

*August 20, 2012*

*10:30 a.m.*

*Bresnan Arena in the Taylor Center*

*Minnesota State University, Mankato*

## ***“CAMPUS OF THE FUTURE”***

Convocation Address Delivered by  
President Richard Davenport

Good morning and welcome. The 2012-2013 academic year has officially begun! And, what a year it promises to be. I know that many of you share the same enthusiasm that I do as we greet returning colleagues, welcome new ones, and finish preparations to welcome our first year students later this week—all leading up to the beginning of classes next week.

This is a great day in the life of a university!

We begin the year without one of our colleagues. In July, former Provost Scott Olson resigned to become president at Winona. I expect that he is doing something similar today.....greeting returning faculty and staff. We will certainly miss his presence on our campus, but we know that he was well prepared for this move and we wish him well. We will begin a national search for a new provost early this fall.

Interim Vice President Linda Baer will lead the academic and student affairs division during this year. Many of you worked with her while she was Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs at the system office and perhaps prior to that when she served as interim president and vice president at Bemidji State University. Linda is a nationally recognized expert in the field of student engagement and use of analytics. We are truly fortunate that Linda agreed to become a Maverick this year. Welcome, Linda.

I also want to welcome Dr. Kristine Retherford our new dean of Allied Health and Nursing. Dean Retherford comes to us from the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire. We are very proud that she is an alumna having earned her bachelor’s degree in speech pathology from Minnesota State. Welcome home, Kristine.

I also want to greet our faculty and staff who are new to our campus. I look forward to meeting you personally during this week and in working with you throughout the year.

Our special guests this morning include the emeriti faculty and staff who served our university and students during their careers and remain a vital part of our community today.

I especially want to welcome former President Margaret Preska. This will be a busy week for her as the first students move into her residence community. Margaret will be there to greet these students and welcome them to their new home. I know that many of you toured our newest residence community earlier and have commented on the beautiful structure, the enhanced living and relaxing spaces and the comfortably furnished semi-suites. Please stand Margaret so that we can thank you for continuing to serve as an ambassador for Minnesota State Mankato.

Also in attendance today is former Dean Jane Earley. We are always happy to welcome Jane to campus. I'm told Jane was traveling last Friday with one of our development directors visiting a donor. She exemplifies the dedication and love for the students and programs at Minnesota State that our employees have which continues into retirement. Please stand, Jane, as we thank you for continuing to serve the university and our students.

Today, I want to share with you a few of our big ideas and accomplishments from last year and begin to lay the path for our work this year.

In late May, Chancellor Rosenstone met with me to discuss my work and the accomplishments of the University during the past year. As a follow-up to that meeting, the Chancellor gave our institution very high marks and noted our success in achieving several key objectives that I share with you this morning:

- Developed a five-year strategic plan for enrollment.
- Initiated a new intensive English language program.
- Created a new model for faculty professional development.
- Increased our presence and student growth at our 7700 France site in Edina.
- Developed several new collaboration and articulation agreements with two-year colleges.
- Sponsored a system-wide undergraduate research symposium; the first of its kind.
- Engaged Minnesota State Mankato in the Higher Learning Council Assessment Academy.
- Developed a comprehensive recruitment and retention plan for underserved students.
- Launched the first Big Ideas innovative projects program
- Increased engagement at alumni events.

- Continued producing strong financial measures such as our Composite Financial Index, reserve ratio and facilities excellence.
- Maintained strong enrollments during the past 3 years resulting in Minnesota State becoming the largest university in the system based on full-time student enrollment.
- Continued to be the fundraising leader in the system.
- Continued to enhance an already strong brand.

You and I know that the Chancellor was overwhelmed with the accomplishments and highlights of the past year and obviously could not list them all, but I want to note just a few additional accomplishments to demonstrate the breadth of our big ideas/real world thinking.

