

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

In those short years that each of us spent on this campus during our education, we become a member of the Michigan family for the rest of our lives...

And Ann Arbor becomes forever our home... at least in our hearts...

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...

Role of Alumni

And, of course, this is where you come in!

For a university achieves leadership...greatness...

...through its people...

...through their talents and abilities,

...through their involvement and commitment.

The Michigan family extends far beyond those
on our campus for the moment, our students, faculty, and staff

It includes that army of maize and blue,
our 340,000 alumni, one of every thousand Americans!

Indeed, you have been...

...and will continue to be even more...

...the most critical factor in achieving and sustaining
the greatness of your University.

And, of course, those of us presently serving
as leaders of the University are out in California
("Michigan West") this weekend
not to attend a football game...

But rather to trumpet "a call to arms"

...to activate and energize our
California alumni and friends....

A Call to Arms

We are seeking not just your financial support...

...but something far more important

- your commitment
- your involvement
- and, most of all, your loyalty

to the University of Michigan.

Quite frankly, we're here seeking your help!

- 1) Your financial support
which provides the critical margin of excellence
for our programs
and which provides the financial aid through
which we can provide students from
less fortunate backgrounds with the
same opportunity for a Michigan education
that you enjoyed in years past
- 2) Your influence
Michigan produces leaders...
and many of you are in positions of influence
in the public or private sector and capable of
helping your university
- 3) Your help in telling the Michigan story to the nation
We are among the most visible universities in America
(CBS Morning News, Steve Fisher, activism)
...let your Michigan pride show a bit!

4) Help us make new friends and enlist new supporters!

5) And most of all, become involved...

...providing to our students a sense of the
potential of a Michigan education

...providing to our faculty and staff
encouragement and support

In a very real sense, you as alumni and friends
play the key role in passing the torch...
in passing from one generation to the next
the Michigan traditions of excellence and leadership
which we all cherish so deeply

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...