

Text of Chancellor Ringeisen's remarks on September 14, 2001

Day of Remembrance

Welcome. Thank you all for being here.

We have come together to share a moment in history that we will remember forever -- a moment that has changed us all and one that brings us closer together. We join people all across this nation who are in mourning and are unified in their shock over this unspeakable tragedy.

Now is the time to be mindful of each other as human beings. We are a nation of immigrants. That is what our flag stands for -- liberty, acceptance, unity, pride, and compassion. Its colors represent the rich diversity of this nation and the tolerance for others that helps define us as Americans.

Today, it is good to remember the inscription on the Statue of Liberty. It reads: "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, ... send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me: I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

I am very proud of the way all of you here at UIS have responded, the way you have remained calm and courteous, treating each other with respect and dignity.

Again, I say we must be mindful of each other as human beings, no matter our backgrounds, our religions, our countries of origin, or our color. That is what distinguishes us and this great nation from any other in the world.

Let us now share in a moment of silence and remembrance for the victims and rescuers of this terrible tragedy and for the families and friends of those who are lost and injured.

**Remarks to UIS Students
Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
August 20, 2003
Studio Theatre**

A very warm welcome to all of you. I trust you have had a good summer and are now eager, perhaps even...well maybe even excited, about beginning the school year. Or...maybe that's just me...but I hope you share my enthusiasm, at least somewhat. I am excited because this is the best time of year for all of us here at UIS – full of expectation and hope as we welcome our students and anticipate all the activity that accompanies their return.

You ARE what make this campus come alive!

I extend welcome and greetings from everyone here at UIS as well. We want to make sure that your experiences here are the best that they possibly can be.

All in all, it was a good summer, although, as most of you are probably aware, we have had to deal with some pretty serious budget cuts for the second year in a row.

This university has certainly not managed to escape economic difficulties. However, and I want to emphasize this point, we have gone to great lengths to try to minimize the impact on you, our students, as much as possible. That was our primary goal last year and our primary goal this year as we went through a very hard process of figuring out what we could reasonably live without...and, in some cases, not so reasonably live without.

Our hope is that because of our efforts to protect the academic side, you will not notice much change. Our wish is that you will also find that we are poised on the brink of some exciting new initiatives.

This is a year that holds great promise as we move toward our vision of making UIS one of the best small public liberal arts universities in the region, if not the nation. That is our vision.

You, our students, inspire us to continue building toward that vision, to plan ahead with hope, and you expect us to help you prepare for a future with endless possibilities. By providing you with the best possible educations, we are, essentially, giving you

the tools that you will need to succeed in a very complex, global world.

Whether you are a new student or returning to UIS, a Capital Scholar, a transfer student from a community college, a part-time adult student, or a full-time graduate student, by being here, you have made a commitment to education as part of your personal plan for growth and enrichment. You have much to gain by making this choice to continue learning – to build on your knowledge – and to better position yourself to realize your goals.

For whatever reason you have selected UIS, we are very pleased that you are here, and we think you have made an excellent choice! That is because *this institution is really about you, its students.*

Some of you are at UIS for the first time – such as our third class of Capital Scholars. We welcome you and know that you will continue to bring new life to this campus with your spirit of adventure and high energy.

And welcome to our transfer students – new and returning – who have come here from community colleges and four-year colleges and universities. You are what make this university tick, and we are eager to assist you in your academic pursuits.

Whether you are undergraduates or graduate students, studying full-time or part-time, your presence and success here are very important to us. Those of you who are part-time adult students, I commend you for taking the time to pursue your educations while balancing other responsibilities, such as work and family.

When I say *this university is really about you, our students*, I would like to tell you about some of the highlights of this past year, all of which make a positive difference in the quality of education that you receive here, directly or indirectly.

We saw our physical campus continue to grow. Steel girders now form the skeleton of our classroom/office building. We remain on target to open the doors in time for the first day of classes in the fall of 2004.

And we have expanded our on-campus housing with the construction of several new townhouses, some of which are now ready to receive their first residents this fall. Some of you here this evening, I imagine, are living in the new townhouses this fall.

We also took a major step closer toward another long-time dream – the recreation and fitness center. I made a bold prediction at this time last year – that plans for the new center would be finalized by now. Well, thanks to the extraordinary efforts and careful planning of Chris Miller and his student affairs team, and, particularly, the leadership of our students, our students approved a referendum this past spring to fund the center. The Board of Trustees and Illinois Board of Higher Education must still review and approve our specific building plans, which are being developed. Think about a beautiful new performance arena, state-of-the-art fitness center, basketball and racquetball courts, and eventually, a swimming pool.

It will take some time to get it designed and built, but the process has started, and what a great legacy for the students who were involved in its creation.

In March, we launched the National Commission on the Future of UIS to help shape a mutual vision that will lead us all to shared goals. I asked the Commission to look ahead 10 years and ask two major questions: What will we be and what do we want to be known for 10 years from now? I chose that time frame because it is one we can get our hands on. I am looking forward to getting the commission's report this fall. Then I will work with UIS leaders and our important consultative groups, including the Student Government Association, to consider the overall vision and engage them in a more detailed strategic planning process.

One of UIS' most exciting and far-reaching developments began to take shape this past year with the establishment of the UIS Lincoln Center. In November, the Center presented the Inaugural Lincoln Legacy Lecture on the subject of *Lincoln and Race*, and in April hosted the Public Policy Summit 2003: "Politics

and Ethics in Illinois: Past, Present, and Future.” This Studio Theatre was filled to capacity for an entertaining and thought-provoking program featuring Judge Abner Mikva, visiting professor of law at The University of Chicago, and a panel of seven distinguished government leaders, public policy activists, and scholars. Get to these things – take advantage of where you are!

The Capital Scholars Program was the success we had earlier envisioned in the past year, its second. The reputation of this wonderful program is growing, as evidenced by the large number of applications we received for this fall. Our Capital Scholars have brought honor to the campus – UIS has the second highest academic profile of first-year students and the highest retention rate of first-year students among Illinois’ 12 public universities.

This past year we also took our first steps in studying a general education curriculum that would allow us to expand our Capital Scholars program beyond the current number of students. It is important to remember that these discussions are just beginning,

and are pointing toward a larger first-year class, but one always aimed at the highest quality high school seniors, and one that will always be small by comparison to other state schools.

Campus life is growing at UIS, thanks to the ideas and participation of our students, and last year was no exception.

After 26 years of our athletic teams being independent, UIS became a member of the American Midwest Conference last March, one of the premier NAIA Conferences. This is a great move for us. Being in a conference will generate more local, regional and national attention for our teams. That will give UIS more visibility and our students and our community more reasons to discuss our teams as we pursue conference championships and post-season triumphs.

Besides sports, other great activities last year included our first theatre productions, a foreign film series, the Starlettes dance team, the UIS Pep Band, our cheerleaders, our choir, the great success on the part of our Forensics Team in bringing home national tournament honors, and the entertainment, concerts,

lectures and special events sponsored by our 60-plus student organizations, who now have their own space in the new Student Organizations Resource Center in the PAC. For you new students, there is a lot to do at UIS. We're looking forward to seeing you involved in our activities and traditions. In fact, start a new one, if you're so inclined!

We are very proud that the vast majority of our students build an impressive record of internships, research projects and experiential learning activities. That's partly because of our remarkable connection to the agencies of Illinois state government, but also our good relationships with private industry and not for profit organizations.

Our students teach conversational English to children in India. They train as financial planners. They report for National Public Radio and the Chicago Tribune. They work for the Secret Service, and at such places as Abbott Laboratories and the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. *They're everywhere! And you will be, too.*

During the last year, many of our students took part in civic engagement and service activities that ranged from politics, the environment, education and social work, to working with groups such as the Animal Protective League and The Springfield Project.

For example, faculty members Heather Dell and Pat Langley enhanced a class on empowerment last semester by taking students to Nicaragua to observe the working conditions in clothing factories identified as sweatshops. The students founded the UIS chapter of Students Against Sweatshops.

And, as a result of their efforts and their suggestions, UIS joined more than 100 other universities in the Workers Rights Consortium, and we will refuse to deal with manufacturers who produce apparel in overseas sweatshops.

I am very pleased that we've been able to add some very talented new faculty this fall. Check out our website for their photos and resumes. Many of you will have them as your professors. They bring different perspectives on teaching and learning, new ideas for scholarship, and the capacity to enhance

this institution's already strong reputation for delivering high quality education.

As our academic reputation increases, with the hiring of exceptional faculty, so also does the value of your UIS degree.

Our enrollments remain strong in both classroom and online courses. Speaking of online, UIS is leading the way and has experienced rapid growth ever since our online program began in 1998. We offer more than 60 courses online every semester. For our students who commute, this is a way to add a class without committing to another day on campus.

Now, I'd like to move from academics to athletics for a moment and show you the newly designed Prairie Stars logo.

We decided that our Prairie Stars logo was getting tired and needed to be freshened up this year, so we gave it a more energetic and lively appearance to match the spirit of our teams and the growing enthusiasm of all the fans who will cheer them on. I invite each of you to become a fan this year or continue to be a fan of our Prairie Stars teams.

Now, you know that I occasionally make *bold predictions*, just as I did regarding the recreation and fitness center last year. I can't just settle for making plain old predictions: they have to be *bold*. And I'm going to make some right now: This will be a year of national winners! First, I predict that our forensics team will bring home a team national championship, and turning to athletics, I predict that our soccer team will win the national tournament this year -- well, okay, this year or next year. Our soccer coach, Joe Eck, has assured me the players are going to be very tough competitors this year. Yes, I saw the score last night, and I haven't changed my prediction. This is going to be one of our best teams ever...Go Stars! (*Lead Applause Here*)

And, now that I'm out on this limb, I'm also going to take a *gamble* and *boldly predict* that our men's basketball team will be conference champions, guaranteeing a regional bid and an opportunity to advance to the national tournament. Now, I realize it will only be the team's second season and the stakes will be high, but Coach Kevin Gamble and his players thrive on tough

competition, as do Coach Wanda Nettles and her talented women's basketball team, who, by the way, I predict will also be conference champions.

I also want to let you know that we are working in various large and small ways to enhance the appearance of the campus and to show that we take pride in this institution. It's a big patch of dirt at the moment, but we are developing green space to form a campus quadrangle in the heart of campus where you can gather and take part in activities. What's a campus without a quad? It won't be long now before UIS has one, too.

And, we are *finally* installing a new permanent entrance marker located at the main entrance to UIS, on the corner of 11th Street and Ernest Hemingway Drive. You've probably seen the infrastructure for it that's been out there for a long time.

We want to hear your ideas about how to "put our best foot forward" so please don't be shy – give us any ideas you might have about helping us make this university the very best place it can be.

At the risk of repeating myself, it must be clear by now that you, our students, come first in all of our endeavors, such as maintaining our high quality academic standards, creating more student life opportunities and a richer and more vital campus culture, and continuing to make sure that this campus is safe and secure for everyone.

We want your experiences to be good ones at UIS. And so, we've provided large cardboard boxes in every room for your enjoyment. *(Pause for laughs)*

We're glad you're here and the best of luck in the coming year. There's a band and a comedian here tonight, so have a good time and enjoy First Week!

Thank you.

(Pause)

Before you leave, I'd like to remind all graduate students that your orientation session will continue in Brookens Auditorium. If you are unfamiliar with the location, Jim Korte will lead you to the Brookens location.

(Jim will be standing in the back of the room wearing a yellow orientation shirt)



**Chancellor Ringeisen's Remarks
Board of Trustees Meeting**

November 10, 2005

Thank you for this opportunity to talk to you briefly about UIS and its exciting future.

We are growing and changing in many ways and our vision is clear.

UIS will be a premier, small public university with innovative, high-quality liberal arts and professional programs, on a human scale.

We are growing, especially in the number of full-time students and residential students. More than 50% of our students are fulltime, and more than 800 are living on campus, the most ever. This fall, we enrolled more than 4,500 students (FTE is 3,000), an increase over last year.

As our residential and campus life grows, we are preparing to become a four-year university in the fullest sense of the word when we expand our freshmen Capital Scholars next fall. About 180 freshmen will be admitted to our new general education curriculum and about 100 to our Capital Scholars Honors Program, a total of about 300 freshmen. That's an exciting prospect and one that keeps us watching the average age of our students drop, to about 32 right now.

At the same time, online programming is growing by leaps and bounds. One out of every six of our students is an online degree program major (we have 10 degree programs fully online) and one out of three is taking at least one online class.

As I mentioned, campus life is experiencing a great surge thanks to the energy and vitality of younger students and many of our older students as well. Just in the last four years, we have added a theatre program, a dance team, many music groups, a forensics team, more exhibits in the Visual Arts Gallery, and we now have seven Prairie Stars varsity sports! And that's just a sample.

Our growth is also evident in the physical development of the campus - University Hall, new townhouses, a new recreation and fitness center in our near future, as well as a new residence hall. And the appearance of our campus has really been dressed up by the elegant colonnade and fountain.

We have just finished creating a new strategic plan that will ensure that we attain our lofty vision.

During my Convocation address to the university community in August, I said: "This is your time because you provide the spirit and the energy to move this university forward and implement our collective vision. Our visibility is rising and our stature is rising."

There is no ordinary strategic plan and ours is no exception. Listen to our Statement of Strategic Intent: "UIS will be one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the United States."

This institution will take the steps necessary to get onto the "top-school" lists and then to climb into the top five.

Here are some things that explain why we have the audacity to say that today:

UIS has a young but highly credentialed faculty coupled with many high quality academic degree programs - programs that attract students who are interested in student-focused learning, small classes, and individual attention from professors.

We have excellent programs such as history, accountancy, management information systems, business administration, educational leadership, and public affairs reporting, all of which are able to attract high quality students.

To give you an idea of the rising stature of our graduate programs, biology student Tracy DiMezzo (who has since graduated) brought honor to UIS when she received a distinguished thesis award from the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools. She was one of three to be so recognized. The other two were from the Miami University of Ohio and the University of Cincinnati.

The UIS online Computer Science Program was rated fourth in a national survey of the "Top 20 best buys" in higher education. Fourth in the nation.

Accountancy graduates rank well above the national norm in first-time pass rates for the national CPA exam. Among the best rates in the nation.

UIS is taking a lead role in one of the largest flood plain restoration projects in the world - the Emiquon Preserve near Havana, Illinois. Led by UIS Biology professor Mike Lemke, we are establishing a field station there for students and faculty to engage in hands-on research.

UIS received federal funding to establish an online mathematics teacher certification program in order to address the shortage of math teachers in the state.

Our College of Business and Management houses the new Center for Entrepreneurship so that UIS can be of greater service in the economic development of Springfield and the region. The university has an entreNET partnership with the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce to streamline the delivery of services to entrepreneurs.

UIS has embraced the idea and practice of enhanced learning technology and is on the cutting edge of academic technological innovation.

Our university is completely wireless, the first in Illinois

University Hall has brought UIS into the 21st Century with its sophisticated learning technology in classroom and lecture halls.

Ray Schroeder, Director of UIS' Office of Technology Enhanced Learning, is one of the nation's leading experts on online education. He has brought UIS into the state and national limelight with regard to online degree programming. We now offer 10 degree programs fully online.

In fact, UIS is positioned to help move the entire U of I forward in terms of online education.

Sound like an audacious statement? We believe that it is not!

UIS is poised to build on its foundation of public affairs and tradition of blending real-world opportunities with academic offerings.

That statement is evident in the internships that we offer at the undergraduate level. It's called the Applied Study Term and most of the internships are paid.

It's evident in the 131 graduate students who have internships at 18 state agencies, thanks to the Graduate Public Service Internship Program. By the way, 131 is a record.

UIS' Illinois Legislative Staff Internship Program remains the premier graduate-level program of its kind in the country.

Nationally, the growth of programs such as Campus Compact and the American Democracy Project are signs that civic engagement, citizenship and community service are re-emerging as critically important at colleges and universities. UIS is ahead of the curve with its history of serving non-traditional students and practice of providing students with service learning and volunteerism opportunities.

UIS' Center for State Policy and Leadership keeps the focus on public affairs by engaging in citizen education, addressing issues of state and national public policy, and contributing to the dialogue on matters of significant public concern such as politics and religion, issues in cyberspace, and the role of the Supreme Court.

The two guiding principles of our new general education curriculum -- **engaged citizenship** and **lifelong learning** -- clearly illustrate that this institution plans to continue building on its traditions. In that sense, our past is joined to our future.

I could go on, as I often do, about how far this university has come in the last few years and how brilliant our future is. Suffice it to say, I hope you have gotten a strong sense of our pride and our determination to make UIS the very best it can be.

Thank you.



Chancellor Ringeisen's Remarks Founders Dinner

June 7, 2006

It is great to be here tonight. I am impressed that so many are here, and it's fun to see so many familiar faces.

Not many colleges or universities are only 36 years old. It's awesome and humbling to be in the same room with some of the people who built this university, academically and physically.

Those of us who have been here only a few years are very much aware that we are standing on your shoulders.

This is a night for reminiscing and celebrating.

So the first thing I want to do is to ask for a show of hands: How many of you had something to do with Sangamon State University in the 1960s or 1970s?

Let's give them a great round of applause!

Now, how many of you had something to do with SSU in the 1980s, or SSU or UIS in the 1990s? Raise your hands - I know it will be some of the same people.

Again, let's give them a round of applause!

And how many have been a part of the university since the dawning of this new century? You deserve applause, too!

This is a night for congratulating yourselves for all you have done.

This is not a night for long speeches, but in these brief remarks I want to remind us of our origins and then tell you what we envision UIS will be when we celebrate our 50th anniversary 14 years from now.

I want to tell you about two documents I saw as we planned for this event.

One was a picture, an aerial picture of some farm fields. There was a lake to the east of these fields. The picture shows ordinary Illinois farm fields, but in another sense it was a blank canvas.

You are in the midst of those fields now, the canvas that became SSU in 1970, when the first temporary buildings were finished.

The aerial picture shows this land before there were any university buildings.

It's the kind of picture that made me stop.

Stop and ponder. Stop in awesome wonder. Stop and think about all the changes made to these 746 acres. Stop to imagine how people dreamed about these fields. Looking at the blank canvas, I was able to visualize that we have indeed built something quite special.

The second document builds on the first. It's a 113-page report prepared by Dick Williams, our great retired physical plant director who oversaw the development of the campus for 25 years. He is with us tonight. His report, published in 1995, describes in careful detail a campus of 42 buildings with a combined 765,000 gross square feet of space.

Since then we've added Lincoln Residence Hall, many townhouses and University Hall. Now we have more than a million gross square feet of space in our buildings. From zero to more than a million. Not bad, not bad.

On top of that, construction of our new \$15 million rec center just began last month.

Have you had a chance to experience the campus outside lately? What a sight to see the quad and the colonnade to the east of University Hall. It's beautiful!

But the buildings that rose from these fields only begin to tell our story.

Much more important are the educational opportunities provided in the past 36 years to our students. Equally important are the benefits to the community - with SSU and UIS providing cultural, recreational and educational opportunities that only a university can bring to a city.

UIS has more than 22,000 alumni living in almost every state and in many other nations - making a difference in the world. We have more than 40 degree programs and recognized excellence in many of them.

These educational opportunities, these benefits to the community, this attraction for faculty to move to Springfield and prosper as teachers and scholars, is possible only because you dreamed boldly and built this university with great energy and creativity.

Now we are still dreaming boldly.

You probably have heard that we just completed a new strategic plan for UIS. ... No, no, no. Don't let your eyes glaze over. It is a bold plan for the 21st century. We are creatively building on your dreams and your successes. You have a copy of the executive summary.

Here is our vision: To be a premier small public liberal arts university with high-quality professional programs and public affairs activities. And we set high goals - three overarching goals:

1. Academic excellence.

2. Enriching individual lives.

3. Making a difference in the world.

We know that universities become great first by being great locally, in their own backyards. The College of Charleston knew that by making its mission to serve the "low country" of South Carolina with unprecedented excellence. It has done just that and is now recognized nationally as a premier university.

At UIS, let me give you just two recent examples of how I think this will work for us:

One, we are doing biological research on the Illinois River reclamation project near Havana. That is an important project about the Illinois water supply. But what we learn there is expected to have an impact on how scientists and environmentalists deal with the Amazon River in South America and the Yangtze River in China. Awesome, isn't it?

Second, our work in online education expanded our outreach to non-traditional students, making high-quality education more and more accessible. How we're providing online education is getting attention literally around the world - at major national and international conferences and in publications such as the Wall Street Journal.

Think of those examples: local excellence, global impact. It's a pattern that works.

As I wrap up these remarks, I am thinking about the current national debate about Red States and Blue States. Red states are Republican and Blue States are Democratic.

The tragedy is that the red state-blue state debate is shorthand for how divided the American people supposedly are. Some say we are hopelessly divided. I hope they are wrong.

Instead of talking about division, I prefer the promising rhetoric of an emerging American leader, our own Senator Barack Obama. He mentioned red states and blue states in the 2004 campaign. This is what he said:

"There are those who are preparing to divide us. Well, I say to them tonight, there's not a liberal America and a conservative America - there's the United States of America. The pundits like to slice-and-dice our country into Red States and Blue States. ... But I've got news for them. ... We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes."

