Media Union

Welcome to the future

To the dedication of the Media Union
A marvelous new facility,
    funded by the state of Michigan
    that will enable the University not only
    to meet the changing needs of its students and faculty
    but to serve the people of the state of Michigan
    in new ways enabled by the powerful and evolving
    tools of information technology.

We are honored that the Governor of the State
of Michigan, Governor John Engler, is present to
dedicate this facility.
What could be more appropriate,
    since it was his strong support of higher education in general
    and his vision for linking together the state’s universities
    to better serve Michigan that was key to this project.
I will introduce the Governor for some remarks in
    a moment, but first let me make some other introductions...

INTRODUCTIONS

JJD OBSERVATIONS

What is the Media Union
It is many things.
It is
    ...the electronic library of the future
    ...a place where we can teach the powerful
        new tools of information technology
        ...multimedia
...virtual reality
...the Internet
...the site of our efforts to build virtual universites
institutions that transcend the constraints of space and time
and deliver educational services directly to people
in the workplace
and in the home.

But it is more. To quote our prospectus

Our new Media Union merges the creative aspects of disciplines
across the entire campus,
ranging from art, psychology and architecture
to engineering, philosophy and biology.
Inventive scholars and students will come together
with powerful resources, entering a free-wheeling space
where both ordinary and extraordinary people
can do exceptional things.

The State of Michigan’s portal to the rest of the world,
the Media Union will reach out to the hugh storehouses of knowledge,
growing daily on the Web, while drawing national and international scholars and students into our campus conversations.

New information technology will create a “virtual” community of thinkers,
allowing face-to-face dialog and collaboration across the state, the nation, and about the globe.

Two days ago we had the opportunity to dedicate another facility,
a conference room in the oldest academic building on the campus,
the University Observatory, named for a former Regent, Alfred Connable.

This facility, built in 1854, is of immense historical importance, since it is among the first research facilities on any American college campus.

It symbolizes the extraordinary character and impact of the research university, which has served America so well throughout the past century.

Today we dedicate another facility destined to create a new future, and perhaps a new kind of university. The Media Union represents the first facility of its kind in the world designed to break the constraints of disciplines...

...of barriers between the University and the society it serves...

...indeed, of space and time itself.

In dedicating the Media Union today, we are dedicating a laboratory where the future of education itself will be determined.

And now it is my great pleasure to introduce the Governor of the State of Michigan, the Honorable John Engler.