Dear Friends of Notre Dame,

On October 29, 2014, a community of Hounds representing eight decades, and friends of the College, joined together for a day-long Summit. The Summit came as Athol Murray College of Notre Dame prepares for its second century of existence and was to be an opportunity for stakeholders of the College to provide feedback on the current direction of the College and discuss how it can ensure students continue to receive an extraordinary Notre Dame experience.

What happened on this fall day in Kenney Hall was much more than expected. We cannot tell you how proud we were to be in that gymnasium as participants engaged in respectful conversations which stayed true to the Notre Dame values of a balanced education that engages the mind, body and spirit, principles that the Sisters of Charity of St. Louis and Father Athol Murray founded the College upon.

Throughout this “Red Letter Day”, students and members of the Senior Leadership team hosted a strong core of supporters, some of whom had not been back to the College for years. There was a powerful energy throughout, and no question that all those in attendance care deeply about the future of Notre Dame!

During the Summit we heard from participants a belief that Notre Dame continues to be an excellent school as we progress on the three primary organizational strategies from Emerge & Excel, our 5-year Strategic Plan.

We heard clearly from our participants that they want Notre Dame to succeed and that they want to be involved in the success of Notre Dame. The great takeaway from the Summit is that the participants, represented by eight decades of alumni, staff, students, Board members, parents and friends of Notre Dame, want the school to move forward and take the next step. There was an honest and positive attitude of “how can we help?”

Accompanying this report is a video summary of the day of interaction on campus. Here is the link: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsHeJhXyWCg

But clearly, it is not enough just to document the outcomes. Please be assured that our dedicated Board of Regents has already begun to outline key actions to move from the “talk” phase. We are excited to have our Strategic Plan’s focused direction reaffirmed and reenergized.

We take this opportunity to extend our sincerest gratitude in the role that participants played in making this Summit a day we will never forget, a day that will be looked back upon in which a bigger conversation was started involving the powerful Notre Dame community. If you desire any additional information, please call 306-732-1277, or send an email to summit@notredame.ca and we will be glad to follow up with you.

Sincerely,

Rob Palmarin
President

Mo Bundon
Chairman

November 2014 | Athol Murray College of Notre Dame | The Notre Dame Summit Report
OVERVIEW - REPORT FROM OUR “RED LETTER DAY”

The Notre Dame Summit was truly a “Red Letter Day” as Hounds, parents, friends, staff, Board members and students, both long-time and new, came to Wilcox to learn about Notre Dame today and take the opportunity to discuss how the Notre Dame community can help in its success. Offering the day and their personal investment to travel to Notre Dame, attendees came prepared to tackle how Notre Dame will enter its second century as a leading boarding school in Canada.

Participants represented a wide range of stakeholders in the College. Together, they provided a passionate, and diverse perspective on the future of Notre Dame. Collectively, the energy, commitment and desire will ensure that for the next 100 years, Notre Dame will maintain its important position in the Canadian educational landscape.

Not all conversations started at the Summit were completed and for this reason, the Summit must be defined as the beginning of a process of continued education, engagement and dialogue about the important issues facing Notre Dame and what is necessary to ensure its continued success.

Participants were presented with the current state of Notre Dame as well as a bold Campus Master Plan which addresses the long-term capital goals of the College. For most, this series of presentations, tours and discussions provided new insight into the direction Notre Dame is moving, and the challenges facing the College as it moves forward.

Key to the current state of Notre Dame is Emerge & Excel, the 5-year Strategic Plan and the current framework for ongoing efforts to enhance the Notre Dame experience. As presented to participants, Emerge & Excel, focuses on three key areas of opportunity and need for the College.

EMERGE & EXCEL THREE KEY STRATEGIES ARE:

1 Programs

**ENRICH** key programs (Academics and Hockey)

2 Community

**ENHANCE** Campus life (Virtues-leadership, Primacy of the Spiritual and our Co-Curricular program)

3 Resilience

**ESTABLISH** long-term organizational resilience (Retention and Recruitment, Communications and Marketing, Financial Viability, Governance, Fund Development, Human Resources and Facilities).
The Summit was the beginning of a process that with the support and continued engagement of the Notre Dame community, will lead to a successful next 100 years for the College.

The work has already begun to continue this conversation, to continue the education of stakeholders of Notre Dame, and to continue to engage those who are concerned with the future of Notre Dame.

