

# President's Message

It's hard not to feel energized in spring. The hours of daylight increase; the temperature creeps steadily above zero; and fresh air and sunshine work their way back into our daily routine.

On the campuses of the University of Manitoba, much like other universities and colleges, the springtime also represents a near seismic shift as thousands of students receive their parchment and begin the next chapter of their continued or post-university lives. Certainly for many of these students, spring and convocation afford them opportunity to take stock, to look back on where they've been as they fix their glances on what is to come. As president of the institution tasked with preparing these young men and women for the future, I too find myself in a reflective-yet-forward-looking frame of mind.

Part of this certainly owes to the fact that I am still in my first year at the U of M and have yet to experience a calendar year's worth of events. And part of it has simply to do with the fact that, in glancing back on the past few months, we've accomplished a great deal and there is much to feel proud about.

With the news of the world presenting itself in varying shades of doom or gloom, I hope stories about the many positive steps our institution, faculty, staff, students and alumni, are taking into 2009 play like music to our graduates' ears.

I also hope they *raze* the spectre of doubt regarding the U of M's place among its peer institutions, for this is a centre for post-secondary educational excellence. I echo the sentiments of graduate Leo Pettipas, whose letter to the editor (opposite page) correctly suggests one good measure of the value of



David Barnard and UMSU president-elect for 2009-10 Sid Rashid were part of a crew of volunteers who prepared peanut butter and jam sandwiches for soup kitchens and Boys and Girls Clubs throughout the city.

a University of Manitoba education necessarily rests in the contributions of our graduates to the betterment of our world. In this issue of *On Manitoba*, we profile two such individuals: Peter Herrndorf and Raed Joundi.

Herrndorf, in his current post as president and CEO of the National Arts Centre (NAC) in Ottawa, has led the effort to re-establish the NAC's position as Canada's finest showcase for performing arts. He has also revived the NAC's role as a bandwagon that travels across the country to illustrate – through performance and education – how the arts help us celebrate and better understand our shared, diverse culture. His career accomplishments as a journalist, TV producer, magazine publisher and business leader are manifold, and his accolades – Officer of the Order of Canada, his four honorary doctorates (including one from the U of M) to name but a few – staggering. Several decades his junior, Joundi too has already amassed an impressive list of accomplishments, most recently as the U of M's latest Rhodes Scholar. We now have the most of

any western Canadian university with 88, a tally that puts us in the top three across the nation.

Within the walls of our campuses, our researchers continue to receive awards for their work while their investigations garner significant financial support from provincial and federal bodies.

As well, our ongoing efforts to redevelop and upgrade our campuses to create a leading-edge learning and living environment for students received a significant boost. The Province of Manitoba announced \$26 million would be put towards addressing the many infrastructure issues plaguing our campus.

As spring convocation ushers new U of M graduates into the world, they face the challenge of a global community reeling from investments gone awry. I say to them, and to all our alumni, the U of M remains a safe investment in your future; one that promises significant return.

**David T. Barnard**  
president and vice-chancellor