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From the Publisher

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Purpose Statement

| This publication is by and largely for the academic communities of the twenty-eight colleges and universities of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is published by the Vocation and Education unit of the ELCA. The publication has its home at Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, which has generously offered leadership and physical and financial support as an institutional sponsor for the publication.

The ELCA has frequently sponsored conferences for faculty and administrators that have addressed the church-college/university partnership. The ELCA has sponsored an annual Vocation of the Lutheran College Conference. The primary purpose of *Intersections* is to enhance and continue such dialogue. It will do so by:

- Lifting up the vocation of Lutheran colleges and universities
- Encouraging thoughtful dialogue about the partnership of colleges and universities with the church
- Offering a forum for concerns and interests of faculty at the intersection of faith, learning, and teaching
- Raising for debate issues about institutional missions, goals, objectives, and learning priorities
- Encouraging critical and productive discussion on our campuses of issues focal to the life of the church
- Serving as a bulletin board for communications among institutions and faculties
- Publishing papers presented at conferences sponsored by the ELCA and its institutions
- Raising the level of awareness among faculty about the Lutheran heritage and connectedness of their institutions, realizing a sense of being part of a larger family with common interests and concerns.

From the Publisher

| After attending the first evening of the 2009 Vocation of a Lutheran College Conference, I rushed from the event to travel that same evening to Ohio for my goddaughter's wedding. I had a great time that weekend, and the participants at last year's conference did, too, given the articles in this issue of *Intersections*. If you attended the 2009 consultation, enjoy re-visiting the major presentations. If you missed most of the conference like me or could not attend, enjoy discovering the excellent presentations from last year.

As I write these words, the Board of Regents of Dana College (Blair, Nebraska) has received the difficult news that the Higher Learning Commission denied Dana's request to transfer accreditation to the for-profit entity purchasing the college. The denial effectively terminated the purchase agreement (the HLC would object to my description of the closing of the college as an outcome of the denial, although the linkage is accurate), and the Regents have initiated a plan to dissolve the college. Our network of ELCA colleges and universities has responded splendidly to welcome Dana students and to offer employment opportunities, when possible, for Dana's faculty and staff.

The HLC's denial of Dana's request has sparked the latest iteration in the wars attendant to the expansion of for-profit higher education in the USA. No longer is the for-profit community restricted to beautician, secretarial and other technical schools. Even though Dana's plan to yoke with the for-profit world was thwarted, for better or worse, the for-profit educational community has (I suspect) irreversibly entered the world of liberal arts education. This challenges all of us who care deeply about sustaining excellence in higher education for the liberal arts and professional training. If the Lutheran community has a vocation in higher education, surely it will include helping higher education in the United States learn to do residential, liberal arts education well using a for-profit model, even though most education will continue will continue under non-profit structures...at least until that very 20th century distinction legally and practically disappears.

What more reason do we need to continue the conversation about the Vocation of a Lutheran college?

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