That same Barack Obama was on this stage in Sangamon Auditorium just 18 days ago giving a commencement address. He challenged the graduates of the SIU School of Medicine to use their new roles as doctors to make health care more readily available to more Americans who cannot afford it.

Why did he say that?

Because, he said, "Because it's only when you hitch your wagon to something larger than yourself that you will realize your true potential."

Why do I bring that up tonight in a much different kind of setting?

First, because I know you're the people who hitched your wagon in these farm fields to something larger than yourself. The second reason is that sometimes I get the impression that whether we're talking about UIS or Sangamon State, some people try to conjure up a divisive image like the red states and blue states. It's like planting weeds on this great soil. Why they want to sow discord, I do not know.

But I've got news for them: The pioneers - you pioneers! - who staked your credentials on this land had a wonderful dream. Then, President Naomi Lynn and her team did a superb job directing the transformation from SSU to the University of Illinois at Springfield. And now we have a vision that will continue to blaze a new trail in higher education. It took a great team effort and community effort to make it succeed, and it will take an equally dynamic community effort to pursue and achieve the vision of being recognized as one of the best in the nation.

So as we hitch our wagons to the vision in our new strategic plan, we'll still be hitching our wagons to something greater than ourselves - for the benefit of our students and certainly for the benefit of this community.

When a Chicago Tribune reporter was here last week, one of our deans told her that UIS is on an upward trajectory now. I like that language: an upward trajectory, leading to something wonderful all over again.

I could probably never thank you enough, or thank this community enough, for supporting what has been an institution in transition for its entire existence. Now we have a mission and vision that gives us all the energy we need to unite us: Academic excellence, enriching individual lives and making a difference in the world.

Let us continue to be bold and continue to build something wonderful. We must continue to do it together. Let's get at it, together!

Thank you.

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A Message from the Presidents and Chancellors of Public Universities in Illinois to the People of Illinois

Posted on all public university websites and sent to Illinois media outlets

Wednesday, February 11, 2008, 3 p.m.

The public universities of Illinois play a critical role in the lives of our state's citizens and in our state's ability to compete in the national and global economies. We know your expectations of us are great as are the dividends of a high quality system of public higher education in Illinois.

In good times and bad, our institutions are here for the people of Illinois. We never waver from the commitment to fulfill our missions of education, research, health care and public service in ways that earn your trust. In these difficult financial times, we want to communicate directly with you, the people of Illinois.

To students and their families. A quality education is crucial to our students' future. Providing it is our fundamental purpose and we pledge to do so in ways that work for you. Tuition is a significant burden for many. We will strive to keep tuition as low as possible in order to maximize access and minimize financial burdens. State support is also crucial to controlling tuition costs. Funds for financial aid from all sources are critical.

To elected officials. Public universities with total enrollment of more than 200,000 students are collectively the state's most valuable asset in enabling citizens and the state to have prosperous futures. Our governing boards and administrators take this responsibility seriously. We will provide a quality education for as many qualified students as possible, and fulfill our missions to supply clinical health care, research and public service. We recognize the enormous financial pressures placed on our state leaders and legislators. We are committed to careful stewardship and sound management of the budgets entrusted to the state's universities; we are also committed to ensuring efficient operations in order to control tuition costs and to provide financial aid.

To members of our home communities. From DeKalb to Carbondale, Charleston to Macomb, Chicago to central Illinois, we are major employers and we provide good jobs, pay and benefits. We produce the building blocks for economic strength across the state and enhance the quality of life in our hometowns through those we educate, our research innovations and our cultural opportunities. We strive to be good citizens. We appreciate your support, and we look forward to strengthening the partnerships with our communities in the difficult days ahead.

To faculty and staff and their families. The human capital on our campuses is our most valuable asset. It is our employees and students who make us great. You are foremost on our minds as we manage through this economic recession. We will do our best to continue to be dependable employers.

The public universities of Illinois have served the state and its people since the latter half of the 19th century; most have been in existence for more than 100 years. All have stood the test of time and the trust of Illinois' people. Higher education and our state's public universities have never been more important than now. You can count on us as we move forward and navigate these difficult times.

Sincerely,

Dr. Frank Pogue
Interim President, Chicago State University

Dr. William L. Perry
President, Eastern Illinois University

Dr. Elaine Maimon
President, Governors State University

Dr. C. Alvin Bowman
President, Illinois State University

Dr. Sharon K. Hahs
President, Northeastern Illinois University

Dr. John G. Peters
President, Northern Illinois University



Chancellor Ringeisen's Remarks Volunteer Leadership Forum

October 20 , 2006

A Star Rising

Good morning, distinguished alumni, friends, colleagues and guests. Good morning, and welcome-welcome to the University of Illinois at Springfield Volunteer Leadership Forum.

I'd like to talk with you this morning about UIS being a star, about being a leader, because that is the destiny of the University of Illinois at Springfield.

What began 36 years ago as Sangamon State University, what today is the University of Illinois at Springfield, is definitely a star rising. You may be wondering how I can make such an assertion, just what I'm basing this statement on.

My belief in the star power of UIS is sparked by things like last summer's Chicago Tribune article that called us the **University of the Future**. And our Admissions staff is telling us that while recruiting in the Chicago area, they are finally hearing people say, Oh yes, we've heard about UIS and heard things about UIS. That's a major breakthrough for us.

Beyond internal or external recognition, though, my belief in UIS is ultimately based on what I see everyday on this campus.

So, I'd like to share what I see at UIS - what I see in UIS.

To be a star, you must dream boldly, creating a vision based on creativity and intellectual drive. Our vision at UIS is the deepest expression of what we want to be, our preferred future, an image of how we can best serve our cause. Just what is our vision? "UIS will be a premier small public university offering innovative, high-quality liberal arts education, public affairs activities and professional programs dedicated to academic excellence, to enriching individual lives and to making a difference in the world."

Yes, that's our vision, but we take it a step further. Besides our vision, our statement of strategic intent says that **we intend to be one of the top five** small public liberal arts universities in the nation. That is bold, isn't it? And now we have people all over campus coming to us and saying - if you really want to be in the top 5, you need to support us more. And they're right - and I'm thrilled that people are catching on to the "top five" idea.

As we implement our plan, we recognize that leading universities have passion for a cause that is larger than they are - a dream and a vision that will make society better. That is why we declare UIS will make a difference in the world. It's the third of our three major goals. To make a difference in the world.

Our graduates, our students, our faculty and staff are prepared to lead, to contribute to society, to nurture their communities.

Another key element of leadership is the ability to see new things: leaders must consistently demonstrate innovation and insight...insight that inspires others to action, innovation that improves life for all. Take a look at our past five years, and you'll see innovation, you'll see transformation.

Just a few highlights show UIS making a difference in the world:

- UIS is a recognized leader in **online education and technology**. Our University campus is completely wireless, the first in Illinois. Ray Schroeder, Director of UIS' Office of Technology Enhanced Learning, is one of the nation's leading experts on online education. He has brought UIS into the national limelight with regard to online degree programming.
- UIS is taking a lead role in one of the largest **flood plain restoration** projects in the world-the Emiquon Preserve in Havana, Illinois, a huge project on the Illinois River that is expected to have worldwide implications for river projects on the Amazon and in China.

- Shining stars! When it comes to **our students**, no other phrase is as fitting. Just a couple of examples, though there are many more...UIS Accountancy graduates rank near the top in first-time pass rates for the national CPA exam. And, the College of Education and Human Services has a 100% pass rate for Teacher Education candidates on state exams.
- Our College of Business and Management houses the new Center for Entrepreneurship so that UIS can be of greater service in the **economic development** of Springfield and the region. And we are one of the leadership investors in a brand new Springfield Chamber of Commerce initiative about economic development, a multimillion dollar community investment that has the bold goal of creating 4,500 jobs in the greater Springfield area.
- UIS' Illinois **Legislative Staff Internship Program** remains the premier graduate-level program of its kind in the nation - placing graduate-level interns on all four legislative leadership staffs in the state Capitol every year. We are well-positioned to build on our tradition of blending real-world opportunities with academic offerings. That is evident in the 149 graduate students who have internships at 14 state agencies this fall, thanks to the Graduate Public Service Internship Program. By the way, 149 is a record.
- Within the College of Public Affairs and Administration is the nationally renowned and highly selective graduate program in **Public Affairs Reporting** under the direction of Charles Wheeler. Wheeler and political scientists Kent Redfield and Chris Mooney - all at UIS - are three of the most-quoted sources in the state on the subject of Illinois government and politics. Here's a fact that isn't known widely enough: Two months ago Professor Wheeler was inducted into the Lincoln League of Journalists of the Illinois Associated Press Editors Association. He became only the seventh member of the league, which was created in 2000 to honor "men and women who have provided exemplary service to other journalists and to daily newspapers published in Illinois."
- UIS has significantly increased its share of **grant funding** to further our teaching and research efforts. For example, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is a recipient of Merck grants for undergraduate research in sciences. LAS is also a co-recipient of a National Science Foundation grant for Center for the System Security and Information Assurance (CSSIA). The College has also received a major National Science Foundation grant for archaeological research in Germany, including student internship opportunities.
- Online programs in the College of Education and Human Services are rated among the top 5 in the nation by the Wall Street Journal as of May 2006. And, the college's **online math certification** program is helping to alleviate the shortage of math teachers in the state of Illinois.
- Our **Center for State Policy and Leadership**, in addition to all its service to state government, is creating an exciting intellectual climate on campus with its forums, summits and lecture series, featuring nationally and internationally respected speakers.
- There is clear evidence that UIS is doing **athletics the right way**. More than half of our student-athletes have been named to our Director of Athletics' Honor Roll. The men's basketball team led the American Midwest Conference this past season with nine players named to the Academic All-Conference Team. And our women's volleyball team was among 287 teams at schools throughout the nation that earned an American Volleyball Coaches Association Team Academic Award for the 2005-06 season.
- The **fine arts** at UIS are growing exponentially. For example, we are now one of four major art venues in the city of Springfield. And, Sangamon Auditorium is one of central Illinois' finest performing arts facilities, presenting more than 60 performances per year and hosting numerous other events as well. And we now have a building appropriately named the Visual and Performing Arts Building - you knew it as Building G, maybe - as a sign of our commitment to the fine arts.
- Let me tell you something else you probably didn't know. Our library, **Brookens Library**, has a larger collection than most of its peers - meaning small private colleges in Illinois and public liberal arts universities throughout the United States. With 540,000 volumes and many online sources, the greatness of Brookens Library has been, until today, too much of a secret. So in the years to come, we will do a lot more bragging about the resource we have in Brookens Library.

- Leading universities create a sense of place and offer first-rate facilities. The UIS campus has undergone a **physical transformation** in order to create its own sense of place. University Hall, one of the most technologically-sophisticated classroom buildings in the state, is first-rate, as is the state-of-the-art Lincoln Residence Hall. We are now watching our new recreation and athletic center take shape, and very soon construction will begin on more townhouses, where students will enjoy living in style and comfort, as they do now in the existing townhouses. Then we'll break ground for our second residence hall, which will feature many of the conveniences that our students have come to expect.

That's the short list.

I could go on, as I often do, about how far UIS has come in the last few years and how brilliant our future is. I hope that you have gotten a strong sense of our pride and our determination to make UIS the very best it can be.

First, though, maybe, I can share the stars with you.

Without a doubt, our future will be brighter than ever.

UIS is going to reach beyond what appear to some people as limitations, but we know they are not limitations. They are only more stars beyond the ones we have already discovered.

This is our time.

This is also your time, because you help provide the spirit and the energy to move UIS forward and implement our collective vision. Please know that your individual efforts, your "can-do" spirit and your financial support, are all deeply appreciated.

We want, and need to involve you in the process for defining and implementing the bold future envisioned for UIS. With dedicated, unified commitment, at the conclusion of this Campaign, I believe each of us will be able to say, 'I helped to build the best possible future for higher education in this region.'

What dream, what goal could possibly be better? At UIS, you're in on the ground floor; we'll emerge as stars together.

In closing, I offer my sincere thanks for all of your hard work on behalf of UIS, and for your strong, engaged support of our advancement work. In gatherings such as this, we are shaping a bright, bright future for the University of Illinois at Springfield.

The stars are rising, and in 10 years, it will be much, much brighter.

Thank you.

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Chancellor Ringeisen's Remarks Convocation for Faculty and Staff

August 17 , 2006

These are the prepared remarks of Chancellor Richard D. Ringeisen for Convocation 2006, delivered on August 17, 2006. Chancellor Ringeisen does not use a verbatim text for his remarks. He uses a combination of notes and text, and this is his prepared script.

Creating a brilliant future

Good Afternoon and Welcome

Thank you for the introduction, Harry.

I always look forward to this day.

Welcome especially to new faculty and staff who are here.

We take time at this annual convocation to celebrate the new year and the promise it represents.

The UIS presentation in Urbana about the strategic plan was a pivotal moment in the history of our university.

"My professors know me" - a slide we used to portray the essence of UIS - really got people's attention, including President White's.

That symbolizes what makes us great: Small classes, intimate learning environment.

The response from our deans and from other campuses was remarkable

Sometimes, when you're fortunate, you can say: That was a moment in time when things changed.

At this time last year at this time I talked about the enormous task ahead of us:

- To complete our strategic plan
- To create and to teach the courses needed for our new general education curriculum

What I am saying this year:

- We have turned the corner
- And we are, right now, creating a brilliant future.

I can sense it!

The Chicago Tribune this summer called us The University of the Future. I'll take that.

I know we have turned the corner after dealing with four really bad budget years, and then spending 18 months in spirited conversations about our future and our strategic plan.

I can tell you today that not only have we survived years of budget cuts, but we have emerged with a strong, focused plan for our future.

We have emerged with a new general education curriculum with two great principles: lifelong learning and engagement.

We have emerged with our first comprehensive strategic plan in 14 years. It's called Creating a Brilliant Future.

We have emerged by adding about 40 new faculty last year and now we have 41 - giving us more faculty than UIS has ever had in its history.

I think this is the most faculty we have added in any given year, including the year we first opened in 1970.

As I heard Dean Margot Duley say last spring, UIS is now on an upward trajectory as we become a full-fledged four-year university.

We did a lot of work last year to finish our strategic plan.

Then we drilled deeper at the college level.

Now all the colleges have their own strategic plans, as does Brookens Library, the Center for State Policy and Leadership, the Division of Student Affairs, and our Development and Alumni offices.

We have indeed turned the corner.

We are on that upward trajectory.

This is the year we make the biggest transition in my five years here from planning to implementation.

We are going to focus on two priorities this year, and that's what I want to talk about today:

1. Our strategic plan - and in the first year, how we're already making progress on its goals.
2. Building bridges and making connections

First I must address THREE ISSUES that came up many times during our strategic planning discussions. In fact, I want to make some declarations about three issues as we move forward.

1. The first is that we remain committed to our traditional role in serving non-traditional students. All over the country, universities are going after non-traditional students. You might say that we are 30 years ahead of them, because we have been doing this so well since 1970. I hope we stay 30 years ahead of the competition as we continue to serve non-traditional students. The competition for such students is getting stiffer in our state and in the nation.
2. Second, we remain committed to our tradition in strong public affairs programming. Our location in the state capital is one of our strengths, and we will continue to do what no other Illinois university is in a position to do.
3. Third, we will continue to have strong professional programs. Many liberal arts universities have outstanding professional programs, and so I want to let you know again: Our professional programs here are an integral part of our academic mission. They shall prosper.

We will do these things as part of a premier public liberal arts university. Because that is the way UIS chooses to be the best. We choose to be premier:

- We choose to have strong professional programs.
- We choose to have high-quality public affairs programs,
- And we choose to reach out to adult students, even as we grown our residential population.

We will be THE model for a high-quality, broadly based, public liberal arts university.

So let's talk about the STRATEGIC PLAN.

As you know, it has three major goals.

1. Academic excellence
2. Enriching individual lives
3. Making a difference in the world

Academic excellence - I am so pleased that academic excellence emerged as our number one goal. That's exactly as it should be.

I am pleased to announce that we are already implementing this goal:

- New courses: We have added at least 60 new courses to our curriculum as we implement our new general education curriculum. Thanks to Karen Moranski and all who worked with her in the past year to make that happen.
- New faculty: As you can see today, we have added dozens of new faculty members across the curriculum in the past two years.

- Support for faculty: We will increase support for faculty to attend conferences at which they will make scholarly presentations.
- We will establish an internal grant program aimed at supporting innovative, interdepartmental faculty development projects.
- We will provide funds specifically targeted at the theory and pedagogy of general education and liberal learning.
- Seed funding for new projects: We will provide seed funding for some high-visibility collaborative projects identified in the strategic plan to aid those projects in leveraging external support.
- Professional development for Academic Professionals: We will also take steps to develop the skills of our dedicated academic professionals and their ability "to advance the professional practice in their fields" by increasing the pool of funds available to them for professional development.
- Support for college offices: We will begin to remedy longstanding staffing needs by increasing staffing in the college offices and by beginning to address faculty and staff salary equity.

All of this with a strategic plan that is just a few months old but will guide us for the next three to five years. I think we're off to a great start.

The other goals: enriching lives and making a difference in the world

There is one current project that summarizes the aspirations we express in the strategic plan to enrich individual lives and to make a difference in the world.

Look no further than our Quad - and see the sculpture by Preston Jackson. It arrived in late July and it will be here for months. It is a beautiful piece of sculpture.

It is here because one of our faculty members, Mike Miller, worked with:

- local arts organizations in this community;
- the sculptor himself;
- the UIS community;
- and the local African American community.

To make this happen.

The Preston Jackson exhibit is a community-wide exhibit, and on September 9, there will be several receptions in Springfield.

The first reception will be here at UIS.

And so we have the fine arts enriching lives and making a difference in our community.

Everything about this exhibit is right for our community and right for UIS. I commend Professor Miller for making this happen at UIS, and I hope we have an overflowing crowd at that September 9 reception.

Making a difference in the world. What a wonderful goal!

We know that universities become great first by being great locally, in their own backyards. For example, the College of Charleston made its mission to serve the "low country" of South Carolina with unprecedented excellence. It has done just that and is now recognized nationally as a premier university.

Let me give you recent examples in which UIS has applied this principle:

1. One, we are doing biological research on the Illinois River reclamation project near Havana. That is an important project about the Illinois water supply. But what we learn there is expected to have an impact on how scientists and environmentalists deal with the Amazon River in South America and the Yangtze River in China. Awesome, isn't it?
2. Second, our work in online education expanded our outreach to non-traditional students, making high-quality education more and more accessible. How we're providing online education is getting attention literally around the world - at major national and international conferences and in publications such as the Wall Street Journal.
3. Third, there is Gear UP and how we have helped students at Lanphier High School.

Think of those examples: local excellence, global impact. It's a pattern that works.

You might say we have a "laboratory" every day in the arts, in state government, in the sciences, in education.

Local excellence, regional and global impact.

And that leads me to the other point I want to make in these remarks. First I wanted to talk about our strategic plan; now I want to talk about building bridges.

BUILDING BRIDGES

As we execute our bold plan for the future, we will have to build many new bridges, and we will.

The Preston Jackson exhibit is just one example of that - of building bridges in our community.

Jim Collins is an author well-known for his business books *Built to Last* and *Good to Great*. One of his points is that many businesses and organizations are mediocre or good, but few are great.

Someone gave him the idea to apply his principles to the nonprofit sector. He recently did that, in a monograph called *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*.

Collins says something that pertains directly to the implementation of our strategic plan. He said this: "The number one resource for a great social sector organization is having enough of the right people willing to commit themselves to mission."

Well, we have a mission, and we are on Dr. Duley's upward trajectory, and so we need to build bridges to get more people committed to our mission and vision.

Let me give you just three examples:

HOMEcomings

This year's homecoming at UIS will be very different from all others. We have built a new bridge to the community for our homecoming.

This year, we have representatives of the city's Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce on our Homecoming Committee for the first time. We have asked local businesses to allow our students to paint UIS Homecoming themes on their windows for Homecoming week. We are making efforts to introduce our UIS visitors to more local businesses. We have built a bridge to the local business community in this way, and I think it's the start of a great new tradition. And we will have a parade and I hope the public comes!

ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER

Another example is the lunch our College of Business and Management hosted here in June to give grants to 10 local entrepreneurs. That was the work of our emerging Entrepreneurial Center in our business college - reaching out to lend our expertise for the betterment of the community.

DOWNSTATE INNOCENCE PROJECT

Still a third example is the success of our Downstate Innocence Project to help a previously convicted woman gain her innocence at a new trial this summer. How terrific is that - UIS helps an innocent woman gain her freedom!!!

Enriching individual lives and making a difference in the world by building bridges. Remarkable.

As I wrap up my remarks, though, I have a special message for the UIS community about bridges I want us to build right here at UIS. From the administration to faculty, staff and students. Let's recall how important building bridges was in our successes - the gen ed curriculum, the marvelous strategic plan, the invest in UIS program.

Let's continue to build strong build bridges and walk on them together!

I am reminded of something that Benjamin Franklin said at the end of the constitutional convention. He advised his colleagues in this new nation in 1787

to **doubt their own infallibility**, to set aside their differences and to work together to implement the new constitution.

And that reminds me of something our own Phil Paludan says: **Don't believe everything you think!**

We have high aspirations, and it is vital that we talk about our aspirations today.