- The College of Education received the national 2012 Exemplary Professional School Achievement Award in March.
- Forbes Magazine's 2011 "America's Best Colleges" list ranked Minnesota State among the top quartile of four-year public and private colleges and universities
- Total FY12 awarded grants and contracts were over \$5.3M. As of August we have over \$25M active grants and contracts.
- Our Facilities Management unit was recognized for the 11<sup>th</sup> year by the system office with the Excellence in Facilities Management award.
- "Crash" choreographed by Theatre & Dance faculty member Dan Stark was selected to perform at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.
- For the sixth consecutive year, our MBA program was listed among the best in the Princeton Review's 2012 business school's guidebook.
- Strategic Partnerships secured over \$414,800 in new training grants and contracts.
- We awarded our first 4 doctor of education—educational leadership degrees this past spring.
- Intercollegiate athletics hosted the NCAA Division II indoor track & field national championships. The football team ended the season with a win at the Mineral Water Bowl. Our soccer, volleyball, baseball, and softball teams all competed in NCAA regional postseason tournaments with our baseball team advancing to the semifinals—finishing in 3<sup>rd</sup> place nationally. Our athletes continue to shine in the classroom with 75 Maverick student athletes achieving a perfect 4.0 GPA for spring semester and 40.5% of our athletes earned Dean's List recognition.
- We completed the \$4.5M renovation of the Centennial Student Union Ballroom and are opening the Margaret R. Preska Residence Community later this week.

- Honorary doctorate degrees were awarded at spring commencement ceremonies to Al and Cathy Annexstad in recognition of their commitment to the mentoring program Big Brothers Big Sisters and their scholarship support for these students.
- Just last Friday we were notified that one of our students majoring in economics was one of four students worldwide selected as a finalist in the Best Undergraduate Paper Competition sponsored by the International Atlantic Economic Society. She will compete later this year against a student from Denmark, one from the United Kingdom, and one from Stanford University.
- We created a process and successfully distributed \$4M in the Big Ideas strategic priority funding. We should all be very pleased with how this money will be spent and we'll start to see the progress this year. A few of the funded projects include:
  - Improving academic advising
  - Project Outreach and Recruitment Web Pages in Spanish, Somali, and Chinese
  - Redesign of Chemistry programs
  - Sophomore and Transfer Success Program
  - Armstrong Hall and Morris Hall renovations and innovations
  - Dental Simulation and Technology Lab
  - Halling Recital Hall Sound System Renovation
  - Library Connection to the Centennial Student Union
  - Moving Teaching Laboratories into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century
  - Composition Program Development for 100% online learners
- And lastly, I want to recognize the Integrated Marketing team which received the Gold Award from CASE for their publication pieces for the Global Solutions Comprehensive Campaign. Through their efforts, our brand is well-recognized throughout the state of Minnesota, especially in the Twin Cities area. Our latest advertising is starting to roll through Mankato. In partnership with the City of Mankato Transit Services, 5 City buses are now wrapped in purple. In fact, one of these buses is sitting outside Taylor Center. Feel free to stop over and look at it following the convocation.
- More of the highlights and achievements from last year are noted in this morning's Mankato Free Press. Copies of the paper are available outside the arena. Please take one as you leave. We can all be very proud of the many accomplishments during the 2011-2012 year.

In addition to his praise for the work we are doing, Chancellor Rosenstone also suggested in his review of our university, a few areas where the university's performance metrics need improvement. I agree with his assessment, and we had, in fact, recognized earlier that we needed to work on improving these measures. For example,

- We need to strive for greater diversity of faculty and staff, which has not increased over the past five years.
- Persistence, completion, placement and achievement of underrepresented students must continue to rise.
- Pass rates for student licensure exams need to improve in certain disciplines.

I will speak more about these three points later in my remarks.

Chancellor Rosenstone's new strategic framework has provided a focus built around 3 general concepts including ensuring access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans, being the partner of choice to meet Minnesota's workforce and community needs and delivering the highest value and most affordable option by designing the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System of the Future.

This is an exceptional platform for building our own institutional goals.

