

Exploring. Coming Home. Making Connections.

I am writing this letter in late December from the Netherlands and the home of our dear Dutch friends, George and Marja. Although I am usually on campus or traveling within the U.S. on behalf of Austin College, I am delighted to spend a few days of my first January Term having the same kind of self-expanding experiences that our students and faculty are exploring this month. Like them, I have come to Sherman, Texas, to see the world!

One of the pleasures of travel is the chance to “re-understand” the meaning of home. I am delighted to find that Austin College has indeed become home to me and my family. We continue to be amazed and nourished by the warm welcome we have been offered on campus and in the Texoma region. These many kindnesses have given me so much energy for the work before us. We are moving forward, full-steam ahead, with a new vision for the long-dreamed-of science building. (You’ll read all about the IDEA Center in upcoming magazine issues.) We are engaged in strategic planning and working to develop the best alumni-student career network of any small college in the country. Also, we are in the middle of a search for a new vice president for Institutional Advancement. And our new Web site will be unveiled early in the spring, and we hope it will enable you to keep in closer touch with the campus.

Being in touch is an important theme for me in 2010, so I hope you will come to visit us in person or write to me with your thoughts and ideas. You can also “Facebook me” if you like to communicate that way. But I hope you also will talk to each other and brag widely to your friends and colleagues about our very special community.



This issue of the magazine is particularly meaningful because it carries our Honor Roll of Donors. There are no words to express fully my gratitude for the support that our alumni and friends offer to Austin College. This financial support is essential if we are to pay our bills and keep our doors open; it also allows us to continue to pursue our most cherished goals: academic excellence and educational access. We know that even as the market has reduced the value of our endowment, we do not want to compromise the quality of the education we offer; excellence must remain our standard. At the same time, we refuse to reduce scholarship opportunities that allow talented students from families with limited means to pursue an Austin College education. Your gifts ensure that we can remain faithful to these core values, and I offer you my deepest thanks.

Speaking of core values, we soon leave Holland to spend a few days in Paris, and then we’ll be back on campus. Back home. With fresh eyes and fresh ideas. And with a deep sense of our blessings as we start this exciting new year.

Best,
Marjorie





NEW HORIZONS

Marjorie Hass was officially installed as president of Austin College on November 5, 2009. A rainbow of color in the academic procession of delegates from colleges and universities around the country set the stage for the installation of Dr. Hass as the College's 15th president. Academic traditions, fall colors, and a swell of optimism and support for the new president blended to form the perfect celebration for faculty, staff, students, alumni, board members, and friends. "If I look happy, it's because I am," a radiant Dr. Hass told those assembled as she began her inaugural address following the installation led by Board of Trustees chair Robert M. Johnson '53 and assisted by Austin College president emeritus Oscar C. Page, the 14th president.

PHOTOS BY JACKI LEE



Speaking on her inauguration theme of “New Horizons,” Dr. Hass said that though individuals learn that there is no literal horizon where earth and sky meet, they never stop seeing the horizon before them. “And more importantly, we never stop looking to the horizon as the place just out of reach but close enough to almost touch,” she said. “The horizon stands for our hopes, for our futures, for our ability to hang on to those precious glimmers even when reason tells us that they are hard to attain.”

Sharing thoughts on plans and hopes on “the horizon” for Austin College, Dr. Hass continued, “A college grows in the healthy soil of good planning and sound strategic investments. But it also needs the rain of simple hope, the oxygen of grace, and the equivalent of lots of spiritual duct tape. For what we do here is a form of practical magic. We find ways to see more. We teach the ways to see the horizon when it’s hidden, and we offer lessons in dream-following and dream-making.

“A college grows in the healthy soil of good planning and sound strategic investments. But it also needs the rain of simple hope, the oxygen of grace, and the equivalent of lots of spiritual duct tape. For what we do here is a form of practical magic.”

“How do we do it? We do it by allowing ourselves to look toward ever-new horizons, to keep our dreams before us, to know that even as we move forward, the vistas before us continue to grow.”

Dr. Hass referred to the writings of psychologist and philosopher William James, who, in *The Principles of Psychology*, offered instruction on viewing the horizon: look carefully at the distance to the horizon and then “with inverted head, look at the same. There will be a sensible revision of the maximum distance.”

Though Dr. Hass joked that she would not continue her address from on her head, her words echoed James’ concept: “Upside down you’ll see farther and wider,” she said. “Somehow the change in perspective erases a limit.”

James, she said, “was telling us a secret of actual perception: as wide, wild, and lovely as we find the world, there is always more, always something else to be found by widening our gaze and changing our perspective. But James also was telling us something about our own metaphorical horizons—turn yourself upside down and you’ll see more of what is before you.”

Dr. Hass explained that some aspects of the view of the horizon remain unchanged regardless of the different perspective. “At Austin

College, over time and tide, we remain true to our commitment to the liberal arts, we keep our covenant with the Presbyterian Church with loyalty and with love, and we continue on the path of pursuing excellence and holding the doors of access wide open.

