

Homecoming

Welcome

Welcome back to Michigan...

Welcome back to your University...

Homecoming is always a very special time...

A time of great excitement...

A time of pride...

A time of renewal...

We all have certain images of the University of Michigan, images that get reinforced when we have the opportunity to return to the campus...

These magnificent fall football weekends...

Walking down to the Stadium through the falling leaves...

We even have arranged for an Indian Summer day for you!

The excitement of the students...

The sounds of the bands...

Our eager anticipation of a Michigan victory!

The Homecoming tradition...

The term "homecoming" itself suggests something very important about the University...

In September, the streets of Ann Arbor have these large banners which say "Welcome Home Students"...

And, in a very real sense, we do become the home for our students during this period of their lives...just as we are for our faculty and staff.

But let me suggest that the University remains the home for its alumni as well--at least in an intellectual sense.

The importance of the University to Alumni

There is little doubt that the college experience probably has as much impact on our lives -- certainly on our careers-- that any other event

It sets us on a career course...

For many of us, we meet our lifetime companions... roughly one-third of Michigan graduates meet their spouses at Michigan

Throughout our career and our lives it provides us with an anchor...a tie to a values and understanding that guide our lives

To the University

Yet, as much as this place means to many of you...I can assure you that you mean just as much to this University...

A university achieves greatness through its people... through their talents and abilities... their involvement and commitment...

But it is important to recognize that the "community" that comprises a university extends far beyond its students, faculty, and staff...

Rather this community extends outward... beyond our ivy-covered walls to embrace our alumni and friends...

it also extends backward in time...to include that long line of maize and blue that have build and sustained the distinction of this University...

I might even suggest that this community extends into the future...through those families...many of them already associated with the University.. that will produce the

students and faculty for this institution in years to come
In a sense, our alumni play the key role
in passing the torch...
in passing from one generation to the next the
Michigan tradition...the tradition of excellence
which we all cherish so deeply.

Let me suggest that your active involvement with your
alma mater has never been more important...

A time of great excitement...

We have become absolutely convinced that
the University today faces a period of truly
extraordinary opportunity, responsibility,
and challenge in the years ahead -- a time
that will demand even greater involvement on
your part.

You can feel the growing excitement that permeates
our campus today...

But there is one more word that I believe we should
add to those characterizing Michigan's future: excitement!
I believe Michigan is going to be an extraordinarily exciting
place in the years ahead

In the past several weeks alone...

1. Yesterday broke ground on a new \$50 million
Child and Maternal Health Care Center
2. Last week Governor Blanchard visited the
University to dedicate two new facilities...
the \$25 M Center for Advanced Electronics and Optics
Technology--without doubt the most sophisticated
microelectronics laboratory in any University in
the world...
the Industrial Technology Institute, a \$100 M
effort designed to make Michigan the world's
leading source of emerging industrial technology
3. Arthur Miller gave the kickoff lecture to launch our
new Humanities Institute, a spectacular effort to
bring together students and scholars in the arts
and humanities...and funded through the generous
gifts of alumni and friends of the University
4. And, while for the first time in many, many years
the Michigan football team does not dominate the
national rankings, the University itself continues to
do so!

US News and World Report...

How many of you have seen the last two issues of
US News and World Report?

- i) Last week, the nation's university presidents ranked
the quality of undergraduate education at Michigan
8th in the nation -- on par with leading private
institutions such as Harvard, Stanford, and Yale.
Indeed, Michigan and Berkeley were the only public
universities listed in the top 10
- ii) This week the rankings of key professional schools
based on surveys of deans across the nation
appeared. Michigan Law was ranked 3rd, behind
only Yale and Harvard; Michigan Engineering was
ranked 6th, behind MIT, Stanford, Caltech, and such;
and Michigan Business was ranked 7th, behind only
Harvard, Stanford, and a few other private schools.
But Michigan clearly ranked as the leading public
university in the nation in the quality of its
professional schools.

While one can always discount such surveys...just
as one can discount national football rankings...
they nevertheless provide a sense that across
all fields, undergraduate, graduate, and professional,
Michigan is regaining its reputation as the leading
public university in the nation!

Conclusions

Michigan is not only on the move!

Indeed, we have switched on our afterburners and
we are accelerating rapidly!

We are committed to strengthening our role of leadership
in education, research, and service.

And, of course, the key in accomplishing this will be your
continued interest, involvement, and support.

Once again, welcome back to Michigan...

And may the force of the maize and blue be with you...