

The Anatomy of a Capital Campaign: *Growing a Future Rooted In Hope*

by Darla Anglen-Whitley

I have worked in the Development Office at St. Gertrude's for six years. In that time I've witnessed the community become a group of women with vision and vitality, eager to create their own future instead of waiting for a future to engulf them.

A significant new aspect of the monastic community's future is Spirit Center, a 21,800 square foot retreat and conference facility. Building Spirit Center is an outward expression of the community's mission of providing a place of healing hospitality, grateful simplicity and creative peacemaking in an increasingly crazy and hostile world.



Groundbreaking: June 13, 2004. L-R: Srs. Corinne Forsmann, Teresa Jackson, Wilma Schlangen and Lillian Englert.

There are many ways for an organization to acquire the funds to construct or renovate buildings. The monastery has decided to conduct a capital campaign to secure funding for their project.

A capital campaign is a particular method of fundraising. It "enables an organization to raise a significant amount of money in a limited time for a special project designed to improve the organization's service to its community."¹

The monastery's capital campaign – *Growing a Future Rooted In Hope* – will raise \$5 million over three years to: 1) build Spirit Center; 2) make major renovations in the monastery; and, 3) create endowments for the museum and spirituality ministry.



Sr. Meg Sass (L) and Prioress Jean Lalande place Holy Medals into the foundation of Spirit Center as Dave English, Project Manager, looks on.



Construction workers pour the cement floor in the residential wing on cold and rain-threatened day.

The *Growing a Future Rooted In Hope* campaign is symbolized by a tree, deeply rooted, growing and spreading upward and outward, providing shade, sanctuary and comfort to everyone who falls within its circle.

The structure of the capital campaign is like a tree, too. The first two phases provide the roots and stability of the entire endeavor. Phase three is the trunk, the bulk of the tree, providing height and vision. Phase four is like the branches, expansive and reaching out to everyone.

Because of the amount of money raised and the length of time needed, capital campaigns are typically conducted in four phases.

Phase One - Pre-campaign Preparation. This stage has been going on for several years. The sisters strengthened their Development Office, increased visibility, and expanded vocations to the monastery. They engaged in several years of strategic planning, conducted a professional building assessment on the monastery, and hired an architectural firm to put their vision onto paper.

Phase Two - Campaign Planning. This phase began in August, 2003. During this phase the sisters hired a professional fundraising consultant experienced with capital campaigns. The consultant conducted a Readiness Assessment to determine the feasibility of the project and of raising \$5 million. The sisters prepared a Case for Support, developed a steering committee, established campaign policies, determined a dollar goal and developed a table of gifts outlining the size and number of donations needed to meet the goal.

Phase Three - The Quiet Phase. The *Growing a Future Rooted In Hope* campaign is at this stage, which began on January 1, 2004. The emphasis of this phase is for the sisters to invite the participation of individual donors and foundations with the potential to make the largest campaign gifts. This phase will last until 75% of the goal is reached, which means \$3.5 - \$4 million is pledged or donated. The campaign has raised \$1.5 million since January in gifts, pledges and verbal pledges.

Phase Four - The Public Phase. Once the initial donations are in hand the campaign will enter the public phase. This is the point at which the monastery announces the campaign through press announcements, general solicitations, events and other public fundraising activities.



Walls are going up on the residential wing. The conference wing is in the foreground.

Stay tuned as the sisters *Grow a Future Rooted In Hope*. You will continue to hear from them about this major project. If you want to know more about Spirit Center, please contact the Development Office via email at develop@connectwireless.us, or (208) 962-5061.

¹ *Capital Campaigns: Strategies That Work*. Kihlstedt, Andrea and Catherine P. Schwartz, Aspen Publishers, Inc., Gaithersburg, MD, 1997, page 1.