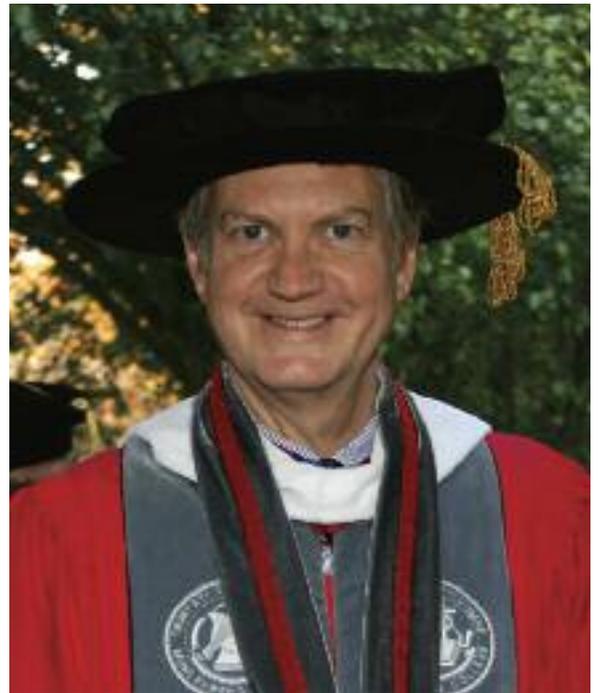
“But on our heads we also see with a wider gaze: our hopes for the future are brighter, our commitment to bringing that future into existence is deeper. And the ordinary moments—the unplanned but life-changing conversation between mentor and student, the hard won ‘A’ from the demanding professor—become extraordinary again.”

“When I stand on James’ hilltop and turn on my head to look at Austin College, I see a wealth of opportunities just ‘over there’ and ready for us to realize. I see a college that builds on its long-standing leadership in global education to create a more worldly community. I see a college that is widely known for ‘changing lives’ with its distinctive, vibrant, hands-on, head-down approach to teaching and learning. And I see a college that builds the bonds between generations to develop the strongest alumni-student career network of any small college in the country. And that’s just in my first glance. Even as we make these visions real and whole, we will keep looking toward the horizon, in order to shape ‘always more’ for this great college.”

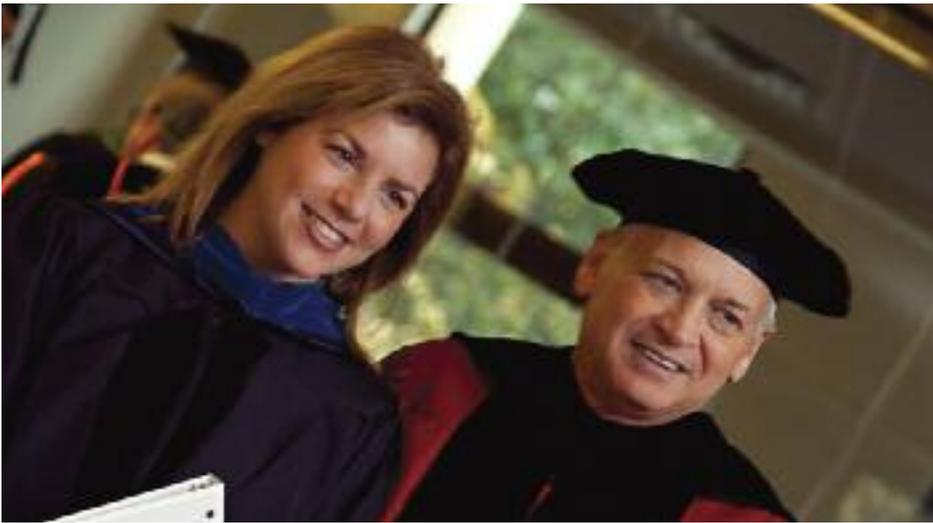
Dr. Peyton Randolph Helm, president of Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania, introduced Dr. Hass before her inaugural address. Dr. Hass was a faculty member and then administrator at Muhlenberg, rising over 10 years to the role of provost, which she held from 2004 until her move to Austin College.

College presidential inaugurations typically include representatives of other higher education institutions to provide a tradition of formal recognition of a change in leadership. Delegates representing more than 50 colleges and universities attended the installation of Dr. Hass, including TCU chancellor Victor Boschini and Schreiner University president Tim Summerlin, who also represented the Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities.

Student, faculty, staff, and alumni representatives added their welcomes, as did Judy Fletcher, executive of the Presbyterian Synod of the Sun, and Texas State Representative Larry Phillips. The program also included College Chaplain **John Williams** ’84 and 2009 graduates **Jonathan Hersh**, a member of the Austin Teacher Program, and **Keatan King**, now studying at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, as well as **Dallas Key** ’10, student body president, and **Lisa Brown**, associate professor of psychology and a member of the Presidential Search Committee. The Austin College A Cappella Choir and Chorale, led by **Wayne Crannell**, associate professor of music, performed during the ceremony. 🎵



Peyton Randolph Helm



This page clockwise, from top left, President Marjorie Hass poses with Donald Gibson '75, Board of Trustees member; the Austin College Board of Trustees; delegates prepare for the ceremony; the A Cappella Choir performs during the installation; Dr. Hass greets Jessica Bufford '10 as she enters Wynne Chapel; Austin College faculty members find their place in the academic procession.

Facing page clockwise, from top left, President Hass talks with Austin College faculty Jacqueline Moore, Don Rodgers, and David Baker before their presentations at the faculty symposium during inauguration week; the Austin College Improv Ensemble P.S. poses before its performance; a campus-wide picnic follows the inauguration ceremony; Marjorie and Larry Hass celebrate during the inaugural dinner and dance; Board of Trustees chair Robert M. Johnson '53 and his wife, Joyce, smile for the camera; President Hass' parents, her son, Cameron, and her husband, Larry, are called on to assist in presenting Robert Johnson's toast for President Hass; Susan DeLee Cuellar '69, a senior member of the Board of Trustees, was recognized for her work in coordinating the inauguration.



PHOTOS BY VICKIE S. KIRBY AND JACKI LEE