

Taking Stock: State of the University 1999-2004

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Greetings to Chair Popper, Senators, faculty, staff, students and guests. It is a great pleasure to welcome everyone to a new year. The high energy surrounding the new beginnings is like being born again ... a chance to start anew.

And welcome to the new Senate leadership. I appreciate greatly our shared governance in programs and policies of the campus and also the time, energy, and true dedication of those who participate.

I want to take a moment to thank all those who carried the University so effectively through the norovirus crisis in the summer. Housekeeping and residential facilities teams deserve great thanks for their super effort. They had to disinfect two high-rise dorms and a community center in record time. Every surface was disinfected: ceilings, floors, mirrors, walls and halls. Our staff always rises on these occasions. It is a marvelous characteristic of this place that I always find inspiring. Thank you very much.

Last year was another wonderful year for the University: We celebrated extraordinary faculty achievements; records were set for fund raising, attendance and events on Maryland Day; and our graduation rate hit a record high. In addition we founded a research park just to name a few special accomplishments. Because of time constraints, I decided to discuss them in an annual report on the web. I won't speak about them today but you can always ask questions about them.

1999-2004: How far have we come?

In my remarks today I want to talk about the transformation of the University over the last five years and about what the next five years portend for us.

In my inaugural address in April of 1999, I laid out three themes for my presidency. They were:

- i. build a culture of excellence across the campus,**
- ii. enhance the educational experience for all our students, and**
- iii. build the greater Maryland Family.**

Then in my 1999 Senate address, I proposed specific, and rather aggressive, achievement goals under each theme that we were going to reach by 2004. That is, by now. I recall Bill Walters, Senate Chair at the time, was surprised by my specificity. But I needed to

say where we were going if I expected anybody else to want to go there too. Along the way both good and bad things happen unexpectedly, like the dot.com collapse. But many good things popped up too and we hitched on to them.

So how did we do over the last five years and what does it mean? The short answer is ... we did very well ... and it means a lot! Should I sit down now? No. Of course, you deserve a more complete discussion. First let me say, I remain very happy with the three themes. They turned out to be as right for us then as they are today.

The first theme, building a culture of excellence, is the most critical, and risky, of the three, because building the culture of excellence across the campus calls for: self-examination, self-evaluation and self-determination.

- Self-examination asks each of us, “Who are we? What is our mission?”
- Self-evaluation asks us: “How good are we?”
- Self-determination is the critical question: “How good are we committed to become?”

These are heady questions for us as individuals and as a community.

It is so much easier being good than becoming excellent, and even being very good tolerates many flaws. Greatness does not. Becoming a great institution requires an unrelenting, unforgiving and unapologetic commitment to achieving a standard of the highest quality in everything we undertake. That standard is the fulcrum underpinning excellence. When you want it and have it, it’s a thing of beauty. When you don’t have it, it’s the reality of frustration.

So you can see that building a culture of excellence is a “really big deal.” It’s not hyperbole by the president and it’s not about apologies and excuses. It’s about demonstrable results. And it does not happen overnight. But you have to get on the right road, if you expect to arrive at the right place.

Marking the road to excellence

Let me read to you some of the signposts that we passed along this road in the last five years to see if you think we’re going in the right direction. The first one declared the amount of sponsored research. It reflects judgments about the quality of our work and our people. If we are not competitive in quality, we will not get sponsored. This is not charity; this is competition. Our goal set in 1999 was to increase our total research sponsorship by 50% to \$300 million by this year. We cleared that benchmark for the last three years running with this year’s total, \$349 million.

A second sign post is our *U.S. News* public ranking that moved from 30th to 18th, close to the high bar goal we set at 15th. We are 15th in peer reputation, which counts the most. Our number of top-10 programs moved from 11 in 1999 to 24, one short of our

goal. In addition we show 44 top-15 programs compared to 18 in 1999, and 70 top-25 programs compared to 28 at the start. By any measure these are strong showings.

