

FROM THE CHAIR

The Board of Trustees of The University of Findlay found what it was looking for, and more, in selecting DeBow Freed, Ph.D., to lead UF in 2003.

Dr. Freed, then the recently retired president of Ohio Northern University, came highly recommended. His track record, including 20 years of outstanding leadership at Ohio Northern, was second to none. I remember when I first walked into his office at his home in Ada. I thought I was walking into the Oval Office: American flag on the right, University flag on the left, and it was absolutely pristine. And I'll never forget my exit; he walked me all the way to my car, like I was a general, and waited until I drove away.

Dr. Freed's accomplishments are legion. Academically, the bar has been raised; the institution is financially stable; and the attitude of the faculty and the campus, as well as the attitude of the community toward the campus, have improved greatly.

The quality of the students is exceptional, and the quality of our faculty has taken a step forward; we have added the doctor of pharmacy program and elevated physical therapy to the doctoral level. The physical presence of the campus is well-groomed and polished — and that is the way he himself lives. He is admired by everyone for what he is and what he stands for.

Dr. Freed looks after every detail; he is a stickler, demanding and with high expectations. In addition to extensive written board updates, I personally met with him, at his request, every month to be sure we as a board were well-informed. I have never seen a man more well-prepared for any occasion, both the setting and how the event would be conducted.

I spent a week with him in Japan two to three years ago, where he served as commander as part of the occupation forces, fresh out of West Point in 1946. He was honored by three receptions, all first-class, one of which was televised nationally, and at one of which the Japanese people in attendance rose to honor him with applause.

And all these years later, at Findlay, he has extended the same graciousness. He never misses a departure or a welcome, whether it be athletics, the Mazza or a student event, he is there, and his thoughtfulness includes gifts of local apples for faculty and staff, exam treats for students and much more.

We are extremely fortunate to have had the benefit of his leadership and counsel. Dr. Freed's presence at The University of Findlay may have been his finest hours, for what he has accomplished for the institution and the community. It's been an honor to have had the opportunity to work with him, and we wish him the best in the new challenges he accepts in the future.



C. Richard Beckett