



Editorial

Wilmer Heceta, M.D., an alumnus for all seasons

In this season of many challenges, doubt and uncertainty, we embark on the search for balance, stability, direction, hope and inspiration. Our introspection begins with a look at the past, where have we been, with whom have we traveled, what have we accomplished. Almost always such a journey brings us a figure that embodies the best of what we aspire to. A hero maybe but more of a spiritual guide.

In this time of gathering, we have an opportunity to renew and recommit to the values that invite the better angels within us so we can do what is good for our fellowmen. How true and proper then that we look up to someone among us to emulate so we can do the task before us with strengthened conviction and enlightened perseverance.

We are fortunate to have in our midst such a mentor who calms our hearts, encourages even our modest efforts, and makes us feel we belong and never stops showing us the way.

Dr. Wilmer Heceta, '61, indeed has been a pioneer. Twenty-nine years ago, led by a deep sense of gratitude and inspired by the vision of a great

medical institution, he worked with others to start the alumni foundation. After planting the seed of this entity, he nurtured its growth and has seen to its vitality. He has always been around at annual meetings and



conventions to lend his wise counsel and cheerful support. He genuinely gets to know you, more so if you are a younger graduate.

When he struggles to use the computer and the internet, he is humble to admit his limitations. Yet his messages reflect the values of a compassionate human being. His compliments and admonitions are gifts to be treasured (To one he says, "you

are still a brilliant kid!" To me, he urges "help the alumni by your pen . . . Write anything close to your heart and it will bear fruits.")

When he established the 333 Fund which we now call the Wilmer Heceta Endowment Fund, he envisioned a perpetual source of funds for worthy projects at UERM. His formula: 300 alumni(3) each giving \$300 a year(3) for 3 years aims to raise at least \$270,000. We may be halfway toward that goal but the participation of more could even surpass it. Modest yet achievable.

He models selflessness and sacrificial giving when he donated his SSS check last September to the Disaster Relief Fund following Typhoon Ondoy. He faithfully pays the life insurance he has taken out for the benefit of the alumni foundation.

His words to Ned are his words to each of us - "You are doing a wonderful difficult job. God promised us all safety in things we do but it is not to be calm and easy all the time. The harder the conflict the more glorious the triumph. You will pull through."

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