The third signpost shows the number of faculty chairs and professorships. It increased more than 70% from 46 to 79. Ok, I wanted 100, and I still want 100. But creating 46 over 143 years and then adding 33 more over 5 years shows that times are changing.

A fourth sign flashes brightly -- the new physical space added to the campus. If we tally the buildings under construction with those completed, we have built 25% of the total campus space since 1998. That is, 3.5 million new square feet have been built including the Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center, new Van Munching wing, Kim Engineering and Applied Science building, bioscience building, chemistry wing, Computer Science Lecture Hall, Comcast Center, research green house and many others. And this list does not include major renovations of existing spaces, like the Stamp Union, or the new research park, M-Square.

And to speak of M-Square we just passed it on a fifth sign post, our new research park. Four years ago we had no land and no money for a research park. And now we own a 115-acre research park, next to the campus and inside the Washington beltway. We have professional development partners for financing, constructing and promoting the park. And we have two prominent, long-term tenants. One, the Center for Advanced Study of Language, will create the world's center on acquisition and translation of seldom taught languages. The other will create the NOAA Center for Weather and Climate Prediction in collaboration with us. We also have agreements with the People's Republic of China to build the U.S.-China Research Park and to create a new "Confucius Study Center" to promote learning of Chinese language, literature and culture. Both were firsts for China, and both are unique in the U.S.

The sixth signpost illuminates our leadership in diversity. With the increasing quality of our diversity programs, the campus fosters advancement of our diverse community. The recent June 10 issue of *Black Issues in Higher Education* showed some poignant program rankings. It ranked 9 University undergraduate programs in the top-10 in the nation and 25 in the top-25 compared to 3 and 11 in 1998. Among the top-50 public universities nationally, Maryland ranks at the top in the number of baccalaureate degrees awarded to African Americans, 3rd in master's degrees, and 4th in doctorates.

Our faculty appear regularly in journals focusing on diversity. *Black Issues* named Jim Gates of Physics as one of 20 Giants in the Classroom of the last century; and the July issue of *Black Issues* featured Lee Thornton, of Journalism, in an interview on ethics in journalism. On the back cover the associate editor Robin Smiles, a doctoral student in English, wrote of the challenge for African Americans in doctoral programs.

The number of African American, Hispanic American and Native American graduates in 2003 is each more than double the number in 1998. So throughout the run up in the quality of the university, and the greatly increased competition for admission

over the last 5 years, we have increased our minority graduates, increased the ranking of our programs, broadened the diversity on this campus, and yes, increased graduation rates. Between 1999 and 2004 the 6-year graduation rate increased a credible 9% for the student body as a whole, and also 10% for African American, 5% for Asian American, 14% for Hispanic American and 17% for Native American students.

One conclusion that you can take away from this discussion is that these signposts would not be there if we were not on the road to building a great university. People believe in us, they invest in us, and we are delivering outcomes.

Providing an outstanding educational experience

Our second theme was to enhance the educational experience of all our students. We've passed a number of signposts along this road too.

The first one flashed "special programs." In the early 1990's the campus developed special programs that enhanced the educational experience for some of our students. Honors, Gemstone and College Park Scholars symbolized these special programs offering remarkable living-learning experiences. To provide broadened opportunities for more students we committed to adding 10 new programs to the 25 special programs operating in 1999. And as of 2004 we have added 13 new programs, including CIVICUS, the Hinman CEO Program, and the Writer's House.

I strongly believe that every student should have the opportunity for a special program experience. We're not quite there yet, but we'll be there soon. I am very grateful to the provost and his staff for creating a new program that they call the President's Promise. The President's Promise will guarantee a special program opportunity for all students entering as freshmen in Fall 2005. The programs will include study abroad, internships in government and the private sector, research and independent study and so on. When fully implemented, this Promise will complete our pledge.