We aspire to be recognized as one of the best five small public liberal arts universities in the nation. One of the best!

It is said that if we can imagine it, we can have it. I believe Henry Ford was right when he said **whether you believe you can do something or not, you are right.**

I believe that as we pursue our vision, we must build even stronger bridges to one another. Remember at commencement in the spring how our own Phil Paludan calmly advised us to **try to be good to each other.** Great advice then, great advice this year.

We have strong bridges that unite us, and we need to keep them strong. I'm thinking of my own administration and the Campus Senate, and APAC and all APs, and our civil service workers, and relationships between faculty and staff. Reach out to each other. Try to be good to each other.

I believe we can not only build bridges together, but walk over them together in pursuit of a brilliant future that we will create together. I ask you to join me on this journey, and I promise to join you on yours!

We have already started, and I look forward to working with all of you this year to pursue the boldest vision ever for UIS.

Thank you.

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**Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
University of Illinois at Springfield**

**Convocation 2008
Thursday, August 21, 2008**

Building toward strategic goals

Welcome. It is great to be back, isn't it?

It's good to see so many familiar faces, and to welcome those of you who have arrived or who just started here.

I'd like to start by telling you a story about something new on our campus and, well, kind of a surprise to me at least, but in a good way.

I told you last year about an idea my wife, Carolyn, had about having a fountain in the pond. Now, you may have noticed, or I should say, how could you miss noticing that her idea has become a reality.

It's kind of funny how this turned out - you see, I envisioned the fountain something like this, with water softly rising and falling, creating gentle ripples on the pond.

But Carolyn and Joan Buckles had a much grander vision - I think they may have had Old Faithful in mind - of a fountain that can be seen from almost anywhere on campus and one that makes a big statement on the landscape -- I've heard by the grapevine that some of you are calling it the "Ring-Guyser." I laughed when I heard that, but I think it's pretty appropriate since the fountain is capable of shooting 90 feet high when the winds are calm. It actually has two other heights - 60 feet and 30 feet high - determined by a wind meter similar to the one that controls the colonnade fountain.

Whatever we call it, this is my way of introducing my wife Carolyn, partner in everything we do here.

The southwest side of the pond is where the UIS Women's Center has an annual gathering and awards ceremony at the beautiful place we call Women's Peace and Friendship Garden, which extends along the west side. Carolyn hopes that the new fountain will attract even more students and others to this whole area of the campus - for other social events and relaxation as well.

It's one of those "third spaces" we talk about the importance of developing in our Strategic Plan.

Another great example of an external gathering or "third space" is our colonnade. I don't think it will surprise you that it has become the most photographed spot on campus, the backdrop for just about everything you can think of -- group photos, graduation shots, marketing campaigns, engagement and wedding photos, and on and on. You see, it has no bad side. And it has become a popular place for students to hang out.

I learned this past year that of the 750 acres on which this university is located, 370 of those acres are landscaped. Imagine taking care of 370 acres -- and the number keeps growing! That's what our grounds crew does under the excellent leadership of Joan Buckles. Joan and her crew know how important first impressions are. And they make us very proud of our surroundings by creating and maintaining this diverse and beautiful campus. As do the "inside" staff who maintain our buildings - what a very hard-working bunch of people!

I want to mention other projects outside that Joan has been instrumental in creating. If you haven't seen it, please take a look at our new Japanese Garden located around the southwest corner of this building. During a celebration and dedication of the garden in May, we honored Eileen Ensel, who gave the garden to UIS as a living tribute to her late husband. Eileen, who is one of my favorite people and a great friend of this university, chose the spot for the garden because of its proximity to both Sangamon Auditorium and student housing.

Oh, and another space that I am very excited about is the courtyard between Lincoln Residence Hall and the newly constructed Founders Hall. Wow! Our students will really enjoy stepping out of their residence halls right into this wonderful space that will serve multiple social and fun purposes. We look forward to seeing the courtyard full of students.

By telling you about these spaces, I guess what I'm trying to say is that we're really making strides in turning the outside campus into an interesting, inviting and personally

enriching place for our students, faculty and staff, not to mention the thousands of people who visit UIS each year.

I like to take an assessment at this time every year about where we are and where we're going in the coming year, as best that can be known. Here's what I see now -- we have reached a critical point in time when some very big pieces of our plan to be one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the country are in place. That is, we are physically and academically ready to make a major move toward that aspiration.

Some big developments last year brought us closer to reaching our goal.

Without a doubt, reaccreditation by the Higher Learning Commission for a full 10 years, was the most significant accomplishment. That's the best rating a university can receive, and it was without qualifications, a first for UIS. Many people guided us through that process. I especially want to thank Karen Kirkendall and her team for their superb leadership. And the Provost, too, by the way!

In the fall, we received the highest award in the nation for institution-wide online teaching and learning from the Sloan Consortium. That means we are the best anywhere at institution-wide online education. Our online guru, Ray Schroeder, and his team, and Burks Oakley, are the leaders, and many, many people made it happen. UIS is now a top distance learning provider, and Ray and Burks are the national, indeed, international "go-to" experts on the subject.

In fact, several representatives from other universities from around the country came to UIS this summer to learn from our folks about online learning. The Provost will mention this later.

That's an important step on our way to being recognized among the top five small publics. Here's another one:

This spring, Dr. Karl McDermott was named the first Ameren Endowed Professor in Business and Government at UIS, a professorship established through a \$500,000 gift from the Ameren Corporation. Ameren shares our focus on the future, and professorships like this one strengthen the academic fiber of this university.

Academic Excellence in action - one of our primary strategic goals.

A formal investiture ceremony for Dr. McDermott will be held on September 25. You'll be hearing more about that.

I want to tell you about one day last spring that particularly stands out in my mind. It was the day we dedicated our new Emiquon Field Station and celebrated a remarkable partnership among UIS, The Nature Conservancy and Dickson Mounds Museum. We have so much passion about this station and for our involvement in one of the most incredible floodplain restoration projects in the world.

As that passion was being expressed by our own Biology Professor Mike Lemke, the station's director, and others, Mother Nature decided to show her interest in our project with a downpour and heavy winds that rattled the flaps and shook the tent we were in. It was a fitting drama - right out there in the middle of the Emiquon Preserve near Havana - a timely reminder of the power of nature and her dominance over us all. But that didn't drown out the message: It was very clear -- we're here and we're going to make a difference.

The impact that the station will have on current and future generations of students interested in hands-on field experience in restoration ecology and conservation biology will be immense.

This illustrates what UIS is all about: opportunities for students and opportunities for faculty involvement in the world's biggest issues, demonstrating two of our primary strategic goals -- Enriching Individual Lives and Making a Difference in the World.

Academic Excellence, Enriching Individual Lives and Making a Difference in the World. Those primary strategic goals are the foundation for our actions in everything we do.

Here's more evidence of our commitment to those goals:

* Today we will welcome 27 new fulltime faculty members. That's on top of the 24 new faculty last year, 41 two years ago and 39 three years ago. In total, that's 131 new faculty in four years. Talk about acting for academic excellence! And continuing support for faculty scholarship is a priority. The trend is clear. UIS is putting a high priority on hiring high-quality faculty wherever we need them.

* And the students are coming. We will have the largest class of freshmen this fall - exceeding our goal with nearly 300 students. And the total number of all students enrolled this fall should near 5,000. The word is spreading that UIS is a place where students come because we are small and we are excellent, and our professors know students' names, starting right away, with their first semester here.

* And our campus is growing physically as well. Our brand new residence hall -- Founders Hall -- symbolizes the growth of our residential campus. We have watched it take shape all winter long and now it's, well, nearly finished..... We named it Founders Hall to honor the university's founders in a special way while some of them are still living. We'll be planning some kind of ceremony for them and the campus community this coming year, so watch for that.

* And we will continue to develop opportunities for faculty to become even better teacher-scholars. In place now, for example, are the distinguished visitors series, summer research grants, and increased faculty development funds, e.g. our academic initiative grants, scholarly presentations support and collaborative seed funding.

* Look at these slides: That's part of the new green roof being lifted up and put into place on Founders Hall. What spectacular evidence of our efforts to conserve energy and be earth friendly. The roof is made of sedums, hardy plants that have water-storing leaves. The decision to have a green roof is a major commitment to environmental sustainability. That's a subject we're taking very seriously -- I'll tell you more about that a little later.

* Speaking of Making a Difference in the World, our Global Experience Program has really taken off, so to speak, in preparing students for local and global challenges and responsibilities. We now offer programs in Japan, Nicaragua, Jamaica, Botswana, Australia, Poland, Greece, Germany, Canada, Romania, and the United Kingdom. I was approached by someone I didn't know recently - everybody knows the chancellor - and he told me about how much his nephew, a UIS junior from Peoria, is enjoying his Australia experience!

* UIS offers conversation-based language instruction in French, Spanish, German, Russian, Japanese and Chinese. Here's an amazing statistic: Roughly 35% of the faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences were either born in another country and bring that perspective to UIS, or they have studied another culture and have significant academic expertise. This year a particularly significant hire is the college's first full-time tenure track Director of Modern Languages, Dr. Mayra Bonet. (Dean Duley will introduce her later.) Dr. Bonet will lead planning for our first modern languages major/minor in Spanish.

What great examples of how we enrich students' lives and prepare them to make a difference.

And there's more: Next fall we'll expand our current international studies minor to offer a bachelor's degree in Global Studies. It is already approved and will allow students "to explore global issues and look at the world from a more global perspective," according to Professor Hillary Frost-Kumpf, who will teach courses in that major.

And, I'm really excited about a very special series that starts this fall. It's a revival of the Ambassadors Series that will bring to Springfield several U.S. ambassadors from foreign countries Switzerland, New Zealand, Norway, and the Vatican, are already scheduled. UIS will host this series of world dignitaries, who will share business, economic, and political insights at six lunch meetings beginning in September at the Dove Conference Center at The Prairie Heart Institute. Our College of Public Affairs and Administration and Development Office are making this happen. Look for more on that.

UIS connecting with the community to bring world leaders to Springfield.

There are lots of other exciting plans in the works for the coming year. Before I tell you about more of them, I'm going to change gears a bit now and talk frankly about a couple of challenges that we face as an institution.

It seems like I always must talk about the budget at this convocation. Due to the uncertainty of state support and our being a young institution needing to make investments, the budget remains a difficult issue. It's been many years since higher education regularly received significant increases from state government here in Illinois. It hasn't happened since I got here in 2001, in fact.

And we're still below our 2002 level of state funding caused by earlier cuts.

This academic year promises to be another difficult budget year. We have increased tuition more than we would like to, as have all the other public institutions in Illinois. But, we are grateful that the state did provide an operating increase for this year - a welcome addition indeed.

There are three reasons the budget is so tough. One is that we still haven't made up for past years' decreases in state funding. A second is that last year, while we reached our enrollment goals, we did not reach what we had budgeted for FTE enrollment and we did not retain students - transfer and grad mostly - at our normal rate from fall to spring, and so we had a downturn in revenue last year that we weren't expecting. The third reason is increasing energy and utility costs - heating, cooling and water.

All of this is so sobering because we must continue to press forward with our vision and strategic goals even in difficult economic times. We must and we shall! You know, when a ship encounters stormy water is NOT the time to shut the engines down: And we won't!

Which leads me to a very important point: Retention.

We will focus on retention of students as never before. As I mentioned, we are seeing a slip in the percentage of students returning to UIS - and this is at all levels. Much of that likely has to do with the economy and we can't help that, but this single fact accounts for most of our financial shortage. And we're responding. We have taken two very important steps to help with retention. One is to launch the Center for First-Year Students under the direction of Dr. Marcellus Leonard. Another is to hire Clarice Ford to run our new Diversity Center. Clarice has considerable experience in helping students to succeed in college. So you're going to see greater collaboration this year between our staff in Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to work on retention. I want all of us, whether we're in a classroom, in an office or in housing or elsewhere, to think retention - smile! You know, a friendly smile and a 'Can I help you?' is something we all can contribute. We must be focused on retention and doing more to help our students succeed in and out of the classroom.

But it's not only the students we need to retain. We need to retain good faculty and staff, too. One way we're doing that with faculty is to provide a pool of money for equity adjustments in salary every year. We know our good faculty have choices, and we want them to choose to stay here.

And the staff, too, who make UIS run. More than 100 of our staff and faculty drive more than 20 miles to work everyday, and the price they're paying at the pump just to get here has gotten very high. I know the Civil Service Advisory Council and the Academic Professional Advisory Committee have been talking over the summer about what we can do - beyond monetary compensation - to improve their working conditions. And I am asking our Human Resources department to begin a formal dialogue with the staff to brainstorm about what we can do to help - and still provide all the services we must provide to our students and faculty. And those of you in bargaining units, bring these ideas to the table. I think you'll find we're open to innovative ideas. Let's get creative and talking as a community about these important issues. You can work through APAC, CSAC and Human Resources to promote some good ideas, and I will look forward to hearing them.

As I look at the years ahead - all in all, though, I am optimistic. In fact, I'm downright excited! We're all looking toward our 40th anniversary in two years, for example.

You know, I have a great view of the new fountain in the pond from my office window and, particularly when it's at full height, it kind of reminds me of how we are always reaching higher and higher for excellence, to be the best at what we do no matter what the stresses are that we face.

That has come to define the character of this campus community -- a group of good people who keep striving, who look up - always up, always asking, what can we advance next!

As we look ahead to this year, I would summarize the major opportunities and challenges like this: First retention. Then sustainability, diversity, security, and private fund-raising, not necessarily in that order. There's more to be sure, but those subjects will require a lot of our attention in new and creative ways.

Sustainability: It's one of those words that we hear a lot. In striving for a "Green Campus," we have already set institutional milestones for achieving environmental sustainability. It's part of our Strategic Plan. We have established an Office of Sustainability, an umbrella office for what we are already doing and what we'll do in the future. Dave Barrows, our Associate Chancellor for Administrative Affairs, will oversee that office. Saving energy is no longer just an option. We are raising building temperatures or lowering them depending on the time of year and have replaced 98% of older light bulbs in every building with energy-saving fluorescent bulbs, lamps, and ballasts. Windows in Brookens Library are being replaced with double-pane glass to save on both cooling and heating costs. A new Bike to Work Program will help reduce gasoline costs for those employees who choose to use it. The UIS Energy Task Force, chaired by assistant professor of Environmental Studies, Tih-Fen Ting, has submitted a draft UIS Energy Use report. Input from the campus community about the report will be sought this semester. And campus recycling has increased, thanks to assistance from students and various campus departments such as Food Service. I talked about the green roof on Founders Hall earlier, but I also want to mention that Founders and TRAC are both designed to meet, even exceed in some cases, U.S. Green Building Council standards.

And our student group SAGE - Students Allied for a Greener Earth - will hold several events and activities this year and, I am told, will have a "green float" in this year's UIS Homecoming Parade. We look forward to that!

Diversity: Something we've been working on for a long time. Now, as I just mentioned, we've established a new Diversity Center and hired a director, Clarice Ford, who will lead our efforts to create a better environment for our diverse student body. In keeping with our strategic goal, more students from a wide variety of backgrounds are enrolling at UIS. We want them to have the best possible experience here. The Diversity Center will be a place where they can feel safe and comfortable, explore different cultural perspectives, and take advantage of programs, seminars, cultural festivals and much more. We are also now well positioned to begin searching for a coordinator of our LGBTQ efforts in that Center. The Center will promote achievement of two strategic goals: Enriching Individual Lives and Enrollment and Retention.

Also and importantly, we have hired a new, full-time director of the Office of Access and Equal Opportunity, Deanie Brown. We decided to make that position fulltime to improve and expand access and equal opportunity efforts. The primary goal in doing so is to enroll, retain, and graduate a larger and more diverse student body, and to recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff.

And we'll be conducting a national search for a new vice chancellor for student affairs. This is an extremely important position. And I know the committee, including co-chairs Karen Kirkendall and Ed Wojcicki would welcome your help - especially in finding good candidates.

Security: This subject has become one that has increasingly occupied our time and attention. That will continue to be true this year and into the future.

In January, we launched a new Emergency Notification System and encouraged our students, faculty and staff to sign up to receive text message "alerts" generated by the system in case of an emergency. That program is going well, but many more need to sign up, including new students and others each semester. It's the quickest way to be notified when an emergency happens. Here's the website to register:
<https://emergency.uis.edu>

And we're going to augment our security measures this year by installing a new Public Address System on campus. Also, our Police Department has special training in Active Shooter and other situations that could potentially threaten the safety of the campus. During this year, we will be showing the video, "Shots Fired," to faculty, staff and students. It deals with how best to react individually to such a situation. You'll hear more. But each of us is responsible for staying alert and reporting any unusual activity to the police.

And for individual safety, nothing beats vigilance and cooperation with our police officers.

A safe campus is everybody's business. I repeat - everybody's business.

Fund-raising: Let me briefly touch on our push for private gifts to UIS. As you know, the campaign goal is large for us -- \$28 million. Well...I'm proud to announce that because of all you all do, friends and alumni are responding... We have over \$19 million - that's 68% of our goal, and we've only used 60% of our campaign time. We have 3 years to go! Let me give an example of how important what we do everyday is.

There is this wonderful couple - friends in the community, not alums - who a few years ago pledged an estate gift of one quarter million dollars to UIS. Then last year, based on what they see here, they doubled it. Nice, huh? That's not the end of the story - recently they doubled it again! A million!

And what's ahead? A goal of \$4 million for this year alone! More professorships.

I also want to mention that we've made progress in reaching NCAA Division II status by moving from "Year One Exploratory" to "Year Two Exploratory." And not every school under consideration did. I congratulate the Athletic staff, AD Rodger Jehlicka, coaches, the FAR, Marcel Yoder, and others for reaching this goal. It has taken a lot of hard work. The academic and integrity standards demanded by Division II are impressive. We're only one year away from competing in the high level Great Lakes Valley Conference!

As I said at the beginning, we have now reached a milestone where the big pieces are in place academically and physically. The buildings we need are here - except a student union. A wonderful faculty is in place. We are ready.

So, puff your chests out. Hold your chins high and get ready. Oh, and, to paraphrase Hill Street Blues, 'Have fun out there.' Catch a student play, or concert, or a show. Or take the family to a Prairie Stars games. Enjoy!

And remember, this is the year where we are able to say we're well on our way to being the best small public liberal arts university anywhere!

Thank you and have a great semester!



Chancellor Ringeisen's Remarks Convocation for Faculty and Staff

August 16 , 2007

These are the prepared remarks of Chancellor Richard D. Ringeisen for Convocation 2007, delivered on August 16, 2007. Chancellor Ringeisen does not use a verbatim text for his remarks. He uses a combination of notes and text, and this is his prepared script.

Local excellence, global impact

Welcome. It is great to be back.

It's good to see so many familiar faces, and to welcome those of you who have just arrived or who just started here.

I'd like to include a few stories today, starting with one about our new rock garden.

One day this summer, I looked out my window on the fifth floor of this building and noticed that our grounds workers were removing all the grass from a location between the PAC and Brookens Library.

So we asked what was going on. Joan Buckles, our horticulturist and superintendent of the grounds, explained they were putting in a rock garden.

I love the idea! What I appreciate even more was that it sprang from our strategic plan. During our many deliberations in 2005 and 2006, our UIS community agreed that we needed more gathering places outside, and more walking paths, and Joan explained that the rock garden was a direct response to that part of the strategic plan. So Joan and her crew are taking a beautiful campus and finding ways to make it even more appealing.

There is another place outside at UIS that is quite beautiful and peaceful. It's the pond, where the UIS Women's Center has an annual gathering and awards ceremony at the place we call the Women's Peace and Friendship Garden. It's a great setting but one of our under-utilized assets at UIS.

But my wife, Carolyn, got to thinking – and here is what she saw – a fountain in the pond! Not just a little fountain, but the kind of flowing water that Hermann Melville might have been pondering when he wrote that "meditation and water are wedded forever."

So today, not only do I want to introduce Carolyn, as I always do – please stand and be recognized, Carolyn – but I want to tell you that she has decided to provide the funds for a new fountain in our pond. Plans are for the fountain to be installed this year. And it will be a wonderful addition to the campus. Thanks, hon.

As we were planning for this convocation over the summer, I felt more excited than in any other year since I arrived here in 2001. Last year I declared that UIS is now on an upward trajectory – a phrase I first heard from Dean Margot Duley. We have a bold vision, and in every way we are moving forward together in pursuit of our visions and dreams.

So that is what I will talk about today – the steps we are taking to implement our vision to be one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the nation.

I don't think I could remind us too many times about that vision and where we're heading and how we are getting there. It all starts with academic excellence, which is impossible without great faculty. It's why we take the time to introduce the new faculty to our university community. You'll be impressed, as I am, about what our faculty have been doing recently and the high-quality faculty we are attracting to UIS.

But before I get too far into my formal remarks, I note with great sadness that we must move forward without one of our very best faculty members – Dr. Philip Shaw Paludan, the great human being and great Lincoln historian who died just two weeks ago. Let us pause now for a moment of silence in memory of our friend, Dr. Paludan.

What Phil Paludan did for all of us and how he did it sets the standard and lays the foundation for what UIS is becoming. I am thinking in particular of two speeches that he gave for the UIS community. The first was in this room, where he was honored as the recipient of the first UIS distinguished chair when we conducted the investiture ceremony in 2001.

