



SUNDAY 12/9/12 • SECTION C

**TOM PHILIP**

# One LSU must value components

In a recent guest opinion in The Times, "One LSU is all about remaining competitive" (Dec. 2, 1C), the authors James Carville and Henson Moore state the need to take advantage of the "services and opportunities One LSU has to offer." Although we all see the benefit of a strengthened LSU flag-ship system, we respectfully submit there are serious misgivings about the LSU reorganization plan as it is currently being prescribed for LSU Health Shreveport.



**Phillip Rozeman**  
Guest Columnist

There is a proverb that says "to know the road ahead, ask those coming back." We learn from history. As part of one of the first graduation classes at LSU Health Shreveport, I have seen the metamorphosis of the medical center from predominately a teaching hospital to produce rural physicians to the struggle of emerging as an academic medical center to the current world class medical center with growing research capacity.

The transition from emerging to world class academic medical center is the result of years of blood, sweat and tears by a tremendous faculty dedicated to LSU Health. But the transition is also attributable to the establishment of local authority and a chancellorship for the medical center nearly a decade ago.

Local autonomy increases efficiency, reduces uncertainty and facilitates collaboration. There is greater effectiveness when people know where the buck stops — especially in personnel and budget issues. Uncertainty always leads to an exodus — talent leaving because of a perceived lack of stability. With local autonomy, there are already 30 formal collaborations between LSU Health and other LSU institutions.

Community leaders in northwest Louisiana fought for years in the Legislature to establish a separate chancellor for LSUHSC in Shreveport. Since this occurred nearly a decade ago with the help of the current interim LSU President Dr. William Jenkins — there has been reinvestment in the health center and the positive results and outcomes of the change of governance is obvious to all in north-central Louisiana. We can see the difference.

One LSU is only as successful as the individual institutions in the system. The first three principles of an ideal system outlined in the LSU System working report includes "giving each institution the autonomy required to meet their own potential;" "treatment of member institutions as clients;" and "support of member institutions, as judged by them." Management by adding a new layer of bureaucracy and diminishing the authority of the LSU Health Shreveport chancellor is not consistent with building an ideal system and strong institutions.

See ROZEMAN, Page 3

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2012 **3C**

## Rozeman

Continued from Page 1

LSU Health Shreveport is a foundation for economic development and health care in northwest Louisiana. It is one of the largest employers — attracting highly educated people to our community and contributes nearly \$1 billion annually to the economy. Anything that weakens the institution — like diminishing the authority of local leadership — weakens our community and, because of its importance to the LSU System, weakens One LSU.

To those who have received health care services at the teaching hospital, you know the importance of LSU Health. To those who have received health care services in any other community in Louisiana, you also know. A majority of the physicians and allied health professionals taught at the medical school in Shreveport remain in Louisiana. The same is true for those physicians trained in the teaching hospital in Shreveport. The health-care of North Louisiana and the state as a whole depends on the health of LSU Health Shreveport.

The disagreement is not

about "politics, personal egos and petty jealousies" as suggested in last Sunday's guest opinion. Instead, it is a disagreement based on very different perspectives of what will make "One LSU" more competitive and what will not. In short, the devil is always in the details.

We ask the leaders of the LSU System to continue the current practice of direct reporting of the LSU Health Shreveport chancellor to the president of LSU. An added benefit of this approach will be saving half a million dollars required to add another level of bureaucracy in the system.

All people in Louisiana have a common interest in building stronger higher education and health care systems in our state. This requires building stronger institutions throughout the LSU System. A strong flag-ship requires a strong fleet and LSU Health Shreveport is a very important part of the fleet.

*Dr. Phillip Rozeman is a local physician and graduate of LSU Health Shreveport. He is on the founding board of the Shreveport-Bossier Business Alliance for Higher Education.*