction of apartments and suites (apartments have kitchens; suites do not) to accommodate approximately 175 upper-class students. It also includes housing for the faculty mentor and multi-purpose meeting spaces. I encourage you to read the complete design program statement which may be found at:

http://www.willamette.edu/dept/campuslife/res_commons/kaneko.pdf

The design program will be used to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP's) to solicit an architect through a competitive process determined by the Board of Trustees. It is my expectation that an architecture firm will be selected no later than the end of February 2005. After an architecture firm has been selected by the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Steering Committee and the Campus Facilities Committee, the architect(s) will actively engage faculty and students in the final design process through campus visits and forums.

I have asked the Dean's Office to include me and faculty members of the Steering Committee on the agenda of the December faculty meeting (Dec. 7) to provide further detail about the work of the committee to date and answer any questions about the program design.

It is important to point out that the design program is not intended to address the issues and concerns of faculty with respect to faculty roles and faculty involvement in the

Commons program. I plan to schedule a separate opportunity to discuss these and any other concerns that the CLA faculty might have.

A student event will be scheduled for late January as well, and I hope to provide an update for administrative and classified staff in the near future. Thank you.