Phil's speech that day offered a great insight into why he appreciated Lincoln so much. He described Lincoln as a man of great civility, a president who endured great criticism and yet did not consider his adversaries to be demons or scoundrels. Instead, Lincoln did his extraordinary work "with malice toward none." Dr. Paludan modeled that kind of civility himself in his six years at UIS.

Then last year at commencement, Phil advised our graduates to seek their goals persistently yet humbly. He concluded his speech this way with that soft, passionate tone of his:

"Never give up.
"Try to understand things.
"Try to be good to each other."

So as we begin this year and continue implementing our strategic plan, let us honor Dr. Philip Shaw Paludan by vigorously raising our standards of excellence, by humbly going about our work, and by being good to each other. For that is what Dr. Paludan did; it is how he lived; it is what he modeled for us.

Our faculty here are making great strides – accomplishing a lot. One of our bright young faculty members, Brent Never in public administration, has received a Fulbright grant to study conflict resolution in Northern Ireland.

What a great example that is of what has become a theme at UIS – local excellence, global impact.

That is a favorite theme of mine. It means we do things so well here at UIS that the impact is felt globally, or sometimes regionally or nationally.

Brent Never: local excellence, global impact.

Another example: I am so proud of Dean Ron McNeil and the faculty in the College of Business and Management. The business college had been working for years to achieve national accreditation from The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International. Well, we finally received the good word in the spring. Our business college is now accredited!

Dean McNeil faced many many challenges in getting this accomplished, and I am so pleased that he kept his eye on the prize all along. To the faculty in the college, I salute you as well! I know you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get this accomplished. Fewer than 3 in 10 business colleges in the nation receive this accreditation. We are now in the elite.

The College of Business and Management: local excellence, national impact.

Our faculty here are impressive, aren't they? They are becoming increasingly impressive. There are 24 new faculty this year.

That's on top of the 41 new faculty members last year and another 39 the year before that. In total, that's 104 new faculty in the past three years – up to a record number this year of about 210 FTE faculty. That is our commitment to high quality and academic excellence.

The trend is clear. UIS is putting a high priority on hiring high-quality faculty wherever we need them.

And here's an amazing statistic: The number of faculty peer-reviewed presentations and publications has increased by 67 percent in the past four years. That includes longtime faculty and new faculty. Wow!

Faculty colleagues, congratulations on taking your scholarship so seriously. When you take this to the classroom, you have so much more to offer your students. Teaching and scholarship at a high quality liberal arts university are two sides of the same coin.

It's important to describe how exciting it is when this scholarship filters down to the students. Let me give you one example: Sara Paver, who graduated in 2007.

I want to tell you about Sara because her experience at UIS is indicative of what can happen at a small university in close interaction with a dedicated faculty member. As a freshman four years ago, Sara met biology professor Michael Lemke in the introductory biology course. Mike invited Sara to "hang

around" the lab and learn about research. Within the next couple of years, she learned a lot from Professor Lemke about advanced microbiology techniques. She worked with Lemke on the Emiquon floodplain restoration project north of here on the Illinois River. She analyzed nutrients in water samples collected from the river.

Because nutrients fuel the base of the food web, Sara's work is very important, as is Lemke's. Now this fall, Sara is advancing to graduate studies in ecology.

By the way, we broke ground up there this summer for a new Emiquon Field Research Station – where UIS is engaged with the Nature Conservancy and others on some remarkable research.

Mike, thanks so much for what you're doing to broaden students' interests and develop the next generation of scientists.

This illustrates what UIS is all about: opportunity for students and opportunities for faculty.

Local excellence, global impact.

OK, so far I've talked about a Fulbright scholar, bringing scholarship into the field, and national accreditation for our business college.

I want to tell you about another critically important accreditation process under way for UIS. This fall, in October, we will have the site visit for UIS' once-every-10-year reaccreditation process from the Higher Learning Commission, which we all used to know as the North Central Association.

This is critically important because the Higher Learning Commission examines the entire university, especially in light of our strategic plan. I want to thank Professor Karen Kirkendall for taking the lead and working so well with administrators and the entire steering team to compile a comprehensive report that is essential for the HLC's evaluation of UIS. You have done a remarkable job, and I thank you very much. We are looking forward to the HLC's Site visit in October. You can find a lot more information and documentation about this process on our web site: www.uis.edu/hlcreaccreditation/process/index.html

A year ago I felt so privileged in thanking you for your great effort in producing a visionary strategic plan for UIS. Now it obvious the strategic plan gives us clear direction, the direction we need. Without that strategic plan, we simply would not have been able to put together such an organized document for the HLC.

And you know what? We are still on the upward trajectory that we have been mentioning so frequently in recent months.

There are so many examples of local excellence leading to regional, national and global impact. Let me mention a few of them.

- Many computer science programs in the nation are lagging and having trouble getting students. Not here. Our program continues to grow and is one of the largest programs at UIS. Professor Ted Mims is a living billboard for this program wherever he goes.

Computer science: Local excellence, global impact.

- Here's another: We have about 350 Civil Service staff at UIS, providing the structural backbone that allows us to do the work that we do. I was so pleased when they came to me earlier this year and we discussed if UIS would create a new award, called the CARE award, to honor one of the best among them every year. I said yes right away, and this summer, the first CARE Award went to Dave Antoine in our electronic media department. How about a round of applause for Dave and for ALL of our Civil Service workers?
- Here's another: We have applied to join the NCAA, Division II. It's going well. Today I want to emphasize that joining Division II is good for academics as well as athletics. The NCAA Division II insists on academic quality and has more rigid requirements than the NAIA. Local excellence, national impact.
- On another note: I am also pleased to say we have just hired an Environmental Health and Safety Officer. His name is John Teimeyer. He has great credentials for this important, important position for UIS.
- Speaking of the environment, there is growing advocacy on campus for protecting the environment. UIS recently got a \$27,500 grant, to be supplemented with funds from student affairs, to expand recycling efforts here. That is wonderful news. Thanks to UIS faculty members

- Tih-Fen Ting and Marc Klingshirn for writing the grant with the help of the student group called SAGE (Students Allied for a Greener Earth).
- Yet another: Something else new this year for new Academic Professionals and Civil Service staff: a new Campus Welcome Committee. This group will meet monthly with new employees to share with them the UIS culture and the benefits for them personally of being a UIS employee. This will help to strengthen campus culture and to build a stronger community – which is another goal of our strategic plan. Earlier this year I asked APAC – the Academic Professional Advisory Committee – to get this Campus Welcome Committee up and running, and I commend you for putting together such a great program for our new employees.
 - Look at this slide. It's really what we are, and everybody nods their head "yes" when they see this. In fact, UIS is becoming known around the state as the place where the professors take time to know the students in small class settings.
 - Something else to be aware of: This past year our students have studied abroad at two universities in Australia and a university in Japan. We also offer our own short-term study abroad courses in China, Nicaragua, and Japan. And in the fall, we'll have a student at Colima University in Mexico. Local excellence, global impact.
 - And we continue to generate students and visibility around the world with our wonderful array of 16 online degree programs. We're still a national leader in this area and will remain so – local excellence, global impact.
 - You will see on our web site home page a box called Brilliant Futures. This is critical to our future – a major capital campaign that the University of Illinois formally launched June 1 at a gala event in Chicago. We need private donations, and our campus goal is \$28 million. I am happy to report that with the public phase just now beginning, we are already half-way to that goal already. You'll be hearing a lot about it, and the money we raise will help all of us. More scholarships, professorships, better facilities – that's what we are pursuing.
 - Finally, I am so excited that our new Recreation and Athletic Center will open soon. It's a \$16 million facility being paid for by our students – with student fees. This facility changes UIS forever and will become a major gathering point for students and the UIS community. I also predict it will prove to be a point of pride for all of central Illinois. Local excellence, regional impact.

I want to conclude with one last story.

Ninety-nine years ago this week, the city of Springfield endured one of the most notorious events in its history. The city endured two days of race riots – now commonly called the race riots of 1908 – a terrible time in our city's history. They got national attention in the media. As awful as those riots were, they did provide some teachable moments.

And in this academic year, there will be a connection between those events and UIS in a very positive way. Next February – February 2008 – when the national Abraham Lincoln Association commemorates the 100th anniversary of the race riots, one of the events will take place in our own Sangamon Auditorium. Local excellence, national impact.

But there's more to this. Another side of the race riot story is the power of the media to set agendas and to affect policy changes. The First Amendment is very much alive in our country and at UIS.

So this year, at UIS, we are focusing on the media and the First Amendment. We are hosting a presentation by Judith Miller, the *New York Times* reporter recently jailed in connection with the Valerie Plame incident.

And we're hosting another presentation by investigative journalist Charles Lewis, who has appeared many times on national programs and worked with UIS staff on the award-winning Illinois Campaign Finance Project in the 1990s.

This year's focus on the power of the media will culminate in February when the L. A. Theater Works comes to UIS to present the radio play "Top Secret: The Battle for the Pentagon Papers."

Local excellence, national impact.

Before I conclude, I do want to mention just one other thing about the race riot story. Did you know UIS is among an elite number of universities in the nation designated as an iTunes University? Well, today we are adding a new series to UIS on iTunes U: Revealing Voices. This series features oral histories as told by individuals who were present at the time. Go to "iTunes" from the A-Z index on our home page.

I said at the beginning of these remarks that we can honor Dr. Paludan by vigorously raising our standards of excellence, by humbly going about our work, and by being good to each other.

It's what we do at UIS.

We make a difference in the world and enrich people's lives, all from a firm foundation of academic excellence. It's what we called ourselves to do in our strategic plan, and we are doing it.

It's why I know we're going to have a great year. Let's get to it!

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**Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
Email to all employees
University of Illinois at Springfield**

**Budget Challenges
Friday, January 16, 2008**

This week President White and CFO Walter Knorr presented a report to the Board of Trustees about the university's financial situation. The president has asked all three campuses, plus the central administration, to prepare for a budget rescission of up to 10 percent during this fiscal year. That means a \$2.3 million set-aside for UIS. It doesn't mean we are cutting our budget by that amount now. It does mean we are setting money aside as we wait to see how the state's financial picture develops in the next five months.

Among the guiding principles at all three campuses in setting money aside:

- Protecting academic quality.
- Providing students with the courses they need to graduate and minimizing the impact of cuts on students and their academic work.
- Managing sacrifices fairly and wisely.
- Limiting adverse impact on employees.
- Knowing last summer that the state budget was hurting, we have already taken the following actions:
 - Implemented a freeze on hiring, with only certain exceptions allowed.
 - Stopped purchases of equipment, furniture, other big-ticket items, and supplies or materials that are not critical to current operations.
 - Encouraged reductions in travel.

All of that saves us money. But getting to the 10 percent set-aside requires us to go further. A high percentage of our budget goes to salaries and wages, and on all three campuses the last thing we would want to do is implement layoffs. There is a lot we can do before reaching that point. So we have looked for places where "cash" is available this year and have set that money aside. This is restricting "operating funds" in all of the university's divisions. I am well aware that these set-asides and possible givebacks will cause hardship and dash some plans to make progress in several areas.

I also know there has been some talk about voluntary furloughs. They are still under consideration.

Members of the Chancellor's Cabinet have been talking to unit directors and staff throughout the campus about these issues in recent weeks. Such conversations and openness are critical during these unprecedented difficult times.

That is why we are planning an open campus forum on budget issues. Everyone in the UIS community is invited, and release time will apply for staff. The open forum is scheduled for 11 a.m. to noon Wednesday, January 21, in Brookens Auditorium. Provost Harry Berman and I will give a brief presentation, but mostly we want to listen to your concerns and answer any questions you have. We have already met with the Campus Senate and Academic Professional Advisory Committee executive committees and appreciated their understanding, concern and questions.

I am confident that we will make it through these times in pursuit of our vision to become one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the nation.

We are all in this together, not only on our campus, but in our state and in the nation. These are unprecedented times, and we must continue to pull together.

I am very pleased with those of you who worked so hard on retention and recruitment in the fall of 2008. We said last summer and fall that retention is important to all of us. Some of you removed the caps on enrollment in courses; some created new initiatives to work with students in order to retain these students this spring; and some put extra time into recruiting graduate students. All of these efforts seem to have served us well in terms of doing the most we can for our students and for our budget situation. And we must continue all of them because recruitment and retention remain critical to our future.

Thanks again for all you're doing. Let's continue the conversation at the open forum.

Dr. Glenn Poshard
President, Southern Illinois University

Dr. Samuel Goldman
Chancellor, Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

Dr. Vaughn Vandegrift
Chancellor, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville

Dr. B. Joseph White
President, University of Illinois

Dr. Paula Allen-Meares
Chancellor, University of Illinois-Chicago

Dr. Richard D. Ringeisen
Chancellor, University of Illinois-Springfield

Dr. Richard Herman
Chancellor, University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign

Dr. Alvin Goldfarb
President, Western Illinois University

* For complete signature page or confirmation, contact Darcie Shinberger, director of University Relations, Western Illinois University, at 309-298-1993, or Kerry Yadgar, assistant to the president, Western Illinois University, at 309-298-1824.

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**Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
University of Illinois at Springfield**

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**Saturday, May 16, 2009
Prairie Capital Convention Center**

Commencement 2009

Honored guests, distinguished faculty members, graduates, families and friends:

Welcome to the 2009 commencement ceremony for the University of Illinois at Springfield. Without question, this moment is the most gratifying of the year. We look out and see our graduates, their faculty, families and friends gathered together for this ceremony. All that we strive for and stand for is really about preparation for this day when we celebrate a milestone in the lives of our graduates.

While you are a wonderfully diverse group of individuals, in terms of age, life experience, background, race, ethnicity, and lifestyle, you all share at least two things in common. First, you value the role that education can play in helping you to become more informed citizens who are engaged in your communities and in the world around you. And you know that learning goes on beyond formal education to create new possibilities, challenge long-held beliefs, and forge new ways of thinking and being.

As Henry Ford once said, "Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young."

A young, curious mind at any age gives you the ability to respond to change and to improve life for yourselves and for others.

Second, each of you shares in common a different perception of yourself today than you had when you began your studies at UIS. You have been changed by the very act of being a student, by the discipline and devotion, and yes, the patience and persistence that was required. You have been changed by what you have learned about the world, about others, and about yourselves. You have been changed by the knowledge that you can accomplish what you set out to do, no matter how difficult it is or how long it takes.

Times of war always make things different at colleges and universities. During this academic year, another seven (7) UIS students – making a total of 82 since 9-11 of 2001 – another seven students had their educations interrupted because they had to drop classes or take incompletes because they were called to active duty in the U.S. military.

To each of them, I say on behalf of the UIS community, thank you for your sacrifices, and may you return to us quickly and in good health.

We are also aware that several of you with us today still have loved ones in Iraq, Afghanistan, or on active duty in other places. Like you, we hope for their safe return, and in the meantime, they are in our thoughts today.

I ask all of you to give a round of applause to all of our students and graduates who have served our country in a special way, especially in the past eight years.

On this graduation day, I promise all of you here that the degrees awarded today will serve you well and will grow in value as UIS continues to grow in reputation and stature. UIS' future is much like its students – bright and full of promise. Our aspiration is to be recognized as one of the top public liberal arts universities in the nation. And it is happening. We are achieving academic excellence by enriching people's lives and making a difference in the world. Those are our strategic goals, and we will pursue the realization of them with the same tireless determination with which you pursued the academic credentials you will receive today.

But everybody knows that a university is best known for its graduates. So I want you to know we are very proud of you. I don't say that lightly. We ARE very proud of you. We are proud that you have shared some important years of your lives with us.

All of us on this stage feel privileged to share in your accomplishment. This is your day. We wish only the best, and all the best, for you.

This is a special day for all of our students, faculty, staff, and for our entire university. It is a celebration of what you—and we—have accomplished together. You have good

reason to be very proud of yourselves today. We are very proud of you, too.

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Remarks to Faculty and Staff at the Fall 2010 Convocation

August 19, 2010


- [View the slides](#) that accompanied the presentation.
- Watch [video on demand](#) of the entire convocation ceremony.

Good afternoon!

As I begin, I want to introduce my partner here for the past 10 years – my wife Carolyn. Our son and grandchildren were just here for a long weekend, and we had a wonderful time, and they saw a lot of the Springfield sites. They just left Tuesday, so we're still feeling a bit in grandparent mode.

That's a great feeling, and it's great to be here to launch another academic year. How's this for a great wake-up this morning? (*refers to slide showing [newspaper article](#), "UIS One of the Best."*)

A picture in the book, *Three Cups of Tea*, which you see here, amazes me. It shows people from the town of Korphe, in northeastern Pakistan, carrying lumber up a rocky, mountainous, dangerous trail. What the picture doesn't show is this: Just how far their journey was. It was eighteen miles.

 Porters carrying lumber, from the book "Three Cups of Tea" featuring Greg Mortenson

Why? Because the only road to Korphe was blocked. They carried all those materials so that they could build the first school in their town's history. It became the first of many schools built by Greg Mortenson in very rural towns in Pakistan and Afghanistan, especially so that girls could get a formal education. It's an amazing, inspiring story, with physical, financial and political obstacles that are beyond belief.

I tell the story for two reasons. First, Mortenson will be coming to UIS next March, and most certainly, he will provide inspiration to our students. He's been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, and that's exciting.

The second reason I tell the story is that, in hearing about hardships like this, we understand a little more that all hardships are relative, including the ones we face here at UIS. I doubt that any of us could stand the physical labor of carrying lumber for eighteen miles. But in a figurative way, that's exactly what we do – or at least we're on the road to doing, each in our own ways. It's a matter of seeing the journey either as impossible, or simply as the obstacle facing us today.

One autumn in Pakistan, when Mortenson thought his first school finally would be finished, he became discouraged when winter arrived too quickly. But the town leader told him: Don't fret about it, Greg. Korphe has not had a school for six hundred years. I think we can wait one more winter.

Good afternoon again! It's wonderful to be here to open another academic year at UIS. It is my tenth and last convocation as chancellor. It is a historic one for another reason, because today, I am announcing the formal launch of the observation of this university's [40th anniversary!](#)

Forty years of educating. So I have divided these remarks into two parts: 1. First I will reflect on a few milestones in our history; 2. Then I will talk about some opportunities that UIS has this year and beyond. I am optimistic about the future, and I will tell you why.

I am mindful of what the great philosopher, Dr. Seuss, said in his book about scrambled eggs: *The places I hiked to, The roads that I rambled To find the best eggs That have ever been scrambled! If you want to get eggs You can't buy at a store, You have to do things Never thought of before!*

I usually talk at convocation about accomplishments of the previous year. But with this being our fortieth anniversary, I want to spend a little more time on our important history.

It's important to remember our roots. We were called Sangamon State University for our first 25 years. It was an unconventional, upper-division university at first, with an emphasis on public affairs and teaching. Our Alumni Association has stayed in touch with some of the founding faculty members and with some of the charter students; they received the first degrees from here in the 1970s.

Our first buildings were the metal buildings, those one-story 40-year-old structures that everybody thought would be temporary buildings, but we're still using them. Our first permanent building was Brookens Library, which opened in 1976 and now, frankly, needs a rather complete overhaul. This PAC Building opened in 1980, the same year that we opened our first apartments for residential students. Those, too, coincidentally, are headed for a total upgrade. And the Health Sciences Building was completed in 1992.

In 1985, we took a big step forward when the university's personal computer network opened in Building H – the one-story building that we now call the Visual and Performing Arts building. The lab area featured eleven IBM personal computers. Users supplied their own 5-and-a-quarter-inch double-sided floppy diskettes—remember them? -- and faculty could schedule sessions in the lab with 15 days' notice. Ah, the good ole days!

We began a few athletic programs, too, and won national championships in soccer three times in the 1980s and 1990s under the direction of legendary coach Aydin Gonulsen. Aydin was a character much beloved and admired on campus and in the soccer community.

I'm moving along quickly here. For a much more detailed history that has just been written, you can go to our [40th anniversary web site](#). You will find much more, and pictures and links to even more details.

In any event, some major changes occurred in the 1990s that transformed our university. The first was a reorganization of higher education in Illinois, one result being that in 1995, SSU became the third campus of the University of Illinois. We became the University of Illinois at Springfield. Dr. Naomi Lynn, my predecessor as chancellor, led the transition skillfully. It was ironic that SSU did indeed celebrate its 25th anniversary the same year that its name was retired and the transformation to UIS began.

The second major thrust of the late 1990s was a long-awaited decision from the Illinois Board of Higher Education to allow UIS to admit freshmen and sophomores for the first time and to create a Capital Scholars honors program. Everything that has happened since, in the past decade, has risen on that foundation.

Lincoln Residence Hall opened in 2001, the same year that we actually launched the Capital Scholars program. I arrived here in time for the completion of that, our first residence hall. So it is -- even today, our modern and clean housing is a major recruitment tool. Then we built and opened the magnificent classroom and office building, University Hall, in 2004, and the colonnade and quad in 2005. We also added many new townhouses on the west side of campus, opened the Recreation and Athletic Center in 2007, and Founders Hall in 2008.

Just as significantly, our faculty and others in Academic Affairs created a second new curriculum, having already created the honors program, so that we could expand our freshman class beyond the honors program. So much effort goes into creating a curriculum. It was a magnificent achievement. The two foundations of that curriculum are lifelong learning and engagement, two characteristics that now live in everything that we do. It is deeply satisfying to know, from my perspective, that so much careful planning went into these major developments.

