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Messages & Writings : September 2007

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DR. JOSEPH E. AOUN OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



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To the Northeastern Community:

The vitality of our academic community is measured in large part by the level of talent and the range of experience each and every student brings to our campus. In drafting the new Academic Plan, we set out to build on the increasing competitiveness and diversity of our incoming students. The evidence from this year's entering class shows that we are on the right track.

The reputation of Northeastern as a competitive institution is expanding to the far corners of our nation and the world, and our advancements in enrollment reflect that. For fall 2007, we received more than 30,000 applications, a 12 percent increase over 2006 and 41 percent since 2003. We have also seen the number of applicants outside the Northeast rise dramatically. Nationally, we added 650 new high schools to our applicant pool. Over the past five years, we have seen the number of applications rise by 144 percent on the West Coast, 75 percent in the Southeast, 73 percent in the Southwest, and 62 percent in the Midwest. Internationally, applications have more than doubled since 2003.

The academic profile of our new students is very strong: 75 percent of our entering freshmen earned a high school GPA of 3.5 and above, 43 percent graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school class, and more than 300 qualified to enroll in our Honors Program. The mean SAT score of our enrolled freshmen was 1251, with 25 percent of our new students earning scores of 1330 and above. We also achieved a 90 percent freshman-to-sophomore retention rate.

In addition, this class is the most diverse in the University's history. More than 28 percent are students of color, and we have seen a 70 percent enrollment increase of international students over this time last year. This increasing diversity, combined with the exceptional talent of our student body, is a quality that can be felt in the classroom and beyond.

Many of our students have received high-level recognition for their academic and creative accomplishments since arriving at Northeastern. Under the mentorship of Matthews Distinguished University Professor Phyllis Strauss, two of our students were named Goldwater Scholars. Our students have also earned a Fulbright to study in China, Matthews Undergraduate Awards, Presidential Scholarships, a Steamboat Scholarship, and a Gladys Brooks Honors Award.

Northeastern remains true to its commitment to offer opportunity to all students who demonstrate potential. That is why last year we launched the Torch Scholars Program, welcoming a group of 11 extraordinary young men and women who have overcome exceptional academic and financial odds and who demonstrate the potential to excel in spite of those odds. I am pleased to report that all of our first Torch Scholars did extremely well academically and are back with us for their second year. They are joined by 13 new Torch Scholars this year.

As we move forward with the new academic year, we continue to experience firsthand the depth of excellence and engagement of our students. We seek to add to that depth by finding more innovative ways to achieve that goal. Our success in all of these endeavors is dependent upon the institution's financial health. In my next message, I will discuss the advancements we have made in this vein over the past year.

U.S. Student Fulbright Award, 2006-2007

Jennifer Noveck, '04, College of Arts and Sciences

Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship, 2007

Matthew Bouchard, '08, College of Arts and Sciences

Jeff Patenaude, '08, College of Engineering

Presidential Scholars, 2007

Elizabeth Andrews, Bouvé College of Health Sciences

Lauren Chapman, College of Arts and Sciences
Courtney Dunn, College of Arts and Sciences
Seth Housman, College of Criminal Justice
Stefanie LoSavio, College of Arts and Sciences
Sean Mayo, College of Engineering
Philip Stocker, College of Business Administration
Matilda Urie, College of Engineering

The Matthews Undergraduate Awards, 2007-2008

Sean Fortier, '09, College of Arts and Sciences
Sarah Robey, '08, College of Arts and Sciences

Steamboat Foundation Scholarship

Megan Eaton, '09, Bouvé College of Health Sciences

Gladys Brooks Award

Eunice Lee, '09, College of Arts and Sciences

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