NOTRE DAME SUMMIT 2014 - EMERGE & EXCEL

President’s Report

Athol Murray College of Notre Dame President and Director of Education, Rob Palmarin, began the day with an overview of the school’s progress toward implementing Emerge & Excel, the College’s 5-year Strategic Plan. Emerge & Excel, created in 2011, was the result of the input of over 1,000 stakeholders. This group included 95 per cent of staff as well as 983 students, alumni, parents and friends of Notre Dame. Based on the input, feedback and recommendations received from stakeholders, three overarching organizational strategies were identified to advance the College’s vision and mission and build organizational sustainability.

The three key strategies are:

- **Enrich key program offerings** (Academics and Hockey)
- **Enhance Campus life** and our community specifically in the areas of a Virtues-leadership program for students, continuing to infuse the Primacy of the Spiritual and Christian Humanism into all aspects of Campus life and ensure that the co-curricular program of high school sports and clubs will be a mainstay of Notre Dame’s balanced student experience.
- **Establish long term organizational resilience** in the areas of:
  - Retention and Recruitment of students
  - Communications and Marketing
  - Financial Viability
  - Governance
  - Fund Development
  - Human Resources
  - Facilities

The President began the strategic report emphasizing the College’s vision and its commitment to developing young men and women to become purposeful leaders with virtuous character and a global mind-set.

Participants of the Summit were provided an overview of how the College is focused on providing a 21st Century learning environment for students. In 2012, as a major step in this process, Notre Dame implemented the PC Tablet program. Under this program, each student is provided a tablet for use in all academic, spiritual and athletic areas of study. Students
and teachers are now capable of accessing course notes, marks and assignments as required both on and off campus. Following the first year of the program, a survey of students and teachers demonstrated that the majority believed strongly in this program and that it was improving academic programming.

Committed to providing an education that best enables students to be prepared to lead in the 21st century, the College is building upon the typical high school education and teaches critical thinking skills. The faculty is currently participating in professional development called “the critical thinking consortium” to enhance their skills.

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Dedicated to being recognized as the leading hockey development program in Canada, Notre Dame continues to implement enhancements that integrate high performance training, ample practice, specialized instruction, fitness, mental preparedness, virtue-based character formation and academic accountability. The College is especially proud of its Hockey Phys-ed classes which previously were only available to student-athletes playing at the AAA level but are now available to all hockey players.

As a leading boarding school in Canada, the Notre Dame experience prepares students to be purposeful leaders with virtuous character. The College currently uses the SportsLeader program as a template to deliver the virtues modules. The long range plan is for Notre Dame to have its own unique leadership program that is the bedrock for the various student leadership opportunities that are available throughout the campus.

Another key strategy of the College is to infuse the Primacy of the Spiritual and Christian Humanism into all aspects of campus life. The students are exposed to a balanced experience of spiritual opportunities which includes time for private prayer, student led reflections, community worship, and outreach to others through the Works of Mercy and Hounds for Humanity programs. Staff have been participating in “Notre Dame tours” where Notre Dame veteran Gerry Scheibel has led them on a discovery and deeper understanding of Notre Dame’s historical, physical, philosophical and spiritual roots. The College continues to be open to students of all faiths and backgrounds and in the same breath continues to root itself in the Catholic tradition. As a go-forward plan, the College is committing itself to taking a careful look at the articulation of our spiritual identity with the purpose of “getting it right.”

The College is committed to strengthening its co-curricular programs (high school sports, fine arts, multimedia, choir, drama, music and SRC). The goal is to attract more students who participate in activities other than hockey. Hockey has reached its capacity with approximately 245 student-athletes participating on 12 teams. Through new recruitment efforts of international students and the encouragement of participation in multiple sports, Notre Dame offers opportunities for students to continue athletic endeavours year round and to try new sports and other activities they may have never tried before.

Finally, participants learned of the measures that are being taken to establish long-term organizational resilience for Notre Dame. This resilience is focused on achieving maximum enrollment, creating a structure for financial viability, enhancing fund development and increasing professionalism of its communication, stakeholder engagement and human resource activities. Notre Dame is continually striving to bring a greater level of clarity, sustainability and efficiency to the operations of the school.

