

Home

Introduction

It is a great honor and privilege for me to be able to serve
my University and my State...

In a sense, this marvelous institution embodies the hopes and

...**vision, the dreams, the commitment and stewardship** of

almost ten generations of Michigan citizens.

To be chosen as its 11th president is not only a great honor
and privilege; it is also a formidable responsibility

sibility to
the people of this State--and indeed, the nation and the world.
It is also a bit intimidating, since Anne and I will be following in the footsteps
of some truly extraordinary people...
Vivian and Harold Shapiro
Sally and Bob Fleming
...and, of course, Ann and Harlan Hatcher...

A theme for the future...

Each presidency of this University has had a theme...
and, as many of you heard earlier today...
proposed a theme of th

In a sense, my theme is a theme of the future...
a vision in which the University of Michigan
accepts its heritage of leadership...

By developing a model of what higher education
must be to serve Michigan and the nation
in the century ahead...

A mission of building a University for the 21st Century.

Concluding remarks

I cannot stress strongly enough the importance
of active involvement...particularly in the years to come

For we at Michigan believe that the next decade
will be a time of extraordinary opportunity,
responsibility, and challenge
for the University as it prepares to enter the
21st century.

It is indeed a time during which our University
must strive to reassert itself as a leader in
higher education, perhaps even by challenging
itself to develop the new paradigm of the research
university so clearly needed by our nation.

The mission of leadership we propose would
provide both an exciting and appropriate direction
for the University as it prepares to move into the
21st Century.

It would reinforce our continuing commitment
to Michigan's special distinctiveness and
strength: the power of focused quality,
which it shares with the most selective
private institutions,
and the diversity, openness, and breadth
of academic offering which it shares
with the best public universities.

It would also clarify the various facets of
leadership--institution, intellectual,
social, and personal--which we seek to
achieve.

The decade ahead will indeed be a time of
opportunity, responsibility, and challenge.

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

Conclusions

I and my colleagues have met with students
faculty and staff, with alumni and friends throughout the state
and the nation, to listen and to learn about their views
of how we should chart a course for the University into
this future of opportunity, challenge, and responsibility.

We sense the extraordinary quality and

excitement "out in the trenches"...among the faculty staff, and students of this University...individuals deeply committed to teaching, scholarship, and serving this state and the nation...

We began to understand more clearly the very special nature of the University--of the extraordinary intellectual breadth and diversity of teaching and research on the Ann Arbor campus... of the deep commitments of our Flint and Dearborn campuses to serve their regional communities, even as they respond to the needs of the state.

With each passing day we have become more and more convinced that this University is really a very special place...and a very special resource to this state and the nation because of the talents, commitments, and vision of its people.

As I and my colleagues have become ever more deeply involved in this process over the past two years, we have become ever more convinced that the University today faces a pivotal moment in its history... a fork in the road...

Taking the path in one direction will, with dedication and commitment, preserve the University as a distinguished-- indeed, a great--university, but only one among many such institutions.

However there is another path...a path that would require great vision and courage in addition to dedication and commitment...in which the University would seek not only to sustain its quality and distinction, but it would seek to achieve leadership as well.

We believe the University could...and should... accept its heritage of leadership in public higher education... that the 1990s and beyond could be a time similar to that extraordinary period in the late 19th century when the University of Michigan was a primary source for much of the innovation and leadership for higher education.

In a sense, I and my colleagues believe the University has the opportunity to influence the development of a new paradigm of what the research university will be in 21st Century America...a new model capable of responding to the changing needs of both our state and our nation. But this will require clear vision, an unusual commitment to excellence, and strong leadership...

Leadership capable of working with the University community and those throughout the state and the nation that depend on us, to develop and articulate an exciting, challenging, and compelling mission for Michigan as it prepares to enter the 21st century leadership capable of identifying and articulating an exciting, challenging, and compelling mission for the

the
And then to unite the University community...and those who support and depend upon us...in a common effort to pursue these goals.

Michigan is on the move!

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.

May the force of the maize and blue be with you...

The Role of Alumni

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

A key factory in the strength of the University...

active involvement by alumni

Not just for financial support...

although you can expect to hear from us even more frequently

Not just for your efforts in directing outstanding

students to Ann Arbor -- many of them your own children or grandchildren...

Not just for influence...

although since Michigan produces leaders, many of alumni have the opportunity to have major impact on UM through their roles as leaders of government or industry

But beyond that, through your active involvement...

to provide to our students a sense of potential, what the future holds in store for them...

for our faculty, since by buying in to what we are trying to do, you provide them with strong evidence of the profound importance of their activities

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.

A Mission for the 21st Century: Leadership

How of much of this particular vision of the future will actually come to pass?

Will the themes of pluralism, internationalization, and knowledge really dominate our future...

To be sure, change is not a predictable process...indeed one of the more interesting discoveries of contemporary physics has been that complex systems generally

change in high nonlinear, sometimes discontinuous,
and frequently random ways...

Hence there is always a certain hazard to predicting the future...

But then I always remember that old saying

"The best way to predict the future is to invent it!"..

And isn't that, after all, just the role of the University...

the job of inventing the future?...

There seems little doubt that the decade ahead will indeed be a time of
challenge and responsibility, opportunity and excitement.

Michigan's Role

As I and my colleagues have become ever more
deeply involved in this process over the past two
years, we have become ever more convinced that the
University today faces a pivotal moment in its history...
a fork in the road...

Taking the path in one direction will, with dedication
and commitment, preserve the University as a distinguished--
indeed, a great--university, but only one among many such
institutions.

However there is another path...a path that would
require great vision and courage in addition to
dedication and commitment...in which the University
would seek not only to sustain its quality and
distinction, but it would seek to achieve leadership as well.

We believe the University could...and should...
accept its heritage of leadership in public higher education...
that the 1990s and beyond could be a time similar to that
extraordinary period in the late 19th century when the
University of Michigan was a primary source for much of
the innovation and leadership for higher education.

Roughly a century ago, universities were facing changes
and challenges no less profound as America was
changing from an agrarian to an industrial society...
and they adapted by creating the research
university as we know it today.

It may well be that the time has come for yet another
change...and America and indeed, the world,...
changes once again to a postindustrial society...
a society intensely dependent upon knowledge

In a sense, I and my colleagues believe the University
has the opportunity to influence the development of a new
paradigm of what the research university will be in 21st
Century America...a new model capable of responding to
the changing needs of both our state and our nation. But
this will require clear vision, an unusual commitment to
excellence, and strong leadership...

Leadership capable of working with the University
community and those throughout the state and the
nation that depend on us, to develop and articulate
an exciting, challenging, and compelling mission for
Michigan as it prepares to enter the 21st century
leadership capable of identifying and articulating an
exciting, challenging, and compelling mission for
the

And then to unite the University community...and
those who support and depend upon us...in a common
effort to pursue these goals.

Concluding Remarks

The intellectual renewal of the role, mission,
values, and goals of the University is one
of the greatest challenges before us.

It is important that we launch the debate...

I believe it is indeed a time during which our University should strive to reassert itself as a leader in higher education, perhaps even by challenging itself to develop the new paradigm of the research university so clearly needed by our nation.

Such a mission of leadership would provide both an exciting and appropriate direction for the University as it prepares to move into the 21st Century.

It would reinforce Michigan's special distinctiveness and strength...

- i) the power of focused quality, which it shares with the most selective private institutions
- ii) and the diversity, openness, and breadth which it shares with the best public institutions

It aligns naturally with our long tradition as a flagship institution.

And what more exciting mission could we have than to accept our heritage of leadership and strive to develop a University for the 21st Century.