Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni of Our OLLU Community:

Three months ago, we looked up from our usual responsibilities and those added by the aftermath of the fire to realize that the first anniversary of the fire was quickly approaching. You could not have missed this week’s calendar of activities, multi-leveled media of the last few days and all of the details leading to yesterday’s “Building Dreams: Moving from the Fire to the Future” event.

Everything we read, saw and felt was by the dedication that our University community gave, yet again, to create a beautiful remembrance that was prayerful, thankful and joyful. The event was also an important opportunity to reveal OLLU as a very special place worthy of investment by the broader individual, corporate, foundation and governmental sectors whose support is key to our future. We witnessed that last night through the generosity of the underwriters who paid for the event.

All of these events and experiences told one story: OLLU is vital, vibrant and valued. No one builds this story alone. Our students tell it magnificently. Our faculty provides “the material” that makes it possible for our students to tell the story. Our staff is at the core of improvements in enrollment and other supportive and administrative services that we tout as evidence of OLLU’s firm footing. And, our alumni, who celebrated the opening of their Alumni House yesterday, are forging their own OLLU stories in the workplace and in new donor relationships with their alma mater.

The first anniversary of the fire accomplished the two primary goals charged to a University committee planning the week’s events – specifically, that the anniversary mark a significant moment in each of our lives and the University’s history and that it lay claim to the fire an impetus to achieve our Vision Statement. That statement is worth repeating here again:

Inspired by Catholic values and the heritage of the founding Congregation of Divine Providence, Our Lady of the Lake University is a community called to transform individuals as they discover their purpose in life.

We aspire to be nationally recognized for our distinctive programs, our expertise in Mexican American culture, and our diverse graduates who lead and serve with faith and wisdom to improve the world.
Please accept this as my and the Board of Trustees’ thanks to “each and everyone” of you for mobilizing as you did for this week’s observance of the May 6, 2008 fire.

With appreciation,

Tessa Martinez Pollack
Our Lady of the Lake University President