While the activities of the Strategic Plan continue to be implemented with success, President Palmarin laid out the challenges the College must tackle going forward. These challenges include:

- Continuing the implementation and next phase of the PC Tablet program
- Continuing our membership in CAIS (Canadian Accredited Independent Schools) and meeting all 12 of the standards of excellence
- Continuing to respond to student learning needs
- Meeting the challenges of changing mental health needs of students
- Articulating the College’s spiritual identity – getting it right
- Attracting and retaining a full student body
- Engaging alumni in assisting the College to “find and fund Hounds”
- Broadening our donor base
- Ensuring a business model that meets the College’s needs including the implementation of professional, financial and human resource processes
- Renewing and replacing College facilities
- Ensuring renewal of the Board of Regents through a recruitment and succession plan
Campus Master Plan

Over the past number of years, the Board of Regent has led the development of a Campus Master Plan. This plan addresses the many facility and infrastructure issues facing Notre Dame. Board of Regent and Chair of the Facilities Committee, Bob Ellard, along with representatives from Stantec, Stephen Phillips and Bron Nurkowski, provided an overview of the Campus Master Plan for Summit participants. Stantec had been selected and hired through a competitive bid process for this project.

The Campus Master Plan, which takes into account an evaluation of the state of current facilities as well as the future facility needs of the College, lays out the steps necessary to renew as well as replace campus facilities that no longer meet the needs of College programming.

The Campus Master Plan, if fully implemented, would help prepare the College for its next 100 years by addressing academic, athletic, co-curricular, campus maintenance, staff housing and sustainability of campus facility needs. Participants were provided an in-depth overview of the Campus Master Plan as well as the development of the proposed Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

Boarding School Trends

Director of Admissions, Britt Leeking, and Director of Development, Marc Butikofer, provided participants an overview of the boarding school trends in Canada. This presentation provided an analysis of how Notre Dame compares to other boarding schools in important areas such as recruitment and retention, financial aid and operations.

Notre Dame is one of approximately 50 boarding schools in Canada and one of 26 members of the Canadian Accredited Independent Schools (CAIS). It is one of many CAIS schools that offers a competitive hockey program. Within this market there are also a number of hockey specific courses offered through the public schools academic system.
According to the CAIS Collaborative Boarding Project Report, CAIS boarding school enrollment dropped by 9% in Western Canada between 2007 and 2011. In comparison, enrollment at Notre Dame has remained fairly steady with only a slight (less than 1%) decrease. Notre Dame is a leader in recruiting Canadian boarders with students at Notre Dame in 2014-15 representing every province and territory in Canada, except Quebec. Compared to the average Canadian boarding school, Notre Dame has 40% more Canadian boarding students. Conversely, Notre Dame has yet to tap the international boarding market to the same extent other CAIS schools have with 40% less international students.

Relatively, Notre Dame remains an affordable option for families wishing to have their child attend a boarding school. On average, tuition to attend Notre Dame is more than $16,000 less expensive than our CAIS competitors. Additionally, the per student financial assistance disbursement is 82% higher than the average Western Canadian boarding school.

Operationally, Notre Dame relies more heavily on donations and donation generated revenue (endowments) to meet its annual needs. Tuition covers 12% less of operations compared to other boarding schools according to the 2013 National Business Officer Survey. As a result, Notre Dame meets 15% more of its operations through donations and donation generated revenue according to the same survey.

Engagement

The afternoon of the Summit was dedicated to providing participants an opportunity to respond to the information they had received throughout the day. This discussion, led by a facilitator, focused on three questions. These questions were designed to allow participants to discuss in groups the issues that were most important to the College going forward. A summary of those discussion notes is captured here.

What we heard

GENERAL
- Need to educate stakeholders on benefits of Notre Dame
- What does the Notre Dame brand stand for?
- Notre Dame experience is more than hockey
- Need clarity on Notre Dame brand and how it resonates with potential students (i.e. international students)

ADMISSIONS
- Alumni need to understand how Notre Dame could benefit a prospective student
- Promote the success and achievement of alumni
- What are the Notre Dame advantages versus the public school system?
- Sell the outcomes; not the features

ENGAGEMENT
- Need to leverage abilities of alumni to help reach out
- Alumni engagements need to reach out beyond social media
- Alumni engagements need to be properly resourced
- Celebrate history and tradition
- Reach out more personally
- Utilize the class reps
- Have more regular Summit-like events (i.e. mini Summits or bi-annual summits)
- Arm stakeholders with a consistent message on the school (goals, needs, future)
- Celebrate with the Notre Dame community
- Work more closely with the Village of Wilcox

PROGRAMS
- Ensure teachers are involved in innovative processes for programming
- Multi-sport athleticism needs to remain a key priority
- Strong focus on education and building an environment that encourages students to push themselves
- Offer first year university courses

DEVELOPMENT
- Provide information on how funds are being used
- Continue growth of endowments
- Keep an active wishlist for donors to access
- Fundraising – don’t be afraid to ask too many times
- Ensure stakeholders are aware of charitable status
- Shift stakeholder thinking about donations so that everyone knows that every donation, no matter how small, matters
- Target key groups for support (alumni, families)
- Tell people that ‘the College needs you’