Abraham Lincoln might have been thinking of us when he said: *"Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."* Planning well – sharpening the axe – is hard work. Often, it is thankless work. In some respects, those who came before us and those who did the careful work of planning are like those Pakistani porters who hand-carried building materials for an incredible 18 miles so their town could achieve the vision of having its first school. Like them, our predecessors made some courageous decisions and took many steps to get us to where we are today.

Perhaps our most important work outside of the classroom in the past decade was working together to write a brilliant [strategic plan](#), finishing in 2006. The plan now has deep roots in the UIS community. I have never seen a strategic plan anywhere implemented so well, and taken to heart so deeply by everybody. It built on our traditional emphasis of teaching, public affairs, and a broad-based liberal arts education, and it established the bold vision, which I have called the "bodacious" vision, of UIS being recognized as one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the nation.

We aspire to be a top five, and we are well on the way. In the past two years, *U.S. News & World Report* named us the [fourth best university in our category](#) in the entire Midwest. We are excelling, and we are being recognized for it. This year, in the *U.S. News* rankings, our category changed names. It used to be "master's level institutions," but now we are in a category called the "Regional University" – and I am happy to repeat what you already saw in the news this week – In the *U.S. News and World Report's* 2011 Edition of America's Best Colleges, UIS is

the best public university in the “Regional University category” in the state of Illinois and fourth best public university in that category in the entire Midwest for a third time.

In another category, we did better. Of the 142 top public and private colleges and university in the 10-state Midwest region, last year UIS was 27th. This year, we moved up five slots to 22nd out of 142. The new ranking puts us in the top 15 percent in the Midwest. Congratulations to all of you!

One thing I have not yet mentioned is our national stature in online learning. We began offering online courses at the turn of the century, and by now, one-fourth of our students are totally online students. And many more students take online courses, because our faculty have embraced the possibilities when it comes to teaching online. We have received national recognition and awards for our online prowess. I am pleased by this and encourage it to continue.

Well, that’s forty years of history in just a few minutes. Clearly, we have reason to celebrate this year.

We have more than 31,000 alumni – that’s 31,000 degrees made possible by the combined efforts and dedication of so many people, many of yourselves included.

Due to budget restraints, we had to scale back some of our 40th anniversary plans. But you may have seen the banners in downtown Springfield. They proclaim the three major goals of our strategic plan: academic excellence, enriching lives, and making a difference in the world.

You may have noticed the cover of July’s Chamber of Commerce magazine. It features a good looking fellow – the dean of the SIU Med School, and another guy – both places celebrating 40 years. Also, at the college and unit levels, many of you are planning 40th anniversary events. That is terrific, and it’s not too late to do so. Labeling our activities this year as a 40th anniversary event helps to increase the buzz about UIS and our anniversary year. The official celebration will wrap up in January at our Employee of the Year ceremony.

Forty-five years ago, there was no university in Springfield. Where we stand and sit today was all farmland. Ten years ago, there was no Lincoln Residence Hall, no University Hall, no TRAC, no Founders Hall. Now we have dozens of buildings covering nearly 300 acres, and we’re not finished yet.

Forty-five years ago, Springfield was the home location to zero university faculty. Over the years we have attracted experts and teacher-scholars from all over the world. They, in turn, have transformed this university and this community and, given our rich history of teaching non-traditional students, they have educated three or four generations —“enriching lives and making a difference in the world.” I am so proud that our trend of hiring great faculty has continued this year, and so is our focus on academic excellence. I won’t elaborate on this because Provost Berman will talk about it later, but be assured that this is a great, great source of pride.

It’s a testimony to our having an inspiring vision. Most of all, it’s a testimony to the possibilities that exist when there is a constant focus on what’s best for our students. I said that in my first convocation speech in 2001. Having been here then just four months, I said that the single most important thing I could possibly say is that “the success of our students ... is everybody's most important business.” I still believe that’s true. I thank all of you for making students our priority, and I hope that all of you who are new have been told that students come first at UIS.

With that in mind, I want to look ahead to this academic year and beyond. It promises to be another very good one. First, I want to talk about enrollment. This is the year UIS will top 5,000 students for the first time. We were hoping to reach that milestone last fall, but we were 39 students short. The number won’t be official until census day, the 10th day of the semester, but the numbers are looking good. This is a UIS success story – great academic programs, led by great faculty, our new retention efforts and early warning systems, student life and Student Affairs, athletics and coaches, staff who provide support to students and faculty, and our Admissions staff, which works so diligently all year along. Everybody can take a bow for this, and I applaud all of YOU.

I am also proud to say that as we’re growing, we are growing more diverse. We are recruiting more students from Chicago and elsewhere. That enriches everything we do. I am also pleased that over the summer, Student Affairs achieved our promise to hire a full-time LGBTQ coordinator, Kerry Pointer. Thanks to those of you who promoted this hire and served on the search committee.

Well, I do need to say something about our budget situation. I know it’s on your minds. I was assuming a few years ago that someday, I could get through one of these convocation speeches without talking about another bad budget year. Unfortunately, we are going to have another bad budget year.

Generally speaking, there is a 3 percent cut in our operating budget this year, and it was with much regret that I announced the last week in July that there will be no general salary increases for our staff this year. That is very painful. The truth is, these are the worst economic times in many decades in Illinois, and the state of Illinois does not see higher education as an uncuttable priority. Nor do most state governments in almost every other state. Cuts in state support are happening to public universities throughout the United States. That’s just a fact of life. When all of this budget-cutting started—a few months after I arrived, now that I think about it—we used to talk about doing more with less. I think we need to stop saying that.

We’re beyond the days of having to do more with less. I would rather look at it this way: We simply must pursue our vision and implement our mission with the resources we have. It means pulling together like the Pakistani porters who said if we have to carry lumber for eighteen miles, then we will carry lumber for eighteen miles. Because we have a vision, we have a plan, and we’ll do what it takes to get there!

Sometimes that means reallocation of funds and people. It means we have to stop doing some things that we want to keep doing. It means allocating all the resources we have as wisely as possible. It means eliminating some positions and distributing their duties to several people,

and reallocating our resources in alignment with our major strategic goals, so that the students and faculty feel the effects of cuts less painfully than anyone else.

While I always talk about the three major goals in our strategic plan, the fourth goal in the plan will get more attention this year. The fourth goal is to strengthen campus culture. It's a goal that intersects with the top three. You'll recall, there were two reasons we included that goal. One was recognizing a need to solidify our identity. We have done that with our vision statement and by emphasizing those three top goals. A second was recognition that we can do and should do more to build a sense of community, the kind of community we aspire to be as even as we pursue our vision.

Hence, our deliberate choice to become more diverse, and to teach our students from the rural parts of Illinois, the Chicago area, and from mid-sized cities like Springfield the value of diversity. Hence, our deliberate choice to become more global, to reach out east and west, across two oceans, in search of faculty and students and build a new major in that area. Hence, our decision to conduct a climate survey so that we get better data about how we're doing. Hence, our deliberate choice to join the NCAA, Division II. A core belief of Division II is that the "student" in student-athlete is more important than anything. This year, we are now a full, active NCAA member for the first time. I am very grateful to Athletics Director Rodger Jehlicka, his staff, and all who cooperated with him in the rigorous three-year process to make this happen.

Hence, our diligence in fundraising, which is also everybody's business. We are close to our \$28 million goal in the capital campaign that ends next year. This remains an urgent priority because of the decline in state funding, and we dare not fail to reach that goal! Let me remind you: We have enjoyed the benefits of our success with many more scholarships for students and with the six named professorships and distinguished chairs, which raises the stature of our entire faculty.

Hence, our choice never to stop dreaming. When a few people in central Illinois began serious dreaming about a university for Springfield, it was about the same time that President Kennedy said we would land a man on the moon by the end of the 1960s. The nation did not say, "It's too far." And people in central Illinois did not say, "Oh, that's just silly." Neil Armstrong walked on the moon in 1969, the same year that people began planning in earnest for the arrival of students here in 1970. We keep dreaming now because our vision lives, and we are all a part of that.

Perhaps nothing symbolizes our bodaciousness more than our plan to renovate Brookens Library, the heart of our intellectual community. We need at least \$51 million, and we're seeking state funding for this project. We're not likely to get it soon, but the point is, we have a vision and we'll keep going after it.

As I get close to wrapping this up, I know that this will be a different kind of year because we have a [new U of I president, Dr. Mike Hogan](#), who started July 1, and you will be getting a new chancellor. Dr. Hogan has been to UIS, and I assure you, he likes what he sees here. He came to the job already up to speed about the best of UIS, and his initial impressions are quite favorable. He is absolutely dedicated to finding a great leader to fill the shoes of this chancellor. The search committee already is hard at work, and I am pleased that Tih-Fen Ting is chairing the search committee. I am confident that under her leadership, the committee will find and recommend people who can take UIS to even greater heights. Speaking of Tih-Fen, I also want to thank you publicly and personally for the great leadership you have shown as the chair of the Campus Senate.

I said at the beginning of these remarks that all challenges are relative, that all obstacles are relative. Like the people of Korphe, we are facing some challenges. But I am optimistic, and I believe we are up to the challenges. I believe that we will not only deal with them successfully, but we will also make progress in pursuit of our vision. I believe that we can walk together for eighteen miles to do what needs to be done for our students and our university.

I take great pride in the upward trajectory that we have created together. Great things happen because of your talent, your dedication and your perseverance.

I was reminded of how long it can take to get something done when the new MacArthur Boulevard interchange opened on Interstate 72 earlier this year. Local officials began working on that one in 1998, I believe it was. So that took twelve years. Who would know it's that complicated to build an interstate exit? Gee, maybe the 11th Street extension all the way from here to downtown really will happen someday!

Here at UIS, we are all building something far more complicated and far more profound than an interstate exit. We are building a university that our predecessors started. We are growing and getting better in many ways. That means every one of you has a chance to build something special here. It is every generation's and every administration's responsibility to leave something positive for those who come along next.

Please never forget that the success of our students remains everybody's business.

It has been a great pleasure to stand here ten times at this formal convocation. You have my very best wishes as you begin a new decade, heading toward our 50th anniversary.

Well, Dr. Seuss, we have "*scrambled some very good eggs*," and we did it by doing "things never done before!" With another year just beginning, hope rises again, our work begins anew, and our vision lives.... our vision lives!

Thank you very much.

**Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
University of Illinois Springfield**

Thursday, August 20, 2009

**Remarks to Faculty and Staff
Convocation 2009**

- [View the slides that accompanied his presentation](#) - click on a slide to advance to the next one.

Good afternoon!

We have had a great week already.

I am delighted to be here today to welcome everybody to the opening of another academic year.

But first I want to tell a story about Danny Weber. He is from the small town of Kincaid just a little south and east of Springfield. He's a young military veteran. A few years ago he became the first person in his family to graduate from high school, and then he went on to college. He just graduated from UIS three months ago with his bachelor's in communications. Now he's in Florida - Jacksonville, Florida - having the time of his life as the assignment editor at a television station. If you got a chance to talk to him, he would tell you he couldn't be where he is without UIS. He would go on and on about it. In fact, I talked to him a couple of days ago, and he's thrilled with what UIS did for him.

It's the kind of opportunity we provide here - a chance for people to achieve.

I'm very proud of Danny.

I've been saying ever since I got here that a university's reputation is built largely on the shoulders of its graduates. He is but one example.

You know where else some of our 2009 alumni are?

The Penn State law school, and a few other law schools.

Two different medical schools.

The Peace Corps.

State Farm, Archer-Daniels-Midland and Illinois state government.

Also, many graduate schools around the country, from Purdue to South Carolina to Loyola and Colorado, among others.

I mention those points of pride early because, let's face it, some things happened over the summer that tempt us to feel a bit gloomy and negative.

One is the Chicago Tribune series about admissions practices at our sister school at Urbana-Champaign. Related to that is the call of Governor Quinn's commission for all U of I trustees to resign. Seven trustees have now resigned, including the chair and the past chair.

I don't want to dwell on this today, except to say that transitions at the highest levels of the university system surely touch us, too. Last week, President White asked all the campuses to take a new look at their admissions policies, and that's what we'll do. I don't expect much will have to change in UIS admissions practices. But I do want to mention that we talked to our admissions staff here right away when the articles came out, and I can assure you we don't have anything resembling a clout list here or ways for influential people to circumvent our admissions process. Together with the Campus Senate and faculty leaders, we'll look at everything and see how it all plays out in the bigger picture.

In the meantime, we have many other things to do here at UIS, and that's what I want to talk about today as we begin a new year.

It occurs to me we always have a choice about how we're going to approach any year.

I choose optimism, while being realistic.

I choose gratitude for the resources we have, instead of anxiety about what we still want.

I choose to be hopeful about the future, and I think we have good reason to be.

In my eight-plus years at UIS, I have always encouraged you to seize the opportunities in front of us.

In this convocation address I customarily spend a lot of time reviewing the last year. I'm going to change that just a bit this year, because we surpassed some MAJOR mileposts last year. Together, they should remind us how far we've come in our strategic intent to become one of the nation's top five small public liberal arts universities.

I think of two famous lines in a Robert Burns poem:

O wad some Power the giftie gie us
To see oursels as ithers see us!

[The translation]

O would some Power the gift to give us
To see ourselves as others see us!

I want to take a little time reminding you how others have seen us lately. It's worth stepping back just a few steps, for a few moments, to mention what seven different national groups are saying about us. That is significant, because with this kind of national attention, we are on our way to being recognized as one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the nation. Here's how:

1) One: U.S. News and World Report. Because we just started admitting freshmen in 2001, U.S. News included UIS in its rankings for the first time in its 2009 report, which was released about a year ago. We came out very very well - 4th best public in the entire Midwest, and the best public master's level university in Illinois.

And here is some news for you. The news about new rankings for 2010 was just released at noon today that AGAIN -- we were ranked 4th best in the Midwest and Illinois' best again. That establishes us as a top flight public university!

2) Two. As a result of the strategic plan we adopted in 2006, we pursued membership in a very select group of universities - the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges, commonly called COPLAC. Illinois didn't have a university in COPLAC, but now it does: UIS was unanimously invited by other members to join this prestigious group. This is an important marker on our journey, one that we specifically aimed for.

You may have seen the COPLAC announcement - but what you didn't hear was the evaluators say to the provost and me that UIS might be the most exciting university in the nation right now, because of everything we're doing and where we're heading.

It's why I'm so optimistic and choose to look ahead today.

3) NCAA. We are no longer an NAIA college. That ended last year. We are now officially in our provisional year in the NCAA, which means we're a Division II university. And the conference we're in - the Great Lakes Valley Conference, has one of the highest academic records of all Division II university conferences in the country. Our student-athletes are students first, and I'm proud to say they set a UIS record in the spring for the highest average GPA for our student-athletes - 3.16. That's an amazing achievement.

Here's what's really important: When the NCAA site visit team came here in the spring, they were very impressed by all the steps we've taken to make sure we're not only compliant, but doing what's best for our student-athletes.

4) Four. UIS has been designated by the National Security Agency (NSA) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as a National Center of Academic Excellence in Information Assurance Education (CAEIAE). That places us among the few universities charged by the federal government with having programs that will teach graduates how to reduce the threat of cyberterrorism.

5) Five. UIS was placed on the 2008 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts to the local community. The Honor Roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement. We have always been known for outreach and community service here, and we're just getting better and better, and reaching out farther. We achieved the highest federal recognition, and I expect we'll stay at that level forever.

6) Six: The Higher Learning Commission conducted a thorough review of UIS for our 10-year reaccreditation about two years ago. But it's so critical to UIS that it belongs on this list. Not only did we get reaccredited, remember, but it was the first time in our history that the national accrediting body said it didn't have to come back for any kind of follow up or review. They liked what they saw, and we were rewarded for it.

7) Seven. I often talk about online education when I'm in my bragging mode, but this year the category is broader than just online education: I'll call it "New

Communications." We're talking blogs, social media, Facebook, Twitter, and online. Here at UIS, we're especially great at providing online education.

Did you see that announcement that was just made Tuesday? UIS content is available on iTunes, which means more than 200 million iTunes users can now download UIS content to play on their iPods. That puts us in some very good company.

And we're recognized from west to east for our online efforts as our online enrollments continue to grow. In the past year, the California-based Society for New Communications Research recognized our efforts to market our online offerings, and the Boston-based Sloan Consortium gave UIS the singular recognition among more than 1,500 member institutions for exemplary quality and leadership in the field.

So that's two awards in online education - and recognition from eight national groups in all, just in the past year.

So, ladies and gentlemen of the UIS community, it certainly is worthwhile today to pause, to see ourselves as others see us.

We're on the rise. We're on the journey. I am tempted to declare that we have arrived, three years after finalizing our strategic plan with a bold vision and lofty goals.

In many ways we have arrived - when you see us as others see us.

But it's probably never a good idea to say we have arrived. We'll let others say it for us.

I would say this: Recognition from eight national groups is something in which we all should take pride.

Let's not forget that all external recognition emanates from the work that we do right here, every day. For the past three years, we have been boldly implementing our top three goals from the 2006 strategic plan.

For the rest of these remarks, I will talk about how we're going to continue on this journey in this year. Mostly I will do that by talking about our top three goals: academic excellence, enriching individual lives, and making a difference in the world.

But I think it's time today to begin focusing more formally on our fourth goal: strengthening our campus culture.

But before I talk about these four goals, there is another serious issue I want to address head-on.

That's the budget. Two aspects of this year's budget are of particular concern to me.

The most important is that this year, the state of Illinois has significantly reduced financial aid for our students - not only our students, but those in all other Illinois colleges and universities. There is a program called MAP - which stands for the Monetary Award Program, a grant program for our most financially needy students - one of the best programs of its kind in the nation, a source of pride for Illinois. The state funded this program at only 50 percent of the recommended level this year. So as of now, about 700 of our students receiving a MAP grant this fall won't get one in the second semester. That means an average reduction of \$1,700 in state aid for these students. We will be working with them on alternatives, but there is no way for us to know at this time how many can afford to come back next semester. This is a very serious matter for these students and their families. We are hopeful the state will do something to restore these grants, and we are urging them to do so, but we cannot count on it.

The state budget hits us really hard in another way this year. This takes some explaining. State law requires us to waive tuition for veterans. We're happy that a lot of returning veterans attend UIS. We welcome them, and they enjoy it here. Danny Weber, who I talked about at the beginning of these remarks, was one of them. The trouble is that this year, the state has eliminated the funding that we should receive for giving these tuition waivers. So we get the students and we have to figure out how to pay for them. We don't have an exact figure yet, but it could mean a loss of \$1 million in our revenue. If it's not fixed, it will be a big blow to our budget. That means budget cuts or reallocations of that amount, and it's not a pleasant thought.

I have given some bad budget news in previous years, but I don't think we've had a year this decade with the uncertainties and potential negative budgetary consequences of the state's reductions in MAP grants and the loss in funding for veterans grants. Every other Illinois college and university must address these issues, too, so we'll keep you apprised of what happens. But! It's a time to remember my favorite analogy: When a ship is in a storm at sea, you don't shut the engines down.

I know one topic on your mind is whether there will be any raises this year. Well, you probably saw the memo that went out to campus - trying to protect our academic mission as much as possible, we looked at this very carefully, and we just don't have the money to allocate for raises this year.

One other thing: you're probably wondering whether we'll have furlough days this year. The truth is, we don't know. We hope not, and as of now, there are no plans for furlough days. There is language in new contracts that would allow us to call for furlough days; it's there if we need it. I have already promised campus leaders, and I'll say it again today, that we won't do this without consulting leaders such as the APAC, CSAC and Campus Senate executive committees. Not only that, but calling for furloughs would be the second-to-last thing we would do to our budget, with layoffs being the last.

Now I want to move on.

I do want to spend some time focusing on our three major goals and what we're doing to implement them more fully this year. First, let me mention that the three main goals are printed on the backs on your business cards. At least, I hope they still are! Anyway...

Academic excellence

In pursuit of this goal, we are offering one new bachelor's degree this year: Global Studies. How appropriate! Plus, we are seeking approval for a new MIS undergraduate degree. I am very pleased to see this. A university can never stand pat with its degree offerings; we must respond to what students want and continually look at new degree opportunities with the resources we have.

It's just incredible to me that we are able to talk about so many major new faculty hires this year. We have recruited some remarkable, talented teachers and scholars. You'll meet them as part of this program -- I know you will be as impressed as I am, so I don't need to go into the details here. And, as we've done in recent years, you have their bios to take with you at the end of this program so you get to know them better.

Plus, we are having two investiture programs this year:

-- One for the Naomi Lynn Chair in Lincoln Studies: Dr. Michael Burlingame.

-- The other for our new three named professors: Dr. Matthew Holden, Dr. Karen Swan and Dr. Keith Miller.

UIS now has six named faculty appointments, and I would challenge you to find another institution of our size with that kind of distinction.

That reminds me of something else faculty will be doing this year. A number of them, led by Karen Swan, will be applying the Community of Inquiry survey in their online classes as we examine ways in which social presence, teaching presence, and cognitive presence interact to enhance the quality of learning. Several research studies are under way here, including one that will also examine the Quality Matters rubric for the design of online classes.

