Stevenson University’s quest to be a leading regional university is closely connected to our ability to continue to advance academic excellence in all that we do. Academic excellence is the centerpiece of a quality university and has a profound influence on all aspects of university life.

Although Stevenson has been deeply committed to academic excellence since its inception as Villa Julie College, it might be useful to review some of the recent developments indicating our deep commitment to academics.

In 2001, we formulated a bold strategic plan stating our desire to become a national leader in career education. Because this encompassed all of the departments and divisions at the time, the plan has had a significant impact on academic quality and set the stage for subsequent changes that have fostered our evolution as a regional and national leader.

Paul D. Lack, Ph.D., Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, has worked closely with the faculty on all processes associated with the quality of their work and life and the academic programs.

Beginning in 2004, with the Board of Trustees’ approval, we began a new planning process that was to have an untold impact on Stevenson and that involved envisioning us as a new university. With the naming of Stevenson University in 2008, our intention was to decentralize the academic leadership by appointing six deans to six Schools. These deans would provide the valuable leadership and focus necessary to expand on academic excellence by providing curriculum innovation as well as quality support to Stevenson students.

During this same period, we identified an overall academic plan that made the education of our undergraduates more powerful and explicit. This plan, called the Stevenson Educational Experience became a blueprint with several elements deemed necessary for a quality university education. These include teaching liberal arts and humanities as well as helping students identify career values that inform the process of selecting an academic major. At Stevenson, we also incorporate the concepts of theory, practice, and mentoring at the undergraduate level because we believe that a quality educational experience can best be fashioned through active engagement.

It can be seen, then, that academic excellence has been a constantly evolving concept at Stevenson—and one that requires ongoing vigilance and focus. One of the most recent, yet perhaps most important, manifestations of our effort to produce academic excellence is the Stevenson Promise.

Working with IDEO, one of the leading innovation firms in the country, Stevenson faculty and staff developed a promise to our students to provide them with an exciting educational experience through the lens of personal direction, professional know-how, and discipline expertise. This effort is now incorporated across all disciplines. As part of this pact, we committed ourselves to empowering our students to take unexpected turns and create new paths, and preparing them to change destinations once they are out on the road. We want them to seek to change the world, make a difference in their lives and communities, and make meaningful and powerful professional contributions.

Academic excellence is clearly as much a part of our University as the beautiful buildings and our quality residential program. From the vision for a university with strong values, quality faculty, and an exciting curriculum that promotes student engagement, Stevenson offers the very hallmark of a meaningful education.