



Chapman University President Jim Doti in front of the Leatherby Libraries.

JOSHUA ŠUDOCK, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

Fruit of their labor



JAMES DOTI
PRESIDENT,
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On a wall beside a Valencia orange tree that forms the backdrop to a statue of Charles C. Chapman on our campus is a quotation

taken from his biography: "I know from experience that there were periods when citrus fruits were entirely absent from the markets in the East. And I be-

The 150th anniversary of Chapman University's founding gives pause to reflect on the entrepreneurial values that made it all possible.

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lieved that if I could get oranges to consumers during these periods, I might develop a really profitable trade. So I took my courage in my hands and delayed any Valencia picking until long after all the other varieties had gone. Then we shipped them in our first ex-

perimental railroad cars. The response was beyond my greatest expectation. The 'trade' eagerly accepted this new variety which was solid, juicy, long-keeping, and delicious."

I love this passage, for it embodies all the essential elements of entrepreneurial

genius: a good idea, passion, courage, profits and the intrinsic joy that comes from serving the "trade." Chapman used those profits to help build a college that ultimately would become Chapman University.

As we celebrate the 150th year of our university's founding, we also pause to reflect on the entrepreneurial values that made it possible for a germ of an idea to become a leading institution of higher education.

From the Disciple Chris-

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DOTI: Chapman alumni carry on legacy of entrepreneurism

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tian servants in 1861 who believed that California needed a college that would strengthen the bonds of faith and reason and be open to men and women of all races and creeds; to Charles C. Chapman [1853-1944 and Fullerton's first mayor], who said, "The most important and far-reaching institution I have had a part in establishing was Chapman College," our university's history is rooted in entrepreneurial spirit.

It was not the norm in 1861, at the advent of our nation's Civil War, for a college to open its doors to both men and women as well as blacks and whites. And then, it took incredible foresight in 1954 to move the Chapman campus from the urban hub of Los Angeles to the rural hinterlands of Orange County in 1954. I note that, at the same time this was happening, another inspired entrepreneur by the name of Walt Disney was making his dream a reality by building Disneyland not far from the new Chapman campus.

Then in the 1960s, it took entrepreneurial guts for Chapman to develop an academic program targeted to meet the needs of military personnel. That program succeeded so well, it is now delivered to civilian as well as the military adult learners through Brandman University, an important part of Chapman's educational outreach.

The highly touted "Semester-at-Sea" academic program, the only such program in the world, was founded by Chapman University as "World Campus Afloat" in the mid-1960s to give American students the opportunity to have an international educational experience - and thereby develop the tools and understanding of global citizens.

In recent years, how many colleges and

universities with little more than dreams are willing to take the risks involved in establishing not only a new law school but a film school as well, now considered among the best in the world?

Although it happened more than 15 years ago, I still vividly recall our Dodge College of Film and Media Arts dean, Bob Bassett, pleading with me not to go forward with the demolition of our old student union building that was scheduled the following day. His passion, coupled with the fire in his eyes, convinced me he had the stuff of entrepreneurial spirit. With the help of other dreamers like Marion Knott, Cecilia Presley and Jack Lindquist, that old student union building was given new life as the first home of our nascent film school.

When I first came to then Chapman College in 1974, I planned to stay one year and then return to my beloved hometown of Chicago. But it wasn't long after being at Chapman that I felt a pervasive entrepreneurial spirit about the place. It was a small, underfunded school that seemed at first glance to pale in comparison to the large research universities that my Ph.D. mentors like Milton Friedman were pushing me toward to ply my trade.

Chapman struck me, though, as a place with breathing room. I was allowed and even encouraged to teach a new course in econometrics even though only a few students would enroll. That, in turn, made it possible for me to partner with one of my graduate assistants, Essie Adibi, to develop along with other students an econometric model that became the foundation for what is now our A. Gary Anderson Center for Economic Research. Instead of the roadblocks of bureaucracy and statism, we were given opportunities at Chapman to take our entrepreneurial ideas and ride them where they would lead us - sometimes failing, sometimes succeeding, but always moving.

This entrepreneurial ethos finds its roots in people like C.C. Chapman but it also finds renewal in people like our alumnus, Ambassador George L. Argyros, who taught us: "We need to be able to inspire people to dare to dream and to be able to

take advantage of the ability to think big and reach high."

It also finds expression in more recent Chapman alumni such as Mike Brown '06, CEO of ModBargains.com, who started and grew his business to more than a million dollars in revenue while still an undergraduate; Rebecca Hall '95, founder, president and CEO of IdeaHall, one of Orange County's top PR firms; Frank Delgadillo '96, who launched Ambiguous Clothing out of his dorm room, grew it into a pioneering niche boardsports brand, and now runs the equally flourishing CO-MUNE brand; Marc Nager '07, CEO of Startup Weekend, a worldwide phenomenon that helps launch startup companies, gathers entrepreneurs and helps them pitch their passions, products and ideas (a focus that recently landed him on the cover of Entrepreneur magazine); and so many others.

How blessed we are as a university to have worked with and learned from Orange County pioneering families, like the Chapmans, Wilkinsons, Schmidts, Knotts, Leatherbys, Creans, Threshies, Pralles, Linebergers, Kennedys, Pankeys, Huttons and Beckmans. And then for their work to be carried on by subsequent generations of community leaders like the Argyroses, Muscos, Henleys, Dodges, Berteas, Rinkers, Sodaros, Brens, Samuelis, Sterns, Lastingers, Attallahs and Zee Allred, as well as many others. We truly do rest on the shoulders of these entrepreneurial giants whose spirit and resolve have nurtured and sustained Chapman University these last 150 years. They have bequeathed to us a remarkable legacy, a legacy that bears fruit in the countless number of Chapman University students and graduates who become global citizens and lifelong searchers for truth.