My personal view is that international experience should be a high priority for all our students. In 2004 one cannot be fully educated without an understanding of the values and circumstances of other cultures that can only be acquired through first hand experience. There is no replacing being there.

A second signpost is the number of beds. In 1999 we were experiencing a demand for on-campus housing that could not be satisfied. All 9,000 beds were full and the waiting list numbered 700. We committed to add 2,000 beds to the housing stock by 2004. And as of now, we have added more than 2,500 beds, which means that we rank nationally as a top-5 university provider of beds. Much remains to be accomplished. We need more housing opportunities for: international students, transfer students and married students. Private housing is being developed around the campus that will expand opportunities for many people, including students and also faculty, staff and visitors.

A third road sign is financial aid. Adequate financial aid was a problem even before the recent budget cuts and tuition increases. In 1999 we committed to raise \$25 million for need-based aid. And we have raised and distributed \$29.3 million in need-based aid and raised another \$17.3 million in aid from private sources.

We have to do a lot more. On the 18th, next Saturday night, we are hosting a scholarship benefit that is called “Hot Hot Hot.” It kicks off a multiyear effort whose principal goal is to raise scholarship and fellowship support. “Hot Hot Hot,” which is chaired by my wife Patsy, has raised more than a million dollars for scholarships so far. Alumni, friends and businesses have generously underwritten it. All contributions to the benefit go to scholarships of the donor’s choosing.

But, regrettably, the student financial aid problem will not be solved by scholarships alone because, simply put, there is not enough scholarship money available. We also need to limit the total student debt burden.

This fall we initiated the Maryland Pathways program. This program provides a student coming from a poverty circumstance the chance to graduate from Maryland debt free. This is an about face from our earlier requirement that a student must maximize allowable debt before a need-based scholarship could be available. About 300 students are participating this Fall, and there will be 500 by next year. We are also working on another program, Maryland Pathways II that will cap the federally approved debt at graduation for resident students. As a consequence, an entering full-time student would have a predictable debt ceiling at graduation. Scholarships will be used to control the total debt in these programs.

A fourth sign flashes the Baltimore Incentive Awards Program. In 1999 I committed to creating an incentive scholarship program for students who have overcome great disadvantage in their circumstances. We would provide them with a full scholarship for four years, and they would help us build a pipeline of students from Baltimore City public high schools to Maryland. Thus the Baltimore Incentive Awards Program was born in nine high schools four years ago. The fourth class, entering this semester, joins an enthusiastic club of sophomores, juniors and seniors as we prepare to expand the program this year to other high schools in the state. It’s got legs.

These signs, and others, show that we are moving down the right road: we are enhancing the educational experiences of our students.

Building the Maryland family

The third theme in my inaugural address, build the Maryland Family, sought to connect the university to its alumni, the business community, the national laboratories, the schools and communities around us – essentially everyone around the university. In 1999 our isolation was palpable, but the solution was simple. Get connected by using our many advantages of location and position.

The first signpost down this trail was Maryland Day. Our goal was to expand Maryland Day from its kickoff in 1999 when 20,000 people attended to 50,000 by this year. We passed 60,000 attendees three years ago and even exceeded 60,000 last year in the rain. This year we welcomed over 70,000. My sincerest thanks go out to the 7,000 staff, students and faculty who gave it their enthusiastic all. A public relations firm told me that Maryland Day is possibly the best public relations effort we could ever *conceive*. Now, that is a sign pointing in the right direction.

Our alumni and donors light up a second billboard that shows a 30% increase in members to our alumni association (short of the 50% goal), and 52% increase in donors, short of the goal to double the donors. And though 2003-2004 was a record fundraising year, it fell short of our goal to hit \$125 million. A number of surprises that occurred after 1999 worked against these important goals. Though we have work to do, our progress is nonetheless well down the right path.