Another thing we're doing to help everybody this year is to create what is called a "portal." This is YOUR individual portal. It is a one-stop, personalized, customizable website that will allow you to access UIS resources with a single sign-on. In other words, you will be able to log in using your UIS ID and password just once, to the portal, and then be able to access Blackboard, DARS Web, a Class list summary, Banner applications, Business applications - whatever you use most frequently.

We are initiating midterm grades for 100- and 200-level courses, with optional participation for 300- and 400-level courses, so undergraduates are better able to monitor and improve their academic performance. I see it as a crucial step forward in our progress towards having a full four-year baccalaureate education at UIS and essential to our retention efforts.

Enriching individual lives

I think it's going to be a great year in Student Affairs. We have a new vice chancellor, Dr. Tim Barnett, who was the search committee's unanimous choice. He brings a wealth of experience in student development, admissions and retention, and I believe he will raise the bar in so many ways for the benefit of our students.

You know what one of his major observations is about UIS?

We need a Student Center. He is right.

A Student Center is indeed on our master plan. It's the one building we still need to be the kind of university we want to be. It will be costly, and we will have to generate the revenue to build it because we can't use state funds. So it's not likely to happen in the short term. But it's clearly on our radar screen and that's exciting!

We have identified some new ways to help our students:

Center for First-Year Students. It opened last year and will be even more robust this year. A search committee is getting closer to hiring a new director. This center will be essential for the retention of our students. Its offices are in the Brookens Library building.

Diversity Center. Clarice Ford had a terrific year last year in her first year. The Black Student Union is flourishing, for example. She shows up at everything, and her energy and bright smile are contagious! Her fresh look at UIS is already helping us: one of her major concerns in the spring was that we had not hired our LGBTQ coordinator yet. Well, we're working on that right now.

I assure you today, as I have in the past, that we value diversity in every way here at UIS. Some people say we should tolerate diversity. I disagree. I think we should celebrate it, and that's where we're heading every day under Dr. Ford's leadership.

Last year we talked about retention of students as a critical issue for us. Dr. Ford has identified what she believes is among the most critical changes we can make to retain students: have more Friday classes, so that residential students get a full week here, have shorter weekends and more opportunities for a total student experience. So we'll continue to work on adding Friday classes as we put our schedules together in the future.

The final thing I want to say about "enriching individual lives" is a small but great document put together over the summer by our Counseling Center. It's called:

"Student Emergency and Referral Procedures"

It's a small brochure about how to handle various kinds of emergencies or behavioral situations you may encounter. Few of us have the expertise to provide the individual intervention that students, staff or visitors need if they are acting out in some way. But this document gives you great advice on what your initial reaction should be if you're not sure how to respond to students or other people who you believe might be a threat to themselves, yourself or others. So keep this brochure with you.

A piece of great news about campus life this year: we were able to confirm yesterday that for the first time in our history, we have more than 1,100 students living on campus. Last year we broke the 1,000 mark.

Making a difference in the world

Our third goal is making a difference in the world.

I am announcing today that one year from now, we will begin a five-month celebration of our 40th anniversary! We first taught students in the fall of 1970, and we've made such a difference to this community and to the world ever since. We have a couple of major events planned, and all of you will have opportunities to create your own ways to add to the celebration. We will roll out some plans this fall, and you'll be hearing more about it soon.

"UIS Around the World" photos. This is fun. I frankly lose track of the many ways that we offer global experiences. So one thing we created over the summer was a web site called UIS Around the World. All we want people to do is to submit photographs of themselves or others emblazoned with UIS clothing in various parts of the world. We've already started.

That's a picture of Carol Esarey at the South Pole!

So submit your photos and enjoy! Send the photos to webphotos@uis.edu.

4th Goal: Strengthen Campus Culture

When we created our strategic plan, we recognized a need to build a stronger community here. Great institutions have strong communities, so we're going to do some special things this year:

First I mention safety. Twenty years ago we probably took safety on campuses for granted. Times have changed.

That's why the Counseling Center put together that brochure.

Emergency notification signup. I want to remind you that we have an emergency notification system, where you can get brief text messages on your cell phones or email inboxes. Please sign up for this. The more people do this, the safer we'll all be if an emergency arises.

Go to our Emergencies web page and click on the UIS-Alert Emergency Notification System link to sign up.

While I'm talking about this, I want to say we are pleased the state put \$4 million in the capital budget for us to build a new Public Safety Building. This is a very safe campus, but that old farmhouse is no longer serving adequately as the police headquarters. We're still a ways off from beginning the design and construction, but it's coming.

What's next after that building? It's not a safety issue, but it is our next major building project...

... the renovation of Brookens Library.

Provost Berman, Dean Treadwell and a small group have been making great plans, and someday we'll build what we can afford. The library needs an overhaul. We all know it, and it's next on our list as we push for more state capital funding.

Another way we are going to improve the campus climate this year is to have a campus dialogue about our common values. As an academic community, we will identify principles of behavior and service here. How do we treat one another and talk to one another? Most of the time, civilly and respectfully. But not all of the time. So we're going to build on a survey administered by Human Resources last year and work together to strengthen our campus culture.

Speaking of surveys, I have not forgotten about the call for a general climate survey here at UIS. This is something I've talked to Vice Chancellor Barnett and Provost Berman about. They work together on this, so you'll be hearing more about this, too.

So that's the plan for this year: to deepen our commitment to academic excellence, enriching lives, making a difference in the world, and strengthening our campus community.

I commend you for all of your work that has led to the recognition we are now receiving.

We don't do what we do for the recognition, of course. We do it for our students, so that they will have the best possible educational experience.

But if you see UIS as others see us, you know this is an institution on the rise.

So I am calling on you, and counting on you, to continue to build something really special for our students, for our community, for our state, indeed, for the world. It's what you've been doing in recent years.

People who are new to UIS may not know that Barack Obama was in this building, on the Sangamon Auditorium stage, just three years ago, inviting everybody to hitch their wagons to something larger than themselves. That's exactly what you do when you join an academic community. You become something larger than yourself.

Speaking of wagons and hitching yourselves, let me finish with a...

Song! With apologies to Green Acres, Eddie Albert, Eva Gabor and others, here it is...

Keep it up and have a great year.

- [View the slides that accompanied his presentation](#) - click on a slide to advance to the next one.

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Remarks at Groundbreaking Ceremony for new Classroom/Office Building

UIS Chancellor Richard Ringeisen

Monday, October 28, 2002

Thank you for coming out on this crisp October day for what is certainly a very auspicious occasion for this campus...an occasion that we have been eagerly anticipating for some time.

I can't tell you how many times I've walked past this expanse of land and envisioned our new classroom building there. What a tremendous addition it will be to this campus!

It will be the first point of welcome for prospective students, the largest and most technically advanced building we will have, and, without a doubt, the future hub and heart of UIS.

It will contribute further to the formation of a campus quadrangle and the development of more green space, where students can gather and take part in activities, and have a more collegial environment in which to study and socialize.

And, because this building moves us closer to having a more permanent campus, UIS will be able to compete more effectively for students from throughout the state and, indeed the nation. It will certainly help us build our image as a fine public liberal arts and public affairs university.

It is very fitting and pleases me greatly that Governor Ryan and President Stukel and members of our legislative delegation could be with us today...because they have been instrumental in the realization of this dream.

We are grateful to you, Governor Ryan, for making the identification of this building a priority of your administration. Without your strong and effective support and that of our legislative delegation, we would not be gathering here today for this groundbreaking ceremony.

If not for the leadership of President Stukel and his great interest in and support for the development of this campus, we would not be here today.

Speaking on behalf of everyone here at UIS, thank you for helping to brighten the future for this campus, particularly during this grim budgetary time.

We are certainly grateful to have something to celebrate now that will help this campus succeed and have such a positive impact in so many ways.

**Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
Email to all faculty
University of Illinois at Springfield**

**UIS Athletics -- A response
Tuesday, April 7, 2009**

From: Ringeisen, Richard D
Sent: Tue 4/7/2009 5:50 PM
To: UIS Faculty
Subject: UIS Athletics -- A response

Dear Faculty Colleagues:

I have reviewed the proposed Campus Senate resolution that asks me to terminate Dr. Rodger Jehlicka, Director of Athletics, and calls for a Trustees' investigation of our athletics department, and I want to respond promptly.

I unequivocally oppose the resolution's recommendations, and I want to explain why.

The resolution seems to emanate primarily from two overriding concerns: (1) the recent resignation of three coaches, and (2) a 2004 report that included 11 recommendations regarding athletics at UIS.

The truth is, in the situations leading up to the coaches' recent resignations, Rodger acted quickly and decisively for the benefit of our student-athletes. I cannot provide a lot of details due to both employee and student confidentiality safeguards, but I can say that Rodger worked with Human Resources and used other university units to step in, assist and protect our students. Ali Fitzgerald, assistant director of athletics for compliance, also spent hours with our student-athletes and continues to provide support. Due to reasons of confidentiality, most people do not know all of the things that Rodger, Ali and the university administration have done for the benefit of our student-athletes in recent weeks. They could not have acted more quickly and properly. For example, Rodger brought the softball team back from Florida immediately after concerns were expressed and began an investigation as soon as they returned. Ali met with every student involved, as well as coaches, and all this was done within 24 hours of their return. Resignations were submitted by the two softball coaches within the week. The resignation of the golf coach was unrelated to those of the softball coaches. A separate investigation took place.

As for the 2004 report, there were 11 recommendations in the Executive Summary regarding our Department of Athletics. To say we have ignored or not addressed these recommendations is inaccurate. We have addressed these recommendations. More pertinent is that we have had a complete change in Athletics administration since that report came out. Our current administrators have instituted policies and practices that are first-rate. Perhaps there is more we can do. If so, we always welcome suggestions, ideas and dialogue. As I wrote earlier, our student-athletes are students first. The grade point averages of our student-athletes are impressively high, as is the number of student-athletes on the academic honor roll. All of us, together, can be very proud of this.

By coincidence the eligibility officer of the American Midwest Conference, our current NAIA conference, called Rodger last evening to say the conference would miss our athletic department and praised our folks here. When I heard of this I asked if she would mind writing me a letter. **That letter is attached** (pdf). Further, the NCAA Division II contact, when asked, said that he was extremely pleased with our Athletic Director's actions.

Where there are concerns about athletics, we have reasonable and civil venues and processes for discussions and deliberations. I am always open to conversations and deliberations about what is best for UIS and our students.

I like to think we're on a continuing journey, together, to build a university and find new ways to make this a great place for all of our students, faculty and staff.

Rich

Richard D. Ringeisen, Chancellor
The University of Illinois at Springfield
One University Plaza, MS PAC 563
Springfield, Illinois 62703-5407
217-206-6634; Fax: 217-206-6511

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**Chancellor Ringeisen's Remarks
Human Resource Management Annual Recognition Event
6 p.m. at Springfield Hilton Hotel**

June 17, 2008

UIS: Positive Impact on the Community

This spring I celebrated seven years as chancellor of the University of Illinois at Springfield. My wife, Carolyn, and I marvel at how quickly time has passed since we arrived here from North Carolina in 2001. Since that time we have met and gotten to know so many wonderful people in this community.

As you can imagine, the university is a great conduit through which to meet people from all walks of life and economic backgrounds. Everywhere I go, I hear stories about what the university means to the people of this community. And I have come to appreciate and value greatly what this community means to the university.

Not long ago, I met a gentleman who told me that his education at UIS had helped him turn his life around after he was laid off from his job. Now in middle age, he has found his footing on a new path with renewed confidence in his own value and worth. He has made a vow to himself to continue learning for the rest of his life, both in and outside the classroom.

It is truly a pleasure to meet graduates and learn about what they are doing with their lives and how their education has made a difference. There are nearly 8,600 UIS graduates living and working in Sangamon County – more UIS graduates than live anywhere else. And Springfield is the number one city of residence for our graduates, with nearly 6,400 living right here.

I guess then it shouldn't be a surprise that fully 25% of the members of the workforce in this county have received at least one degree from UIS, and 28% of this city's workforce has received at least one UIS degree. That adds up to a lot of impact and influence on the local and area economy. And it illustrates how vitally important the link is between the university and the community. One cannot function effectively without the other.

Someone once said they couldn't walk five feet in the state capitol building without running into a UIS graduate who was now working as a government professional, or a legislative intern or someone doing research from the university.

Speaking of interns, UIS' Illinois Legislative Staff Intern Program is the premier graduate-level program of its kind in the nation, placing interns on all four legislative leadership staffs in the General Assembly.

And the Graduate Public Service Internship Program has 124 interns working in 14 state agencies. Over the years, many of those interns have gone on to managerial and leadership positions in the public sector.

During its nearly 40 years in existence, the university has developed strong connections to state government. Our students have the opportunity to learn and work in the living laboratory of state government.

And during that time, UIS has become the tenth largest employer in Sangamon County with a \$37 million payroll. We put a lot into the local economy.

There are many ways in which the university helps prepare individuals to work in productive jobs, seek promotions and stay current in their career fields.

Before I tell you about some specific ways in which the university provides such preparation, I would like for you to indulge me in some outright, shameless bragging about UIS.

After all, I am the lead cheerleader for the institution.

UIS is proud to be a public, liberal arts university and a campus of the world-class University of Illinois. UIS is the place where you can earn a U of I degree in classes that are small and with professors who know you. It is our special niche in Illinois higher education.

We pride ourselves in being warm and welcoming and, at the same time, offering relevant coursework on a technologically-advanced campus. Our students choose from 42 degree programs at the undergraduate and graduate

levels (21 bachelor's degree programs, 20 master's degree programs, and one doctoral program), online courses, and 16 degree programs completely online. We are considered a leader nationally in providing online education.

In fact, we were recognized in this past year by the Sloan Consortium, based in New York for being the best institution in the nation across the board at offering online education.

The best in the nation! That sounds pretty good to us, and it is.

Our vision for UIS is bold. We aspire to be recognized as one of the best five small public liberal arts universities in the country.

It is bold. We really mean it, and we know we are not there yet.

But you see, for a New York group to consider UIS the best at online education is one important step on our way to be recognized among the top five small publics.

At the U of I, you are not used to hearing or talking about a small university and the importance of a small public university.

We aspire to be the great small public university that Illinois does not now have.

Illinois has outstanding large and mid-sized universities, but no great SMALL ones, like Miami in Ohio or the College of Charleston in South Carolina.

Now, I want to tell you more about how your public university in the state capital plays a vital role in helping to prepare the local and area workforce. It's a responsibility we take very seriously because it's about helping our community thrive and become a better place to live. It's also about attracting new businesses to Springfield and bolstering our economy. A city and a university work together to make all that happen. One cannot become great without the other.

The Center for Entrepreneurship at UIS assists innovative small businesses in the area with matching grants and other assistance and works in collaboration with EntreNET, a network of organizations and individuals in greater Springfield designed to form one seamless program of opportunity for entrepreneurs. It's all about encouraging development of business in Central Illinois.

Besides 42 degree programs, the university offers several certificate and professional development courses that provide specialized knowledge and skills for the professional. They include course sequences in business process management, community health education, emergency preparedness and homeland security, environmental health, IT project management, law for human services and social work, legal aspects of education, and management of non-profit organizations.

The list goes on: marriage and family therapy, pathway to the principalship, public sector labor relations, school counselor, systems security, gerontology, and women and gender studies.

I didn't name them all, but that gives you a good idea of the range and scope of subjects that are offered to individuals who have already completed a bachelor's degree in any major.

In addition, hundreds of people come to the university every year for professional development seminars and workshops as well as conferences and other events coordinated by our Conferences Services staff. UIS is the venue for a variety of continuing education activities that range from probation officer training to an annual week-long conference for librarians who come from small libraries located throughout the state. During this fiscal year, a total of 874 such events were held at the university.

That is a huge number!

Another important way in which UIS has a positive impact on the community and, indeed, all of Central Illinois, relates to the many cultural activities that are held at the university each year.

And there are a growing number of such events and activities, especially during the last five to seven years. Campus cultural life has really taken off with the addition of a theatre program, music groups, and more focus on the fine and performing arts. Sangamon Auditorium and the Visual Arts Gallery are great assets serving to bring UIS and the community together.

UIS is now one of four major art venues in Springfield, joining the Illinois State Museum, Springfield Art Association, and Prairie Art Alliance.

The Lincoln Legacy Lecture Series sponsored by UIS' Center for State Policy and Leadership attracts nationally-known Lincoln scholars to the university each year. Free and open to the public, the series focuses on subjects from Lincoln's time that are still relevant today.

I can barely keep track of all the events and lectures that the public is invited to. We host the meetings of the World Affairs Council and bring speakers to UIS each year to talk about environmental issues, economic forecasts, and security measures. We host a series of foreign films in Brookens Auditorium each semester, and hold an international festival every fall.

The 2,000-seat arena in our new Recreation and Athletic Center is home to our Prairie Stars men's and women's basketball teams and our women's volleyball team. I can't tell you what great fun it has been to have so many members of this community come to the games and cheer for our Prairie Stars. I hope you will consider coming out this fall to enjoy some of the games with us. I'll warn you that we really get fired up for our teams!

As I mentioned earlier, my biggest role as chancellor is to tell people what our vision is and to be the lead cheerleader for an institution that is really coming into its own.

I believe we're on the right path in building relationships with the community and Central Illinois and in serving the educational, social and cultural needs of its citizens. We can always do more, and we will do more.

We see a very bright future.

Thank you.

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Email to the campus community upon announcement of UIS becoming a full-fledged NCAA Division II Member

Friday, July 9, 2010

Faculty, Staff and Students:

UIS Athletic Director Rodger Jehlicka received a call this morning from the NCAA, and he is pleased to announce to all that we are now a full **NCAA Division II member!**

We all have been working toward this goal for 3 years, after we first applied for NCAA Division II membership in 2007. Rodger and his team did a great job of getting through this three year procedure and are to be complimented. The past year was our provisional year, when we competed at the Division II level for the first time.

Today's announcement means that **UIS will compete in 2010-11 as a full member of the NCAA, the Great Lakes Valley Conference and be eligible for NCAA post-season competition** for the first time. After having attended the NCAA DII presidents and chancellors meeting a month ago, where for both days the discussion was about academics and the "student" in student-athlete, I feel it important to say that this is a great day for all of UIS.

So many students, faculty, staff, and community members have worked hard to reach this accomplishment. I would like to invite everyone to the TRAC this afternoon for a brief official announcement about the certification and some refreshments. Please join us at **1:30 pm in the TRAC lobby** as we celebrate this special day for the university.

Thank you and I'll see you there.



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**Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
University of Illinois Springfield**

Thursday, September 10, 2009

Remarks to the Board of Trustees

Thank you Mr. President for this opportunity to talk about my very favorite subject - UIS, the University of Illinois Springfield. Let me first add my formal welcome to all of our new trustees, and tell you that we in Springfield are eager to work with you.

"**DIFFERENT**" - That's an important word, because UIS is much different from the other two campuses. We are small, intentionally small, and always will be. We are the newest of the three universities that comprise the University of Illinois - since 1995 - but we have the high quality you expect from this great university.

In 2006 we launched a strategic vision for UIS: To wit, we will be one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the country.

On the UIS campus, the vision is clear. Everyone knows it. It's an advantage of being intentionally small. We live the vision every day, and I can report to you that we have made demonstrable and clear progress toward that goal.

That means we are a lot like small private universities in several ways - classes are small, nearly all classes are taught by faculty (No TA's teaching), and our students expect, and receive, a highly personal level of interaction with full-time faculty members. We do this at a public institution's cost. Are we making progress? Let me say this:

Within the last year or so we have received 8 different kinds of national recognition, each related to our strategic vision. **EIGHT!** You know I'm going to mention a few - three to be exact.

In its new 2010 edition, US News and World Report ranked UIS **the BEST public master's level university in Illinois**, and the **FOURTH** best public master's level university in the large 12 state Midwestern region. That means, in short, we're 4th best in the Midwest already, and we intend to be the best!

Second, I want to talk about our expertise in offering programs online. We have received three **national awards for our online learning programs**. Two are from the Boston-based Sloan consortium of 1,300 institutions that teach online. Sloan says we are the best overall nationally in online teaching and learning.

Third, we officially became THE public liberal arts university in Illinois this year. The national organization of such universities allows only one per state. It's open only by invitation and invited and accepted UIS as a member. Maybe you never thought of this before: **Does Illinois have an intentionally small great public liberal arts university? Yes, UIS!**

The recognition indicates we are pursuing our vision. But there is more than the outside recognitions. This fall we welcomed Professor Michael Burlingame to UIS as our Naomi Lynn Distinguished Chair of Lincoln Studies. Among his many notable accomplishments, Dr. Burlingame has just finished a two volume book, *Lincoln: a Life*, which is already being described as a definitive work on Lincoln. Acclaimed Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin said Lincoln scholars have waited anxiously for this book for decades. Now it's here, and we have Dr. Burlingame at UIS.

The point is that our strategic vision has changed UIS. We have a clear vision, and we are attracting the kinds of faculty and students that, year in and year out, are making UIS better and better.

If you want to go to college in the city where Lincoln walked and where the seat of state government provides a living laboratory, UIS is the only choice. We are very proud of our location, and we take advantage of it. We have a record number of public service graduate interns this year - throughout state agencies, the executive the legislative branches, and in many associations based in Springfield!

