

A Message from the President

Opening doors of opportunity

One of the pleasures that marks the start of each semester is the breakfast I host for new staff members. It is a chance to welcome new colleagues, acknowledge the talent they bring to Whitman College and answer any questions they may have.

At our last breakfast there was something more. As the session ended and staff members filed out, one woman lingered. When the room was nearly empty, she approached me. As she drew near, I could

see that she had tears in her eyes. Was it something I had said?

She spoke first. "President Bridges, I want to thank you. I want to thank you for giving my daughter a scholarship to attend this great college. I am so happy for her, and so honored to be working at the same campus where she is a student."

Emma Lopez is a new employee of the college who has dedicated more than 20 years of her professional life in service to others as a caregiver, hospital worker, agricultural worker and school aide. Her daughter, **Jazmin Lopez '10**, is a second-year student at Whitman whose academic qualifications rewarded her with a large scholarship to the college.

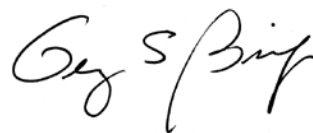
As I walked back to my office, I was struck by the full meaning of the moment with Mrs. Lopez. We at Whitman are

opening new doors of opportunity to a broad community, from immigrant families like the Lopezes to American-born, working-class families. (See related story, Page 4). The college is opening doors today just as it did for the sons and daughters of farm families at the height of the Depression, just as this country did for generations of 19th and 20th century immigrants, including members of my family from Ireland.

At the heart of our mission is equal access to exceptional education for all promising students. Whitman's First Opportunity Scholarship, newly created through the generous support of **Bill '67** and **Rita Neff '69**, is a vital step in that direction. Others are soon to follow.

Whitman is a private college with a vital public purpose. We are committed to creating opportunities for students like Jazmin Lopez that benefit this school as well as these students. They, after all, are the future leaders of our communities, our country and the world we all share.

Sincerely,



George S. Bridges



Sarah Abdurrahman

Emma Lopez, left, Jazmin Lopez '10 and President George Bridges visit in Reid Campus Center.