A third sign is the Samuel Riggs IV Alumni Center, now being constructed in front of Byrd Stadium. This is our first space for alumni, and our alumni are building it themselves. Riggs will bolster connections with our alumni and friends in ways yet to be imagined, and it will be a critically important space for the campus too.

We also passed a few other flashing road signs along the way. For instance, our new Facilities Master Plan, which spans the region from the beltway to the College Park Metro, received the Green Campus Recognition Certificate from the World Wildlife Federation for its environmental sensitivity.

We welcomed many extraordinary speakers, like Nelson Mandela, Kofi Annan and Shirin Ebadi for lectures that drew large numbers of students, faculty, and visitors.

And how about our national champion basketball team and lacrosse teams, and our ACC champion football team. We're in more bowls than Kellogg cereal. And this season, our women's basketball team will fill the Comcast Center. Our athletics programs have brought great pride to the university and our alumni.

The Way Forward

Overall, the showing on each theme has been strong with advances that are competitive with those of any university in the country. The themes are right, and the measures used to judge our progress are sound. Our responsiveness to opportunities was about right and our hits were solid, though a few not as long as we wanted.

Most people agree that we are not the same institution today that we were in 1999. We have higher expectations of ourselves. We are "going around with a different crowd." Wayne Gretsky of hockey fame never skates to the puck. He always skates to where the puck is going to be. That is what we did beginning in 1999. And that is why we feel comfortable where we are now. We got to the puck.

But what's next? Where's the puck going to be, let's say, five years from now? Let's try to see what's driving it.

The University of Maryland, like most other public universities, is moving down a dimly lighted road of decreasing public financial support and increasing public expectation. Some of the landscape has become fairly clear. First, it shows, whether we like it or not, that the primary source of financial support of the university is shifting from the public, through State allocation and Federal financial aid, to the students and university. This is not a temporary circumstance but reflects a transfer of responsibility that has been underway for about twenty-five years. Further, the less the State supports us, the less the State retains responsibility for us. We are becoming more independent, less controlled, and more on our own. I see no forces on the horizon that will change this course. So we need to take seriously the need to generate more financial support including financial aid for students. This is the royal we.

Next, the landscape shows that the society's expectation of university service remains very high. It is probably the highest it has ever been. But society does not want to pay for services through general fund allocations though it does see fees for services as possible.

Third, competitiveness between universities continues to increase. We compete with other universities in all domains: recruitment of students, faculty, and research. We seek the same rankings, awards, partnerships and recognitions. To succeed we must not only be competitive, but we must win many of these contests. There may not be a more competitive enterprise in our society than a modern research university.

Fourth, globalization is driving us. When the Cold War ended, we got globalization. We live in a tightly connected world where every major issue is a global one. Whether it is the economy, the environment, security, pollution, energy, health, food safety, nuclear issues, or education, all are global issues. And like businesses, top universities are global in scope, responsibility and competitiveness too. As an example of changing global competitiveness consider the emergence of top-class universities around the world. China has set a goal to build a number of world-class universities over the next decade. And so has Taiwan and so has Japan and so have a lot of countries. Though most of the World's top universities are currently in the U.S., many are determined to change this balance, and they probably will.

As another sign of globalization, international graduate students are now being recruited to first class universities in other countries and many are simply staying home because of opportunities there. For many reasons fewer are applying to U.S. universities. We received 3,800 fewer international applications this year than last. That's a 36% drop in one year. And other countries are beginning to recruit U.S. graduate students into attractive programs abroad. What goes around comes around.

This is a new world we are moving into. But this is where the puck is going. We have to skate to it.

What's next for us?

First, the three themes that have guided us for the past five years -- build the culture of excellence, enhance the educational experience, build the Maryland family -- remain fundamental, and we will continue to pursue them vigorously.

At the same time we are taking steps to adapt to the changing economic and global realities. I have identified three focuses. The first two relate to financial circumstances -- they are partnerships and innovation. The third relates to our international priorities.