Are there challenges? Certainly! The financial challenges are many. How can we keep our excited and exciting faculty when we can't afford any pay raises? That's a major question in a world where institutions compete for great faculty. We need more faculty development money to attract and retain the best faculty.

Another challenge: to keep building a physical and programmatic infrastructure to recruit and retain students at a high rate of success. We need more scholarships to remain accessible and to attract the best students.

Fundraising presents a different kind of challenge for us, with relatively young alumni and not nearly as many as our sister institutions. UIS is only 39 years old, having opened in 1970 as Sangamon State University.

Here is something that surprises people: We had no theatre program, no musical groups and only a fledgling visual arts program a decade ago. We now have those programs, but students need scholarships and we need to retain those great young faculty.

And athletics is growing on this newly residential campus, just having joined the NCAA at the Division II level. And that needs private funds as well.

How do I know that people on our campus know our vision? Let me tell you this: Just about everybody who comes to me and asks for something - and it's often money - looks me in the eye and says: If you want us to be a top-five program nationally, you should give MY IDEA more resources.

They get it. **The vision is so clear and exciting at UIS.**

So, there you are. We are eager to show you our beautiful campus at your next meeting there in November. I personally welcome any or all of you to come see us any time, to see and learn about your public university in the state capital.

We are different because we're intentionally small - the small public liberal arts university in Illinois. That's what we do for the state of Illinois.

You know what that means? It means our students can and do say, from their first day at UIS: My professors know me. And that makes all the difference. It's our vision.

UIS: UNIQUE, EXCITING, MOVING TOWARD THE BEST.

Thank you and I would enjoy questions.

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Remarks at press conference

Monday, March 1, 2010

I arrived at UIS eight years and eleven months ago, in April 2001.

That beautiful spring, the first dormitory at UIS was in the final phases of construction. Lincoln Residence Hall would open four months later and become the home of our first class of Capital Scholars, the first freshmen at UIS, just a little more than one hundred of them. It seems strange to recall now that we first admitted freshman honors students to UIS only eight years ago. Before that, UIS had only juniors, seniors and graduate students.

We have done so much to make the transition from an upper-division university to a full-fledged four-year public university. In the fall of 2006, we expanded our freshman class to include more than just honors students, and now we have more than three hundred freshmen every year.

Meanwhile, we continued to welcome transfer students and graduate students in record numbers, and our online programs have garnered national praise. Newcomers to Springfield might take it for granted that we have a four-year public university here in the capital city. A lot of local people still don't know that we have more than eleven hundred residential students living in our residence halls and apartments. It literally took four decades to get to this place in our history.

What an honor it has been for me, in the past nine years, to build on the great work begun by my predecessor, Dr. Naomi Lynn, and the three presidents before her. I am only the fifth chief executive of this university. It was called Sangamon State University for twenty-five years and has been part of the University of Illinois since 1995.

Today, I announced in a note to the UIS community that I plan to retire from my position as chancellor, and my last day will be October 31, pending the approval of the University Of Illinois Board Of Trustees. I expect that to take place formally next week at its March 10 board meeting.

It will be difficult to leave a job I love, an institution I love, and the city that has become a wonderful home to Carolyn and me.

But every time we travel east to visit our two children and five grandchildren – maybe three times a year – we literally see them growing up too quickly. We want to be more a part of their lives, and our children want us to be there, too.

Why retire? It may sound like a cliché, but I just feel it's the right time. I've heard others say that, and now it's true for me as well. And I do this knowing I could stay longer.

There are several reasons that I plan to stay until mid-fall. In July we will begin what may well be our most difficult fiscal year in history, though we have been through some pretty tough ones already. I believe it important to be here to get that budget year operating, establish our ability to deal with it and continue to move forward. Also, we will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of our institution this fall, including a mid-October celebration. To be here to get the new year started and then to celebrate the accomplishments of the past decade will be very

special for all of us, together, because the development of UIS has never been about me, but about the work of all of us. A highlight of our 40th anniversary celebration will be an exciting kickoff to our final year of the “Brilliant Futures” private fundraising campaign. We must reach our 28 million dollar goal, and I want to do everything I can to get that final push off to a super start.

After I leave, UIS will be in good hands.

President Ikenberry intends to start consultation soon with the campus community and the Board of Trustees to begin a search.

Between now and the time I leave, I will remain fully engaged in the important work now going on at UIS. Now is not the time for me to sit back, reflect, and relax.

But I do want to say just a couple of things about the progress we have made since I arrived.

In my first convocation speech, in August of 2001, I mentioned why President James Stukel and the Board of Trustees asked me to be the chancellor. I observed then that UIS seemed ready to take the next big step in its development. UIS had been part of the U of I system for only six years.

I said then that we were poised to stand on the shoulders of my predecessors and become a new kind of public liberal arts university – the kind of small, public liberal arts university that Illinois did not have.

Well, it does now.

We have a strategic plan with a bold vision – to become one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the nation. The UIS community has embraced the strategic plan and the vision, and we’re pursuing it vigorously.

In each of the last two years, U.S. News and World Report ranked UIS 4th best in the Midwest among public master's-level institutions. AND, we were unanimously invited last year to become the Illinois member of COPLAC - the esteemed Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges. We aspired to be a member, and now this national organization recognizes UIS as Illinois' public liberal arts university.

Overall, we’re making great progress. We have built new buildings, developed the fine arts, added to student life with athletics and scores of student organizations, all to further that very important goal of being one of the top small public universities anywhere.

I am sure that we’ll be doing more reminiscing in greater detail sometime this fall.

Today, all I really want to say is that I am absolutely confident that UIS has a great future. We have great leadership in our colleges. We have recruited and retained outstanding faculty, and we have an increasingly diverse student body that expects and receives highly personalized attention from our faculty and staff.

It is an honor for me to be the chancellor here.

I will forever be grateful to former President James J. Stukel, who persuaded me to come to Springfield and helped envision what we might all do here together.

I am grateful, too, to Presidents B. Joseph White and Stanley O. Ikenberry, both of whom have been totally supportive of UIS, its mission and Carolyn and me. Thinking about our own campus, I could go on and on about the great people here. I especially want to acknowledge Provost Harry Berman; my right hand person, Ed Wojcicki; and the deans; Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Tim Barnett and his predecessor, Chris Miller; and the chair of the Campus Senate, Tih-Fen Ting. With all of us keeping our sights on our bold and exciting vision, I know that I will leave UIS in very capable hands.

I am grateful, also, to the many Springfield leaders with whom I worked – people like Mayors Karen Hasara and Tim Davlin. Also, to our legislators, Representatives Brauer and Poe, and Senators Bomke and Demuzio; and to our congressmen and U.S. senators, all of whom know our campus from first-hand experience and support us in the state capital and in Washington.

Also, a special thank you to Lincoln Land Community College, our great neighbor to the south, and to its president, Dr. Charlotte Warren. There is more cooperation between our two institutions than I could begin to describe.

Besides our neighbors, UIS has many friends in this community and throughout the state of Illinois. They serve on our advisory boards, they are alumni, they come to the auditorium and listen to WUIS, and they support our students and events with their presence, energy and money. I marvel at the community they have created.

Before I take questions, let me give you just a few numbers. An institution like a university has many facets, but we never lose sight of our most important work – educating students. “Students first” is a phrase we use all the time. We want them to be successful, and they are.

Since I arrived, UIS has awarded just sixteen short of 10,000 degrees – a lot of hands shaken at commencement!

- 5,702 undergraduate degrees
- 4,266 master’s degrees
- 16 doctoral degrees

- A total of 9,984 degrees

I provide those numbers not because I am personally responsible for them. I certainly am not. The credit goes to our faculty, to our dedicated staff, and to the students themselves for creating a wonderful university community.

I commend all of them for their dedication and accomplishments. On their accomplishments are centered my belief that UIS will continue to thrive.

Although I will leave, their work will continue, and the vision lives.

I would be happy to take your questions.

Handouts:

- [List of UIS accomplishments, 2001-2010](#)
- [Richard Ringeisen one-pager, summarizing career](#)
- [List of past presidents/SSU and chancellors/UIS](#)

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Email to the campus upon announcement of the new University of Illinois president

Tuesday, May 11, 2010

Faculty, Staff and Students:

We welcome **Dr. Michael J. Hogan** as the University of Illinois' 18th President.

I would like to personally invite you to meet Dr. Hogan, who will visit the UIS campus on **Thursday, May 13, at 10:00 a.m.** The event, which will be held in the Sangamon Auditorium lobby, is also an opportunity for Dr. Hogan to meet you and other special friends of UIS. There will be a short press conference followed by a brief public reception.

The Board of Trustees is announcing the Presidential selection on Wednesday morning in Chicago. For more information about Dr. Hogan, please see: <http://www.uillinois.edu/>

Although this is short notice, I do hope you can join us in welcoming Dr. Hogan and his wife, Virginia, to this university and community. You can also watch the UIS announcement live on the web at <http://www.uis.edu/technology/uislive.html>

It will also be on the [campus home page](#). In our Social Player at left, click on the Red (or Green) button. The button turns from red to green when the webcast begins.

I am looking forward to seeing you on Thursday morning.

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Convocation 2005

Chancellor Richard Ringeisen's Remarks to Faculty and Staff
August 17, 2005

The Present as Prologue

Good Afternoon and Welcome.

Thank you for the introduction, Harry. Many of you know, but not all do, that Harry is leading this convocation for the first time. Last January, when the time came to name an interim provost, it was clear that Harry should be considered. What a fortunate choice! And he has done a great job since taking over the most important academic position on campus. So, let's have a warm round of applause for our interim provost Dr. Harry Berman.

I always look forward to this day. Welcome especially to new faculty and staff who are here. We take time at this annual convocation to celebrate the new year and the promise it represents.

I want to tell you why this year is so important, why you are so important.

It's because we are in the early years of a new era in world history.

We've been hearing for a long time that we're in the Information Age.

But I assure you, that is passé.

We're beyond the Information Age.

Peter Pestillo, vice chairman of the Ford Motor Company, in a speech six years ago, mentioned the Information Age, yes, but he also said that what will set communities and companies apart in the next decade is "worker knowledge - or intellectual capital, as we call it."

He may not have realized that he was providing a segue to the era that we are in now - the Knowledge Worker Age.

Stephen Covey, author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People*, uses that same term - the Knowledge Worker Age - over and over again in his new book, *The 8th Habit*.

He says the biggest added value that any worker can provide in this era is not product, not time, not energy, but knowledge. Knowledge is now the most important value-added commodity.

We are in the Knowledge Worker Age, and at UIS, we are in the knowledge business.

There is no better place to be, creating knowledge ourselves and teaching our students the benefits of knowledge. It is not hyperbole to say that what we do here will shape our community, our nation and our world for the rest of this century.

The good news is that our future is so bright!

Last year on this day I talked about the future as prologue. We looked to the future because we did so much important planning last year, and many great things happened:

- An exciting, new general education curriculum was adopted. Still needs board approval, and we expect that next month.
- Quad enhancements - trying to compete with the entrance marker for the longest continuing construction project at UIS.
- Graduated first class of Capital Scholars
- Approval for the recreation center - the Board of Trustees approved the design in July, and we'll be breaking ground this fall or next spring, with the opening planned for 2007.
- Oh yeah. And the entrance marker is finished!

Last year I talked of the future as prologue, I tell you now that this year - the present is prologue.

This is our time. This is our moment.

After all the planning and preparation and foundation building we have done in recent years, this is our time.

I am reminded of what a character in *The Secret Life of Bees*, the popular novel by Sue Monk Kidd, said during one important conversation. She said: "This is your time. Don't mess it up."

Why do I say this is our time?

I say the present is prologue - but prologue to what?

Let me start with the people in this room. We have about 40 new faculty members with us this fall. That's an astounding number - about one-fourth of our entire faculty. You have a chance to shape UIS as no new group of faculty has done since this institution opened 35 years ago. This is your time.

You are the big story this year, and I know people are going to be impressed when they learn about the credentials you bring.

You are joining a community of good people. You have great colleagues here.

And if you have been here a year, five years or twenty years, this is your time, too.

This is the year we will implement a new strategic plan.

Last year, our Strategic Planning Committee worked very hard. Its work is not complete. The process continues, and we will get all of our new staff and faculty up to speed about it. That will happen this fall.

Today I want to tell you about a great discussion our Strategic Planning Committee had earlier this year. They talked fervently about the values that have been in place here since the beginning:

Four values that still guide us.

1. Learning. We value an intellectually vital and flexible learning environment, high-quality teaching, high academic standards and scholarship, and opportunities for experiential learning. Our academic values are reflected in an array of undergraduate and graduate degrees offered in all of our colleges.
2. Students. We value a student-focused environment characterized by personal growth and development opportunities within and beyond the classroom.
3. Community. We value a democratic, ethical, caring and diverse community fostering the well being of our students, faculty and staff.
4. Engagement. We value and promote informed engagement and service among our faculty, staff and students, and between the UIS community and the local, state, national, and international communities.

Those values permeate our institution.

Another great thing that our Strategic Planning Committee needed to do was write a **new vision statement**.

It is wonderful and speaks for itself - summing up those values.

Here it is:

UIS: A premier small public university with innovative, high-quality liberal arts and professional programs dedicated to academic excellence, to enriching individual lives, and to making a difference in the world.

I love that commitment to high quality! It joins our past with our future.

But THE PRESENT time - this year - we will take that vision - not yet widely circulated here at UIS - and make it more and more a shared vision, a reality in the UIS community and the UIS culture.

UIS: a high-quality small public university.

High-quality.

Small.

Public.

Right here in Springfield.

You will be part of building this high-quality small public university. It's a lofty vision, but it's where we are headed.

Our visibility is rising, our stature is rising:

- The great historian David McCullough is coming here in October to launch a new national lecture series, in a joint effort with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.
- More international students are attending UIS than ever before - 270 students from 45 countries - double the number from just six years ago.
- There will be a major forum in Chicago hosted by Illinois Issues - with the governor and mayor of Chicago as honorary chairs and with Lisa Madigan and former Governor Edgar among those on the panel.
- The UIS online Computer Science program was rated fourth in a national survey of the "Top 20 best buys" in higher education. Fourth in the nation.
- To give you an idea of the rising stature of our graduate programs, biology student Tracy DiMezzo (who has since graduated) brought honor to UIS when she received a distinguished thesis award from the Midwestern Association of Graduate Schools. She was one of three to be so recognized. The other two were from the Miami University of Ohio and the University of Cincinnati.
- A top state official came here last year to announce that our College of Business and Management will house a new Center for Entrepreneurship so that we can be of greater service in the economic development of this region.

So what an important and challenging year lies before us.

- The Strategic Planning process
- Approval of a General Education curriculum by the Board of Trustees and its development and implementation here at UIS
- An increasing emphasis on private fundraising
- Preparing for the expansion of our freshman class in the fall of 2006 - recruiting, planning, creating new courses, hiring new faculty - what excitement this will generate!

A few words about the budget - our budget:

Once again, no increase from the state. It's called level funding, but it's actually a loss because expenses go up.

Some increased revenue came from a modest tuition increase.

Reallocation is a word you'll be hearing more in the next few years. For example, I think it's essential that we give raises, and the only way to do that is to reallocate funds from somewhere else.

The fact now is, the only way we can do new things now is to take hard looks at everything and then reallocate funds to address vital current needs.

So we have to do more. We will reallocate, but we must also aggressively find **new ways to help ourselves generate more revenue** - perhaps with:

- More continuing education for the community
- Dusting off the Campus Town plans, and continuing to be aggressive in pursuing grants.
- Whatever we do in this area, we must take an enlightened approach - not only generating more revenue, but generating revenue that helps us move toward our vision.

So if you have ideas, I'd love to hear them. To have high quality requires high financing!

We are learning more each year how to allocate funds most strategically, and when we complete our strategic plan this fall, we'll have an even better road

map for the allocation and reallocation of our resources.

So in summary about the budget, it's tight but we're moving forward vigorously. We have stabilized and turned the corner. That's another reason I can tell you: This is our moment.

Our vision is powerful and our optimism is high.

Please know that your individual efforts and your collective spirit are deeply appreciated.

This is your time, because you provide the spirit and the energy to move this university forward and implement our collective vision.

In conclusion, I want to go back to *The 8th Habit* and something else that Stephen Covey said. He said it's great to have plans and strategies in this Knowledge Worker Age, but he also said, with an exclamation point, "Execution is the great unaddressed issue in most organizations today!"

I am convinced that the key to our success as we begin a new year and a new era in UIS history, is execution.

I want you to know that I am absolutely committed to doing my part, to working with campus leaders to stay doggedly focused on what we need to do. We need to put our energy into teaching and learning and doing research - creating knowledge in the Knowledge Worker Age and sharing knowledge with students with high energy and high enthusiasm.

We need to complete our new strategic plan and to implement it with enthusiasm. This is so important, because the working operational goals of that draft strategic plan are so exciting:

- **One, UIS has academic excellence**
- **Two, UIS enriches people's lives - students, staff and faculty.**
- **Three, UIS makes a difference in the world.**
- **Four, UIS celebrates innovations on campus - in a culture where respect and civility prevail.**

Let me repeat:

1. Academic excellence
2. Enriching people's lives
3. Making a difference in the world
4. Working on a historically innovative campus in a great atmosphere.

Last year the future was prologue.

Now the present is the prologue to becoming a great small public university.

This is our vision.

This is our time.

This is your time.

Have a great year.

[Convocation 2005](#)

[Chancellor Ringeisen's Remarks Page](#)

Convocation
Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
August 19, 2003

Good afternoon and welcome to this special occasion. It's always good to see everyone after the summer. I hope you had a good break and were able to spend time with your family and friends. I also hope you had time to relax. We have a big year ahead of us.

Before I begin, I'd like to take a moment and acknowledge that there is a very obvious empty chair in here today. Our colleague, Dr. Lee Frost-Kumpf, passed away last Friday after a battle with cancer. There will be a memorial service on this campus at which time we'll be able to remember our friend properly. But I'd like to say today, that Lee Frost-Kumpf was one of the most committed individuals I've ever met. I find it hard to believe that he was only here seven years. His mark on this campus is so deep, so important, that we'll be benefiting from his energy and passionate caring for many, many years to come.

Hilary, you have our sympathy for your loss. It is certainly our loss as well.

At this time, let's observe a moment of silence for our friend and colleague.

(after a moment of silence). Thank you.

This is a year that holds great promise for UIS. I am eager to begin and look forward to working with all of you to continue our success.

Last year we faced difficult challenges and were forced to make some very tough calls. We did that with an unwavering determination to protect as much as possible our academic instructional mission and our students. *We were successful*, not because we managed to avoid the pain of deep budget cuts, fewer resources and unfilled positions, but because we made hard decisions, carefully considered how to move forward, and *never lost sight of the dream we are here to realize*. In the words of Carl Sandburg, “Nothing happens unless first a dream.”

We are here to create something special – that great opportunity is ours no matter how large the obstacles.

Speaking of obstacles, I have been struggling with the game of golf for many years. It is truly a love/hate relationship, but mostly what keeps me thinking about my next tee time is hope – *I hope* I can keep the ball on the fairway; *I hope* my chip shot doesn't land in the bunker; *I hope* I can make this ten-foot putt, and so on. Trying to improve my score, though, is probably as futile as believing I'll get a hole in one. It sometimes seems as if the game was originally designed to break spirits, but my passion for golf won't allow my spirit to be broken despite water hazards, poor lies, and high scores.

Neither has this university allowed its spirit to be broken despite being “in the rough,” so to speak, on several occasions in the last two years. Then and now, it is our passion for this institution – the fact that we really care about why we are here and what we are doing here – that has made the difference.

FDR considered the beginning of his presidency as a time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. And he said this: “This great nation will endure as it has endured, and it will be revived and prosper.”

We too will endure at UIS. Not only endure, but prosper.

I sense we are ready to move forward and build on the vision of making UIS one of the best small public liberal arts universities in the region, if not the nation. That is our vision.

Today I am going to review some of our major accomplishments with you. Then I want to anticipate some things that we can expect in the coming year -- and there are many positive things on the horizon. I will also share with you some things I'm going to do personally.

(Pause)

Just as change was constant last year, so was the fact that our vision remained the message. *We succeeded in keeping our eyes focused on the future, ever mindful of advancing the interests of our students.*

That vision remains. And remember, you have heard me say it before, that when I talk about a wonderful liberal arts university, I also envision a university with outstanding professional, science and public affairs programs. I want to be clear about that.

Our vision can be seen in every accomplishment of the last year. Everyone can see how we are prospering.

We saw our physical campus continue to grow. Steel girders now form the skeleton of our classroom/office building, a testament to our perseverance in the face of a daunting budget picture. We remain on target to open the doors in time for the first day of classes in the fall of 2004.

And we have expanded our on-campus housing with the construction of several new townhouses, some of which are now ready to receive their first residents this fall. Some of those residents will be students from the Capital Scholars Program who will begin their junior year. Others will be the growing number of upperclass and graduate students who want to live on campus.