**SPIRITUALITY**
- Is Notre Dame a non-denominational school?
- Ensure language on spirituality is welcoming and not overly theological
- Understand Notre Dame’s strengths and build on them (Catholic roots and Christian foundation)
- Ensure spirituality encouragement – not religious enforcement
- Maintain a balanced emphasis for students (prayer, community worship, study and service)

**CAPITAL/OPERATIONS**
- New facility would make a huge statement on investing in the future
- Facility needs must be prioritized
- Facility needs should reflect value of living arts (drama, arts)
- Review overhead of College
- Incremental tuition increases should be introduced
- Ensure deep infrastructure (i.e. water) needs are addressed
- Continue to build professionalism to run Notre Dame like a professional organization (i.e. Green Bay Packers)

**NEXT STEPS**

**Participants**

The energy at the Summit was obvious. The desire to be involved and see the success of Notre Dame going forward was invigorating and participants could not help but see a role for themselves in moving forward the conversations being held throughout the day. Many of the ways in which participants could get involved came out in the notes and feedback provided about the event. It was clear that the participants at the Summit didn’t want the momentum being built on that beautiful fall day to be lost, and wanted to help make the Summit the start of something great.

**COMMENTS AND ACTION FROM PARTICIPANTS**
- Go home and tell the Notre Dame story to fellow Hounds, family members, donors, vendors
- Success starts and ends with the alumni
- Everyone at the Summit leaves with a commitment to reach 5 other people with message. Light the fire!
- Lead by example

**NOTRE DAME**

The Board of Regents is committed to maintaining the momentum but knows that it cannot do it alone. The priorities identified by participants and by the College are many and from the Summit, the most pressing issues heard from participants spanned the entire operation of Notre Dame.

**What is Notre Dame committed to doing?**

- Continue to implement *Emerge & Excel* – our Strategic Plan
- Facility renewal is a priority - Notre Dame will move forward with starting a process to see a renewal of its current facilities.
  - **The Campus Master Plan** - Notre Dame will continue with preparation plans for investment in areas such as the Centre of Excellence for Teaching and Learning, President’s house, off-ice skills facility, athletic fields, staff housing, the demolition of the AMC, and an action plan to address the water management issues.
  - **Capital Campaign** - in 2015, the College will set a process in place to see the dreams of the Campus Master Plan become a reality.
  - **Clarity on the Catholic and ecumenical practice of Notre Dame.** Notre Dame will clarify its statement on spiritual identity.
  - **Engagement** - Notre Dame will review its practices of engaging with stakeholders and how it informs, works with and empowers stakeholders (alumni, parents and friends) in the future of Notre Dame.
  - **Strategic Management** - the College staff will ensure alumni-oriented and development resources are available to help build the capital campaign and enable the business direction of the College.
  - **Professional Development** - commitment to continued professional development for faculty and all staff.
  - **Programming** - commitment to programming that stays true to our Strategic Plan.
“Great engagement from all levels of the school’s support groups. There was a lot of open dialogue speaking about community and individual perspectives.”

– Brennan Turner ’05

Founder and President, FarmLead

“The Notre Dame Summit was an important process. The story of the process must be shared with others. Today’s tours, the mixed groupings and the Notre Dame overview is what I valued most throughout the day.”

– Dr. Shauneen Pete ’83, Associate Professor (Aboriginal Education)
  Executive Lead: Indigenization, University of Regina

“The Notre Dame Summit was a very worthwhile investment of my time. As a new friend of the College, it allowed me the opportunity to listen, think, consider and talk.”

– Dr. Harold Riemer, Dean of Kinesiology and Health Studies
  University of Regina

“The Notre Dame Summit was very informative and well organized. I was very impressed with the vision and leadership of the College. This event allowed everyone an excellent opportunity to provide input on the future plan. The Notre Dame Summit allowed me to have the opportunity to learn more about the strategic plan and to interact with the passionate leaders of Notre Dame.”

– Ron Robison

Western Hockey League Commissioner

WE ONCE AGAIN THANK OUR PARTICIPANTS FOR COMMITTING TO THE DAY AND COMMITTING TO NOTRE DAME. Your presence, insight and contributions to the Summit were welcomed and appreciated. The next chapter in the great Notre Dame story requires all of us to be informed and engaged. It is our hope and dream that all Alumni and friends of Notre Dame strengthen our energy and enthusiasm by joining in the commitment to build today’s Notre Dame for tomorrow’s Hounds. Thank you!

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