First our focus on partnerships. We need to accelerate the building of partnerships that allow us to leverage our resources and expand our effective assets. This will be a primary mechanism for us to increase opportunities for students and faculty, and also to increase our impact as a university. Because of our location and position, we have exceptional opportunities to build partnerships with major organizations. The focus should be broad, including partnerships with federal laboratories like NIH, NOAA, NASA, NIST, to name a few of more than 100 labs located around the campus; partnerships with the Smithsonian, the National Archives, and the National Symphony, as exemplars; partnerships with corporations like biotech companies; partnerships with state agencies like with the Department of Business and Economic Development; with schools; partnerships with countries like China through the Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Education; partnerships through professional development programs like those we have in China, Taiwan, Argentina as well as here at home; and partnerships with universities at home and abroad.

Our success at turning partnership opportunities into expanded university contributions will be a primary determinant to the continuing advancement of the university. We all need to recognize the high value in securing the right partnerships and then set about to create them and make them work.

Next, innovation and entrepreneurship will play increasingly important roles in bringing resources to the campus and using them well. Last year the Senate and I appointed six task groups to examine campus operations in academic and administrative affairs, undergraduate and graduate programs, financial modeling and fund raising. Each group presented its recommendations on the Senate floor last Spring. They ranged from accelerating time to degree, to incentivized budgeting, to combining units. Their reports are substantial and are now being implemented.

Our research park M-Square will bring new resources to the campus in due course. We also need to ratchet up the benefits we receive from our excellent entrepreneurship programs like our incubator, Maryland Industrial Partnerships in engineering, the Dingman Center in business, and the Office of Technology Commercialization.

We also need to expand instructional programs that bring both resources and opportunities to the campus. This will happen through the ingenuity of our unit leadership. For instance the Executive Development Courses given by the Institute for

Global Chinese Affairs have reached over 900 Chinese executives. There are four groups here at this moment and a total of thirteen will be here this calendar year. There may be no more efficient way to acquire enthusiastic, talented and well-placed alumni than through one of these self-funded programs. The Executive MBA of the Smith School, given at home and in Beijing; the MA program in Criminology and Criminal Justice given in Nanjing, and expanding soon to Beijing and Shanghai; the Professional Writing courses for business and government given by English are examples of units running with these opportunities. We all need to consider how we can “do well by doing good.” The campus will look favorably on entrepreneurial ideas for such programs because more should be created. This is a time to look inward for resource generating capabilities that support the university’s mission. This is not a time to be passive.

In short we are beginning to grasp the necessity for innovation and entrepreneurship in our operations and programs; the need is here to stay and will likely increase in the near term. This is where the puck is heading.

The third focus going forward is on international priorities. In this new world our community is a global one. Our reach, reputation and impact are global. Many of our entrepreneurial opportunities are global. Our role for the state is global. We need to think and act globally. The university will give increased consideration to developing new programs abroad, either alone or in partnership with others. Programs of high value that can be self-supporting will add substantially to building the university. We will also need to examine how we recruit and serve our international students. I will ask for a review of programs and services for international students to guide our policies going forward. We don’t live in a small town any more. And we need to see ourselves living in the global community. That’s where the puck is going.

A Clear Direction

So in conclusion, we’re doing quite all right. We’ve weathered some monumental changes in the last five years. Our nation went from being a top-of-the-world economy into a record setting recession, from a nation at peace to one at war on two fronts, from a nation that was secure and confident to one that suspects terrorists on every corner. Still, through all this turbulence, the university has moved smartly forward in every area. We have demonstrated that unrelenting, unforgiving and unapologetic determination required of a great university. That gives us confidence.

I thank you in advance for increasing your participation in partnerships, innovation and international programs. Our capacity to bring people together on common themes has been the characteristic of this university that has fueled our advancement.

In closing I thank you once again for your most polite attention to my thoughts and for your extraordinary contributions to this great place. I wish us all another most successful year.