In ordinary life, we hardly realize that we receive a great deal more than we give, and that it is only with gratitude that life becomes rich.

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer

One of my happy and constant tasks at Elon (and one on which I am almost never fully caught up) is writing thank-you notes to many individuals who have been generous to Elon with their leadership and financial resources. I write these notes by hand at all hours of the day – on airplanes, at the kitchen table, in my office – and for each one, I try to summon the words to express how much meaning the donor’s gift bestows.

To scholarship donors, my thanks might be centered on the real lives their gifts transform, with unimaginable good consequences for all of our futures. To alumni, I attempt to convey how critical their partnership is to Elon’s success and how they are the bearers of Elon’s values for future generations of students. To parents, I stress how crucial their support is at a time in Elon’s history when nearly 60 percent of our alumni are in their 20s and 30s.

To all, I recognize with humble gratitude that my work as president would be impossible without their caring personal support, selfless generosity and, most important of all, shared belief that we are building a truly distinctive and extraordinarily fine university that produces the leaders, creative thinkers and citizens the world requires.

SURPASSING OUR CAMPAIGN GOAL

As the final hours of 2011 waned, the historic Ever Elon Campaign concluded, totaling more than $107 million in commitments. We publicly launched Ever Elon during the darkest days of the financial crisis in 2008 with hope and conviction that our community could build an even stronger university. Ever Elon was the first campaign in Elon history to emphasize building the endowment, particularly for student scholarships, and we can take pride in this important, successful step toward securing Elon’s future.

We have completed fundraising for four major capital projects: the construction of Lindner Hall, Alumni Field House, the Numen Lumen Pavilion for our multi-faith center and the renovation of Alumni Gymnasium. We have built a significant portfolio of estate and other planned gifts that will bolster the endowment in coming years. Thousands of alumni, parents, friends, students, faculty and staff joined the campaign by making annual gifts, supporting current operations of every imaginable type. It was a joy to join hundreds of you in Rhodes Stadium for a memorable evening at Homecoming when we announced “crossing the goal line” for the campaign.
THE DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

The leadership, vision, generosity and passion of the board of trustees, the campaign leadership committee and especially its chairs – Mark Mahaffey P’97 P’01, Allen Gant and Kerrii Brown Anderson ’79 – never wavered. They understood deeply that Ever Elon was about supporting students and creating the preeminent environment for engaged learning in the nation. I do not have the words to describe how fortunate we are to have such exemplary voluntary leaders at the university.

Finally, to each of you individually, I send my warmest thanks for believing in Elon, for supporting the university constantly and for investing in young minds and hearts. When you look back upon what was most significant about your life, I hope that your commitment to Elon will be high on your list and that you will take personal pride in the role you have played in shaping the university during an important and formative time in its history.

Leo M. Lambert
President

EVER ELON campaign facts

June 1, 2006 – Dec. 31, 2011

Total raised: $107,333,426

Donors: 28,268

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Campaign chairs

{ Mark Mahaffey P’97 P’01, Chair of the board of trustees & CEO of The Mahaffey Company }

{ Allen Gant, Immediate past chair of the board of trustees & CEO of Glen Raven, Inc. }

{ Kerrii Anderson ’79, Trustee & former CEO of Wendy’s International, Inc. }

{ At an Oct. 21 event that marked the passing of Ever Elon’s $100 million goal, President Leo M. Lambert called the campaign’s success “just the beginning of the tremendous impact that philanthropy is making on the people and programs of our university.” }