

It can be surprisingly easy to influence others.

I remember a high school English teacher who came up with the idea of turning our biweekly writing assignment into a contest. He continued to grade our essays, short stories, and poems, but the first and second-best writers also read their works aloud to the class. And for the next two weeks, the top writer got custody of a spray-painted gold oilcan, the trophy that became as precious to us as an Olympic medal.

At first, I wrote to win that oilcan, but then gradually I started writing for an audience – my classmates – not my teacher. Little did I know it then, but I was taking the first steps toward my future career.

In this issue's lead article, titled "Why I Teach," several Embry-Riddle professors who were interviewed make it clear that it's not the paycheck that keeps them returning to the classroom year after year. Rather, they continue teaching because they enjoy sharing what they have learned and nurturing others. They're honored to be able to influence the next generation of leaders and doers, to shape the future.

In "Pop Quiz," we ask an airline executive, artist, aviation safety expert, cricket player, entrepreneur, insurer, inventor, and journalist to talk about what most influenced them in choosing the path they took. Invariably, it was a teacher, a caring mentor, or a supportive milieu that guided and emboldened them toward the future they chose.

In "Perspectives," Stephanie Rowe, assistant professor of humanities, defends the role of history, art, literature, philosophy, and the like in a modern university such as Embry-Riddle. The humanities open the door of the imagination, she says, and students learn to ask not what or how, but why. In the process, they learn that living well is about more than making a living.

Several dozen Embry-Riddle students already seem to understand that, as you'll read in this issue. During Hurricane Frances, they pitched in at a hospital in Daytona Beach, mopping flooded floors, transporting patients, and relieving overstretched staff. In helping others, and having fun doing so, they also helped themselves in ways that some of them will understand only later.

Again, it's a question of influence.

Robert Ross
Editor



A satellite image of Hurricane Ivan shows Florida under attack; Embry-Riddle again tops U.S. News 'Best Colleges' list; two first-year students in the redesigned EGR 101 course; pieces of the former Berlin Wall, which once stood near an Extended Campus center at Tempelhof Airport.

