



## A Glance Back, A Look Forward

— by Harvey B. Sperling

**As I conclude my career as an educator and headmaster, I find myself looking back in wonder and gratitude, and looking forward with anticipation and hope. Herein are a few of my parting reflections.**

# TRENDS IN Education

I am enormously grateful to my parents and our great nation for providing me, a first generation American, with the opportunity and privilege of being an educator and a headmaster of a great institution of learning. My parents arrived at Ellis Island as penniless immigrants from Eastern Europe. They valued and supported my love of learning and my desire to share that learning with the younger generations. I also take great pride in being an American citizen, recognizing that had I been born and raised in the lands of my parents, my destiny would have been far different.

I am enormously impressed and humbled by the dedication, vision, knowledge, values, and extension of self demonstrated daily by great teachers. Our society demands and pays handsomely for excellence in sports; it must do so in education. I fear that a great many talented college graduates will not consider careers in education because they will neither be adequately rewarded nor held in high

esteem. At times, I believe that our teachers at USM and others of similar quality at public and private schools are the last of a great breed of professionals who will not be easily replaced in the future. Our most important quest is to ensure that every generation of students at USM (and elsewhere) is taught by inspiring and expert teachers who are honored and rewarded in the most appropriate fashion.

I have gained enormous intrinsic joy from teaching students...all of my students, regardless of ability. There are few things as grand as meeting former students years later and to hear that I was one of their favorite teachers or that I made a difference in their lives. I know that they certainly made a difference in my life.

I believe that a strong liberal arts education is the essential precursor for any advanced studies. It is the best educational preparation for life itself. Our school, and other independent and top public schools, may well be the last liberal arts bastions. Far too often, college is more vocationally or career oriented, and many high schools are at best educational shopping malls for students, offering far too much for the consumer's own good. *(continued on next page)*



*No one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself.*

*Blessed is he who preferreth his brother before himself.*

*What is hateful to you, do not to your fellow man. That is the entire law; all the rest is commentary.*

*Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.*

*Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.*



Harvey and Cathie Sperling  
at Commencement 2000.

I believe that all of our students must have additional pre-college course work and expertise in science, mathematics, and technology. Those areas will dramatically impact their future options.

I hope that we will continue to encourage all students to pursue opportunities and challenges in the arts, athletics, student government, community endeavors, clubs, scouts, and other activities that encourage teamwork, leadership, sportsmanship, humility, diligence, and a sense of giving something of value for the welfare of others.

Finally, I hope that all of us will recognize that we are stewards of a great school, and that it is incumbent upon us to ensure that it will be an ever greater school for each succeeding generation of students. That will only occur if we give our support, our resources, and our blessing to that worthy cause. Great schools are not designed, created, or lasting without an equally great and committed group of educators, parents, and alumni.

All students can achieve excellence in one form or another; our task is to assist them on their way and to help and support them as they strive for worthwhile expression and fulfillment.

Cathie and I bid you a fond farewell. We shall miss the wonderful campus, the great faculty and staff, and, most of all, the children who are the reason why we take such great pride in being called educators. ●

**A Spirit of Caring** To instill and maintain Sperling's spirit of caring, five trees were dedicated in his honor during the "Hats Off!" assembly. Each tree will be marked with a plaque inscribed with one of five different translations of the Golden Rule (above). Adopted by Sperling as his guiding philosophy, these rules were displayed outside his office during his tenure as headmaster.