

Alumni Dinner

Introduction

After serving for almost a decade as Provost, Acting President, and President, Anne and I will be stepping down as leaders of the University this summer.

While there is no perfect time to step aside from a leadership role, Anne and I have decided that this year may be the best both for us and for the University.

Through the efforts of countless members

of the University,

most of the goals we set in the late 1980s

have now been

achieved.

This has been a satisfying period in our lives

because of the great

progress

made by the University

during these years.

Today, in 1995, by any measure,

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due to your efforts.

The University of Michigan, Circa 1996

Today, in 1996, by any measure, the University is better, stronger, more diverse, and more exciting than at any time in its history due to your efforts.

Vital Signs

1. National rankings of the quality of the University's academic programs are the highest since these evaluations began several decades ago. A close examination reveals that the academic reputations of our programs have increased more than any other university in America over the past decade. Further, when rankings across all academic programs and professional schools are considered, four institutions stand apart: Harvard, Stanford, the University of California, and the University of Michigan.
2. Detailed surveys throughout the university indicate that Michigan has been able to hold its own in competing with

the best universities throughout the world for top faculty. In support of this effort to attract and retain the best, the University has increased average faculty salaries over the past decade to the point where today they rank #1 among public universities and #5 to #8 among all universities, public and private.

3. Through the remarkable efforts of our faculty, the University now ranks as the nation's leading research university, attracting more federal, state, and corporate support for our research efforts than any other university in America (last year exceeding \$400 million).

4. Despite the precipitous drop in state support over the past two decades, the University has emerged financially as one of the strongest universities in America. It is the first and only public university in history to receive an Aa1 credit rating by Wall Street--just a shade under the top rating of Aaa. Our endowment has increased six-fold to over \$1.6 billion. And thanks to the generosity of our alumni and friends, with over a year left in the Campaign for Michigan, we have already exceeded our \$1 billion goal, becoming the first public university in history to raise this amount.

5. We are making substantial progress in our efforts to restructure the financial and administrative operations of the University, including award-winning efforts in total quality management, cost containment, and decentralized financial operations. Our administrative costs rank second lowest in the nation.

6. A walk around the University reveals the remarkable transformation in our environment as we approach the completion of our massive program to rebuild, renovate, and update all of the buildings on our campuses--a \$1.5 billion effort funded primarily from non-state sources.

7. The University Medical Center has undergone a profound transformation, reducing costs, integrating services, and building alliances to place it in a clear leadership position in health care, research, and teaching.

8. We have launched some exceptional initiatives destined to have great impact on the future of the University and higher education more generally, such as the Institute of Humanities, the Media Union, the Institute of Molecular Medicine, the Davidson Institute for Emerging Economies, and the Tauber Manufacturing Institute.

9. And perhaps most important of all, through efforts such as the Michigan Mandate and the Michigan Agenda for Women, we now have the highest representation of people of color and women among our students, faculty, staff, and leadership in our history. Michigan has become known as a national leader in building the kind of diverse learning community necessary to serve an increasingly diverse society.□

Claim:

It is clear that as we approach the 21st Century, the University of Michigan has become not only the leading public university in America, but that it is challenged by only a handful of distinguished private universities in the quality, breadth, capacity, and impact of its many programs and activities.

Throughout the higher education, people now look to us as truly “the leaders and best”.

Concluding Remarks

It was almost 30 years ago when my wife, Anne, and I put our furniture and our VW

on the moving van in Pasadena, California, packed up our kids---who had never seen snow, much less Michigan...and moved to Ann Arbor, arriving in a blizzard! It has seemed like every five years, just like clockwork, we get another call from California, inviting us to return. But, we long ago realized that we are now Michiganders. We have spent all of our careers...and most of our lives...working on behalf of your university, the University of Michigan, and we are maize and blue to the level of our DNA.

During this past decade, Anne and I have tried to give something back to my adopted state and to the UM . We are stepping aside from the presidency of the University of Michigan, leaving you as citizens of the state with a University that is better, strong, more diverse, and more exciting than at any time in its history.

The extent to which I have succeeded is thanks to you, citizens and leaders, and to the University's extraordinary faculty and staff who carry on Michigan's historic

commitment to excellence in public higher education.

The challenge for the years ahead will be

to reinvent the

University

to serve a new world in

a new century.

The transformation of the University will

require wisdom,

commitment,

perseverance,

and considerable

courage.

It would require

teamwork.

And it will also require an energy level,

a "go-for-it" spirit,

and a sense of

adventure.

But all of these features have characterized

the University

during past eras of
change, opportunity,
and leadership.

Although we are leaving the Presidency, you
can count on us to continue working to help
our state and the UM prosper.

We look forward to serving the University
in new ways
in the years ahead.

And we look forward to many more
years of working with
the marvelous people who make up the
Michigan family.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve!

And Go Blue!!!