We also took a major step closer toward another long-time dream – the recreation and fitness center. I made a bold prediction at this time last year – that plans for the new center would be finalized by now. Well, thanks to the extraordinary efforts and careful planning of Chris Miller and his student affairs team, and, particularly, the leadership of our students, our students approved a referendum this spring to fund the center. The Board of Trustees and Illinois Board of Higher Education must still review and approve our specific building plans, which are being developed. The design and construction will take three years, which makes the commitment on the part of our forward-thinking students astounding. This facility will provide a range of activities for all of our students and staff, younger and older, whether they live on campus or commute to campus. Many of you will use the facility, and it will energize our campus life.

In March, we launched the National Commission on the Future of UIS to help shape a mutual vision that will lead us all to shared goals. I asked the Commission to look ahead 10 years and

ask two major questions: What will we be and what do we want to be known for 10 years from now? I chose that time frame because it is one we can get our hands on. It's different and more exciting than saying, "What do we generally aspire to be?" By discussing what we could be known for in 10 years, we are dreaming, yet being realistic. I am looking forward to getting the commission's report this fall, which you may recall is a collection of thirteen 'one-pagers' --- one 'vision' for each task force. Then I will work with UIS leaders and our important consultative groups, such as the Campus Senate, the colleges, APAC, Staff Advisory Committee, and the Student Government Association, to consider the overall vision and engage them in a more detailed strategic planning process.

One of UIS' most exciting and far-reaching developments began to take shape this past year with the establishment of the UIS Lincoln Center. In November, the Center presented the Inaugural Lincoln Legacy Lecture on the subject of *Lincoln and Race*, and in April hosted the Public Policy Summit 2003: "Politics

and Ethics in Illinois: Past, Present, and Future.” This Studio Theatre was filled to capacity for an entertaining and thought-provoking program featuring Judge Abner Mikva, visiting professor of law at The University of Chicago, and a panel of seven distinguished government leaders, public policy activists, and scholars.

Following a national search last year, we were very fortunate to attract Dr. Milan Dluhy to the position of executive director of the Lincoln Center.

While on the subject of exceptional hires, we also attracted Susan Linn, who brings many years of experience in professional theatre to her new position as director of Sangamon Auditorium.

At UIS, we embrace a life of the mind. That is most evident in the way our faculty inspire students to realize their capabilities, and to reach beyond them, to discover the world and themselves.

Excellence in teaching and scholarship are an integral part of our vision; indeed, it lies at the very heart of our vision.

Last year excellence was recognized when Dr. Michael Lemke, associate professor of biology, was named University Scholar to honor and reward his outstanding scholarship and teaching. Associate Professor of political studies Pinky Wassenberg received the sixth annual Pearson Award for outstanding teaching; professor of psychology Ron Havens received the second Faculty Excellence Award for career-long accomplishments in teaching and scholarship and for best exemplifying the ideal of the teacher-scholar. And our continued spirit of integrated service was exemplified when Dr. Lee Frost-Kumpf, associate professor of political studies, received the fifth annual Spencer Award for his impressive record of accomplishment in service.

The Capital Scholars Program was the success we had earlier envisioned in the past year, its second, and its reputation is growing, as evidenced by the large number of applications we received for this fall. Our Capital Scholars have brought a new energy to the campus, driven change in student life, and enlivened

our annual events. They have also brought honor to the campus – UIS has the second highest academic profile of first-year students and the highest retention rate of first-year students among Illinois’ 12 public universities. That’s something to be proud of.

This past year we also took our first steps in studying a general education curriculum that would allow us to expand our Capital Scholars program beyond the current number of students. It is important to remember that these discussions are just beginning, and are pointing toward a larger first-year class, but one always aimed at the highest quality high school seniors, and one that will always be small by comparison to other state schools. I want to thank in advance all of the faculty who will be a part of this study and discussion. It is very important that we study this possibility now, since current demographics show that the number of traditionally-aged students is growing.

When this becomes a reality, I have no doubt that UIS will become a destination of choice for high school graduates seeking the extraordinary combination of academic excellence and real-

world experience. We remain proud that the vast majority of our students build an impressive record of internships, research projects and experiential learning activities. That's partly because of our remarkable connection to the agencies of Illinois state government, but also our good relationships with private industry and not for profit organizations.

Our students teach conversational English to children in India. They train as financial planners. They report for National Public Radio and the Chicago Tribune. They work for the Secret Service, and at such places as Abbott Laboratories and the Lincoln Home National Historic Site. *They're everywhere!*

During the last year, many of our students took part in civic engagement and service activities that ranged from politics, the environment, education and social work, to working with groups such as the Animal Protective League and The Springfield Project. *What a place we are!*

For example, faculty members Heather Dell and Pat Langley enhanced a class on empowerment last semester by taking students

to Nicaragua to observe the working conditions in clothing factories identified as sweatshops. The students founded the UIS chapter of Students Against Sweatshops. And, as a result of their efforts and their suggestions, UIS joined more than 100 other universities in the Workers Rights Consortium, and we will refuse to deal with manufacturers who produce apparel in overseas sweatshops.

Speaking of academic excellence, graduates of our accountancy program ranked in the top 5% in the nation for first-time pass rates on the CPA exam. And teacher education program graduates achieved a 100% pass rate on the national certification exam for the third year in a row.

During the past year, several of our academic programs received continued accreditation, the most recent of which was our graduate level program in public administration.

That's a lot to be proud of, folks!

After 26 years of our athletic teams being independent, UIS became a member of the American Midwest Conference last

March, one of the premier NAIA Conferences. This is a great move for us. Being in a conference will generate more local, regional and national attention for our teams. That will give UIS more visibility and our students and our community more reasons to discuss our teams as we pursue conference championships and post-season triumphs.

Vibrant campus life is essential as we pursue our vision. If you think of our vision as a painting, campus life adds color and texture and contributes to those brush strokes that represent fun and help define traditions and create lasting memories.

There were plenty of those brush strokes in the last year. Here are a few: our first theatre productions, a foreign film series, the Starlettes dance team, the UIS Pep Band, our cheerleaders, our choir, the great success on the part of our Forensics Team in bringing home national tournament honors, and the entertainment, concerts, lectures and special events sponsored by our 60-plus student organizations, who now have their own space in the new Student Organizations Resource Center in the PAC.

(Pause)

That painting of our vision needs to convey an image that says we take pride in the way our campus looks, too!

So we are enhancing the appearance of the campus. But sometimes image-building can be like the plight of Sisyphus (sis-a-fuss), whose punishment in Hades was to keep pushing a heavy stone up a hill, only to have it roll down to the bottom again. I am, of course, referring to our permanent entrance marker, *that project* on the corner of 11th Street and Hemingway Drive. At the previous two convocations, I have said something like this to you, and I quote myself: “We are looking forward to the installation of a permanent entrance marker this year, and I want to thank all of you who contributed money toward the marker. Your contributions have been carefully reserved just for that purpose.”

Well, that is *still* true, and I’m pleased to report that, as you might expect, some interest has been earned on your contributions by now. I am also pleased to report that the marker is finally being installed. And when the installation is *complete*, we will have a

celebration commemorating the *longest, the most difficult, and the most frustrating* project ever to have been undertaken in the history of this campus.

Another campus enhancement project I want to mention is the development of green space in the area where parking lot G used to be located. That space will contribute to formation of a campus quadrangle, an open space in the heart of campus where students, faculty and staff can gather and enjoy a more collegial environment in which to study and socialize.

While we have been forced to move more slowly on some initiatives due to budget constraints, I am very pleased that we've been able to add some very talented new faculty this fall, each of whom will be introduced to you this afternoon and you will have a chance to meet at the reception following this program. I think you will find, as I have, that their academic credentials are impressive. They bring different perspectives on teaching and learning, new ideas for scholarship, and the capacity to enhance this institution's already strong reputation for delivering high

quality education. We are proud to welcome them, and they'll be introduced later, but how about all of you stand right now!

Continuing to look ahead to the next year, I would like to mention to you that during the last two years, this institution has reduced its administrative budget by around 26 percent. That is a significant reduction of an administrative budget that was small to begin with. Of course, finding financial resources will be one of the biggest challenges that await us again this year, but we will continue to do everything possible to protect our academic programs and to keep our students from feeling the effects of the cutbacks.

Fund-raising and friend-raising are key elements in the pursuit of our vision.

Those efforts will continue in high gear this year, as our private support needs grow and become more critical. Last year, with your help, we recorded increases in annual giving, the number of annual gifts, and the number of donors. Major gifts last year

included our first estate gift for the Lincoln Center and an estate endowment gift for Sangamon Auditorium.

Our Development Office will be conducting special campaigns this year to raise funds for merit and need-based scholarships, chairs and additional professorships, the Lincoln Center, Brookens Library, and the recreation and fitness center. For example, we hope to be able to announce a new fully funded professorship this fall.

The University of Illinois Foundation has signaled its strong support of our development office by funding two new positions for fundraisers. This commitment to our fund-raising efforts, indeed, faith in our ability to do so, is deeply appreciated. Though he is not here, I want to recognize Sid Micek, the foundation's president, for his enthusiastic support of UIS.

In order to turn our vision into action, we must continue to attract excellent faculty and to offer high quality academic programs to our growing number of students, both classroom and online.

Our enrollments remain strong, and we should take pride in that. Speaking of online, UIS is leading the way and has experienced rapid growth ever since our online program began in 1998. We now have six entirely online degree programs, with English and Computer Science the newest to be offered fully online this fall.

Beginning this year, students are able to transfer to UIS earlier in their academic careers because the Campus Senate approved lowering the minimum number of hours needed to transfer to UIS to 30. This change will give our faculty an earlier opportunity to shape these students.

This year we will conduct a very important national search for dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. I would never presume to think we could *replace* Dean Bill Bloemer, but it is imperative that we find someone who is worthy of following Bill into that key administrative position. *A strong College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is critical to the attainment of our vision.*

As an institution that prides itself on the high quality of our instruction, we have an obligation to look carefully at what our students learn – in other words, to *assess* learning outcomes. The Assessment Task Force has, for the past two years, provided leadership in doing just that.

(Hold up button) This button says “Take a Second Look” and symbolizes what assessment is all about. Let’s make this the year in which we make substantial strides in assessing learning outcomes across all the campus’ programs.

Now, I’d like to move from academics to athletics for a moment and show you another symbol – the newly designed Prairie Stars logo. We all know how important logos are in shaping image.

We decided that our Prairie Stars logo was getting tired and needed to be freshened up this year, so we gave it a more energetic and lively appearance to match the spirit of our teams and the growing enthusiasm of all the fans who will cheer them on.

Now, you know that I occasionally make *bold predictions*, just as I did regarding the recreation and fitness center last year. I can't just settle for making plain old predictions: they have to be *bold*. And I'm going to make some right now: This will be a year of national winners! First, I predict that our forensics team will bring home a team national championship, and turning to athletics, I predict that our soccer team will win the national tournament this year -- well, okay, this year or next year. This very talented team kicks off its season this evening with an exhibition match against Western Illinois. Our soccer coach, Joe Eck, has assured me the players are going to be very tough competitors this year.

And, now that I'm out on this limb, I'm also going to take a *gamble* and *boldly predict* that our men's basketball team will be conference champions, guaranteeing a regional bid and an opportunity to advance to the national tournament. Now, I realize it will only be the team's second season and the stakes will be high, but Coach Kevin Gamble and his players thrive on tough competition, as do Coach Wanda Nettles and her talented women's

basketball team, who, by the way, I predict will also be conference champions. Bring the family and come see our students in action, in the theatre, on the field or court!

Critical to our vision is the work of the National Commission on the Future of UIS. Many of you are involved in that process to more clearly define where we're going. There is a creative energy that results when people work together -- faculty, administrators, friends off campus, the Campus Senate -- toward common goals. That energy fuels ideas and recharges our spirits as we dream about the future together. This is the year we make it happen!

Speaking of high energy, we will have the opportunity to practice our hospitality skills and show off our campus in September when the U of I Board of Trustees comes on September 10 and 11 and then when the U of I Alumni Board meets here on September 19. You can rest assured that we won't miss those important opportunities to make our guests feel welcome and showcase our wonderful campus.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if, when they left, they started telling everybody that their expectations were exceeded everywhere at UIS – from the food service to the conference services staff and to all who they meet?

Many new academic things will be moving forward. I'm quite excited about the ideas that Dr. Dluhy is bringing for new, exciting outreach and research programs in the Lincoln Center, and the deans are all fired up for the new year, as are the vice chancellors. I also sense a strong energy around the chancellor's office, and all of us are being inspired by the continuing successes of our faculty and students.

Now, I'm going to tell you about some things I'm going to do this year. Don't be surprised if I drop by to see you, just to say hello and perhaps chat about something you'd like to talk about. As I begin my third academic year as your chancellor, I know it's important for me to continue to be involved with all aspects of the campus and especially the people who work here. I would enjoy

one-on-one exchanges with you. Your perspectives are essential to improving whatever can be improved. I want to hear them.

I am also going to do more than ever this year to encourage giving to UIS by taking even more opportunities to meet with potential donors and cultivate relationships with alumni. I have already had the privilege of meeting some of our distinguished alumni during Leadership Roundtables and at many different events during the last two years, including outstanding alumni gatherings in Chicago, St. Louis, Tampa, Florida, Washington, D.C., and right here in Springfield. We have cultivated many wonderful supporters. As the *primary cheerleader* for this institution, I will be talking about the many assets of this university and touting its virtues at every possible opportunity I promise you.

UIS cannot realize its vision without a strong foundation of private support. You may help wherever you are and whenever you can. Yes, you are also “cheerleaders,” our best advocates – never, ever forget that!

You may have noticed that my wife, Carolyn, whom many consider to be my greatest strength (!) isn't here today, which she deeply regrets. Well, maybe not soooo deeply, because – forgive me for a personal moment. She and I experienced another wonderful milestone in our lives this month when we became grandparents for the third time. Our daughter, Heather, gave birth to her first child, a healthy 9 pound, 3 ounce baby boy, John Richard Garold Ray. He joins our lovely granddaughter, Erin, and grandson, Addison, our son's two children. And Carolyn is there with the new baby now. *You could say that we are proud, but there are really no words to describe how wonderful we feel, and how blessed.* I'm sure many of you know exactly what I'm talking about.

Thank you very much for being here today and thank you for your determination and hard work. I remain completely optimistic about our exciting future because we are building on a solid foundation.

We will endure and we will prosper.

Thank you.

April 7, 2009

Dr. Richard Ringeisen
Chancellor
University of Illinois at Springfield
One University Plaza
Springfield, IL 62703

Dear Chancellor Ringeisen,

I want to take a few moments of your time to share with you my experiences in dealing with the UIS Athletics Department over the past years. Many times when Chancellors receive letters, they are ones of complaint; this is NOT one of those letters. As the University's membership in the NAIA and the American Midwest Conference concludes, I want to express to you what I will miss about UIS personnel.

Dr. Marcel Yoder, the University's Faculty Athletics Representative, routinely attended Conference meetings, and was always a contributing participant. If he had a question when reviewing/completing eligibility for a student, he asked it immediately so that an informed decision could be made prior to participation (hence avoiding a possible violation).

Brian Clevenger, the University's Registrar, was recommended as a Conference eligibility committee member by Rodger, Jehlicka and quickly became a valued member of that committee. Brian's questions and recommendations were always 'on target' with respect to Conference and NAIA regulations. His concern for student issues while understanding the need to abide by rules will be missed.

I called Dr. Rodger Jehlicka, the University's Athletics Director, last evening because I personally wanted him to know that I will miss the University's membership in the American Midwest Conference for many reasons (some of which are identified above) and others of which I will continue to enumerate.

Whenever, a question was posed at a Conference meeting, Rodger could be counted on to give a 'universal' prospective – not an answer that would benefit his institution to the detriment of others. Whenever (and those times were rare) I had a question regarding a submitted eligibility packet, Rodger made sure the appropriate person (Registrar, FAR, or coach) had an answer for me almost immediately. I say that, because other Conference schools are not always that timely with their responses and since I am responsible for 9 Conference institutions, and 104 sports, Rodger's concern for my time is most appreciated.

Late last week, I was made aware that several UIS coaches had recently 'resigned'. During yesterday's phone call, I addressed those resignations with Rodger indicating to him that such scenarios (whatever they were) are not pleasant and are difficult to handle particularly when local media becomes involved. I applauded his integrity for acting immediately to assure that student athletes at UIS are surrounded by quality persons --- persons who have the same moral and ethical fiber that he has always exhibited.

This letter became longer than I originally intended, but I believe it encompasses the high regard with which I hold Rodger Jehlicka and those UIS personnel with whom I have worked. Best wishes as you begin your new adventure with the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

Sincerely,

Valerie A. Beeson
American Midwest Conference
Eligibility Committee Chair

**Remarks by Chancellor Richard Ringeisen
University of Illinois Springfield**

Friday, October 2, 2009

Statement in support of the LGBTQ community at UIS

I am pleased to support the efforts of the **LGBTQ** community at UIS, which is observing and celebrating **National Coming Out Week**, October 5-11, 2009, in preparation for **National Coming Out Day**, which is observed October 11 each year.

LGBTQ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and questioning. The LGBTQ community also includes its "allies." Hence, we have an active student organization at UIS called the Queer Straight Alliance, and I issue the following statement:

- **Whereas**, members of the LGBTQ community at UIS are important members of the entire university community; and
- **Whereas**, members of the LGBTQ community at UIS are among the ranks of students, staff and faculty, several of them in leadership positions; and
- **Whereas**, the UIS culture strives to have a spirit of inclusiveness and to educate students and staff about the critical value of openness; and
- **Whereas**, the QSA and LGBTQ community here plans a week of activities during National Coming Out Week, including a picnic on Sunday, October 11, for people of the entire central Illinois community; and
- **Whereas**, the entire UIS community is invited to join in those activities; and
- **Whereas**, new programs are being developed at UIS to emphasize the value of the LGBTQ community, including staff training, SAFE ZONE training, and the Lavender Graduation; therefore, be it
- **Resolved**, the UIS administration asks all members of the UIS community to demonstrate a welcoming spirit to members of our LGBTQ community not only during National Coming Out Week, but year-round; and be it further
- **Resolved**, the chancellor encourages all members of the UIS community to participate in SAFE ZONE training, and be it further
- **Resolved**, UIS will fly the pride flag below the UIS flag in front of the Public Affairs Center during National Coming Out week, and be it further
- **Resolved**, the chancellor invites everyone to join him at the flag raising ceremony at 9:30 a.m. Monday, October 5, 2009, in front of the PAC Building.

**Richard D. Ringeisen, Chancellor
October 2, 2009**

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Statement about my retirement

Sent via email to the campus community

Monday, March 1, 2010

Over the years I have written you many “catching you up” notes. This one is the most difficult one to pen. I am announcing that I plan to step down from my position as chancellor, with my last day being October 31, 2010. This is pending the approval of the University of Illinois Board of Trustees, which is expected to consider my intention to retire at its March 10 board meeting.

To say that it will be difficult to leave a job I love, an institution I love, and the city that has become a wonderful home for Carolyn and me, doesn't do justice to the depth of my feelings. And I do this knowing full well that I could stay longer.

But every time we travel east to visit our children and five grandchildren – maybe three times a year – we literally see those kids growing up too quickly. We want to be more a part of their lives, and our children want us to be there, too.

I know it may sound like a cliché, but I will be 66 years old in a couple of weeks, and I believe it's the right time for me to step down after being at UIS for nearly nine years. It's just time. I've heard others use those words on several occasions and was unsure what was meant, but now I know, and it's true for me, too.

There are several reasons that I plan to stay until mid-fall. In July we will begin what may well be our most difficult fiscal year in history, though we have been through some pretty tough ones together already. I believe it important to be here to get that budget year operating, establishing our ability to deal with it and continue to move forward. Also, we will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of our institution this fall, and that includes a mid-October celebration. To be here to get the new year started and then to celebrate the accomplishments of the past decade will be very special for all of us, together, because the development of UIS has never been about me, but about the work of all of us. A highlight of our 40th anniversary celebration will be an exciting kickoff to our final year of the “Brilliant Futures” private fundraising campaign. We must reach our 28 million dollar goal, and I want to do everything I can to get that final push off to a super start.

President Stanley O. Ikenberry intends to start consultation soon with the campus community and the Board of Trustees to begin a search.

In the meantime, I will remain fully engaged in our important work now going on at UIS. We are still on that upward trajectory, in fast pursuit of our vision to become one of the top five small public liberal arts universities in the nation. It's a vision our entire university developed together, and which we as a university have embraced.

I am confident that with the leadership we have in our colleges, our administrative divisions, and Student Affairs, and with the faculty, staff and students we have recruited and retained in recent years, UIS has a great future. We also have solid leadership in the Campus Senate, the Academic Professional Advisory Committee, the Civil Service Advisory Council, and the Student Government Association.

I am so grateful to all of you for your dedication.

You are a major reason it's easy for me to say that UIS is in good hands.

I will forever be grateful to former President James J. Stukel, who persuaded me to come to Springfield and helped me envision what we might all do here, and to Presidents B. Joseph White and Stanley O. Ikenberry, both of whom have been totally supportive of UIS, its mission, and Carolyn and me. And I am grateful to former trustees who were part of the hiring process and were very helpful in my getting established in Springfield - people like Tom Lamont and Susan Gravenhorst and Ken Schmidt.

We will set aside time this fall to reflect more formally and in greater detail as a university community about what we've done together in the past decade.

For now, our work goes on, and I know that you will have questions and concerns as UIS enters another period of transition.

I look forward to talking with you.

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