



**I've** gotten hundreds of colorful PostIt® notes from Dr. Ray Authement since I began working at UL Lafayette in 1993. He attaches them to magazines he receives from other universities and forwards to me.

I took the first few dozen for granted; they all looked alike. One day, I noticed a PostIt® note that was different. Instead of “FYI,” he had written something like, “Page 20. Article is well done.” Of course, I immediately flipped to that page and studied it.

It took quite a few more “FYIs” and a couple more “See inside” messages to grasp what should have been obvious to me from the start: He apparently looks through *all* of the magazines before sending them along. I was amazed because of his already heavy workload.

I've thought about those PostIt® notes a lot since Doc announced in late April that he plans to retire. It occurred to me that they reveal quite a bit about him and how he conducts business at the university.

They are consistent, direct and efficient. They tell me that he has done his homework, that it's important to know what other universities are doing. Their subtler message is: If something is important, find the time to pay attention to it and share it with others.

His little handwritten notes are also a refreshing personal touch in these days of e-mail and text messages.



Believe it or not, we have not told Dr. Authement that this entire issue of *La Louisiane* is devoted to what he has done for the university. We were afraid he would ask us not to pay so much attention to him.

But Dr. Authement's leadership has positively influenced every aspect of the university and countless lives. We believe readers will look at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in a different way after reading about the remarkable journey he began long before becoming its president.

Quite frankly, I expect to be criticized by some readers for dedicating an entire issue of *La Louisiane* to one topic. But a few years ago, someone asked Doc what advice he would offer students. “When faced with a tough decision, do what you know in your heart is right. That's not always easy but you will look back on your life without regrets,” he replied. And so I have.

I'm filled with a sadness that I can't even describe whenever I'm reminded that the steady stream of Dr. Authement's PostIt® notes will soon end.

There is small comfort in a Buddhist proverb I read recently: “If you're facing the right direction, all you have to do is keep walking.” Thanks to Doc, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is facing the right direction.

All we have to do is keep walking.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *La Louisiane*.

— Kathleen Thames