



Bahamas, December 06th, 2009

Doctor
Pamela Eibeck, President
UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC,
Stockton, California
U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Eibeck,

As graduates from different countries and classes of the worldwide pioneering **Inter-American Studies Program** offered by **Elbert Covell College**, at the **University of the Pacific**, from 1962 to 1987, we wish to welcome you as the new President of our Alma Mater and anticipate the best of success in your activities during these very interesting and challenging times.

Ours was one of the more interesting international academic programs that ever took place in any North American or Latin American university. Many articles and interviews during those years in magazines, newspapers and other worldwide media called attention to our program. Last year, we were very proud and happy to see the **Inter-American Studies Program** being relaunched again by the **School of International Studies (SIS)**, and that its promotion and recruiting activities in Latin America were under way.

Scores of our alumni have also been cheered by the opportunity that Dean Margee Ensign and Provost Phil Gilbertson provided us since 2004, to come back again to the university and become involved in the reinsertion, development and promotion of the new **Inter-American Studies Program** at the University. Over the last five years, along with key faculty and staff members of **SIS**, Dean Ensign has worked tirelessly to recapture from us the spirit and essence of Inter-American cooperation that appears not having been properly recognized and propagated in the U.S. as it should have been. The alumni of **Elbert Covell College** represent over 600 people residing in many countries throughout the western hemisphere and, as the proud and successful alumni of yesterday's **Inter-American Studies Program**, we seek to participate actively in the promotion and development of the program as it moves ahead today.

Although at times not so visible in the U.S., the increasing economic and demographic importance of Latin America to the United States may be crucial in your success as **PACIFIC's** leader over the next few decades. Trade, investment and migration between the countries of the region, and the U.S., are already at unprecedented levels. They are all expected to continue growing into the foreseeable future. Also, Latin American countries, on the other hand, are already closer and more integrated with the United States, than the U.S. is with any other regions of the world. The university, under your guidance, does have an important competitive advantage represented in the School of International Studies and its alumni. We look forward to multiplying our efforts as your administration increases its support and provides the indispensable resource base for this program to reach into each of the geographical regions that we came from or where covelianos now live and/or are related to.

Just as happened in the 1960's, the world today, and even more specifically, the Western Hemisphere faces difficult challenges that are creating important opportunities for higher education institutions. At the time of our studies at Pacific, the population of the U.S. was a little less than that of Latin America, but today we have over twice the population. In 1970, Latinos were a small minority of the population, barely a tenth of California's people, but now Latinos are



the largest minority in the U.S. and already emerging as a majority in the public schools of California. Brazil has been recognized for over a decade as one of the four leading emerging economies on the global stage, but now Mexico, Peru, Chile, Colombia and Panama are looked upon as the next edition of Asian Tigers in the global economy.

For over a quarter of a century the **University of the Pacific** was an internationally recognized pioneer in bilingual and multicultural education for our hemisphere. Now, with your energy and vision in leading the University, and with our strong support, we believe that the new **Interamerican Studies Program** and other innovative programs in the **School of International Studies** can achieve as much, or even greater distinction. In your new role as the leader of the institution that is most dear to us, we are writing to you to commit our full support as you lead the **University of the Pacific** in response to the current challenges.

By drawing on us, your international alumni, in this new stage of the university's history, **THE UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC** and the **School of International Studies**, more specifically, can count on having an extended physical reach and a continuous presence required for maintaining active connections within the countries of our region. We look forward to contributing to build further on the university's image and prestige, thus making recruiting and fund raising activities even more accessible and efficient. As Pacific alumni, experts and activists in the international field in Latin America, we sincerely believe that the **new Inter-American Studies Program** will prove to be both an academic and economic success for the University in our hemisphere and that its results may exceed even our more ambitious expectations. Sound educational, financial, sociological and even geopolitical circumstances evolving in our region lead us to believe and make a statement like that. So, given the full opportunity to the **Inter-American Studies Program's** implementation, in the way we lived it and with the additions and adjustments needed by modern times, success will become an astounding reality for the university under your presidency.

This letter is the product of extensive consultation based on the work performed by many of us during these past five years, and is being drafted as we are completing a mission of inter-American cooperation to the Bahamas. There, we had fruitful discussions with the authorities represented by government officials, including the Honorable Governor General, the Secretary of Tourism, representatives of the Chamber of Commerce, and the College of the Bahamas, with whom we have opened the door for a possible future collaboration with the **School of International Studies at Pacific**.

We look forward to your success as President of the **University of the Pacific** and the new accomplishments that you will bring to our Alma Mater with the full implementation of our new **Inter-American Studies Program** at **SIS**.

Sincerely,



Luis E. Ehrlich, President
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cc: Dr. Phil Gilbertson, Provost