Our university brand is flying high in Minnesota because we believe in the value of collaboration. Through the work of Vice President Hoffman and those in his division, our strategic partnerships have increased dramatically throughout the state. These important relationships have resulted in outstanding opportunities for our students and faculty to broaden their experiences and to connect them to the public and private sectors. Our new teacher education program's ground-breaking curriculum design along with our partnerships with the Bush Foundation and the PreK-12 system also has been exceptional. And, we need to intensify our efforts in working with our public school systems to improve college readiness to create successful pathways to higher education.

It is also important to encourage collaboration with Minnesota colleges and universities to create the best learning experiences and practices that can be shared across the System. Likewise, we need to continue serving as a leader in collaborating with business and industry on a regional basis to meet workforce and professional needs as we prepare our students for new careers in Southern Minnesota and throughout the state. We can also look for more ways to collaborate with the MnSCU system's new Campus Shared Service Cooperative to enhance our individual campus resources in order to focus our efforts on education. In fact, we are already offering institutional research assistance to other colleges in the system that cannot afford to duplicate our IR office and are willing to pay for this valuable service.

### *Summary of Annual August Retreat*

Last week, we held our annual retreat on the Gustavus Adolphus College campus with our largest ever group--120 participants. True to form, once again we utilized a new technology called chimein that was introduced by Vice President Ed Clark and Jude Higdon, who recently came to us from the University of Minnesota. The technology allowed the audience to provide instant input and questions throughout the retreat. It can be used in classrooms and if you are interested in using this technology, please contact our IT staff.

Three dynamic guests joined us for the day. Vice Chancellor for Advancement, Dr. Michael Dougherty talked about the changes and new directions in the system Advancement Division emphasizing their role of serving the campuses and was complimentary to Minnesota State's fundraising and branding successes. Dr. Robert Colbert, our distinguished alum gave an inspiring presentation on building sustainable diversity. And, we also heard a very positive and supportive presentation from Mr. Randy Zellmer, President of our Foundation.

Interim Vice President Linda Baer, gave a fascinating presentation and focused her remarks on "optimizing student success through analytics," a topic we plan to hear more about this year. Likewise, the general topic of enrollment management was presented by Associate Vice President for Student Affairs, David Jones, who shared interesting statewide and national data regarding enrollment trends, which I will discuss later this morning. He also presented an ambitious 5-year plan that I will include in my university goals for the year. If we are successful in our enrollment goals it will result in some very significant enrollment changes by 2017.

We also heard a presentation regarding extended learning and related issues from Vice President Bob Hoffman, Dean Becky Copper-Glenz and others. The presentation included a discussion of dual enrollment, community college partnerships in the metro area, the Chancellor's metro area BA completion project and the financial modeling necessary in order to create departmental incentives to participate in our extended learning goals.

During the afternoon of the retreat we offered 15 different small table discussion topics that seemed to create lots of positive excitement and vibrancy in the room. The notes from the Fall Retreat, as well as the presentations, can be found soon on the President's Office web page.

### *Institutional Challenges for 2012-2013*

We will continue to monitor our goals from last year, including our big ideas plan and the promoting the campus civility campaign. And, we will be attentive to the challenges I noted earlier today based on our institutional evaluation. However, I want our university to focus this year on 5 timely institutional goals. These goals should come as no surprise to the campus community since they are centered on more immediate needs of the university. They include:

## **Goal 1 – Completion of Our Comprehensive Campaign**

You may recall that last year I provided a progress report for the previous 5 years involving our quiet phase of fundraising. This past year we moved from the quiet phase of fundraising and announced the public comprehensive campaign. Institutions and organizations do not make such announcements unless they have raised close to two-thirds of the campaign target and are fairly certain they will be successful.

I am proud to say that this past year we raised an additional \$6.0 million toward our final goal of \$75.0 million. We now have raised more than \$62.0 million and have a balance of \$13.0 million yet to raise. Raising \$13.0 million in one year will require all hands are on deck with everyone focused on this final leg of our campaign. Development officers from all the colleges will be given huge “stretch” goals that will test everyone’s abilities and limits. Our senior administrators and Deans will all be expected to help fundraise. Vice President Doug Mayo and I will be meeting with each college dean and development officer to discuss how each department can play a big role in our campaign. I also urge and make a strong plea for our entire university community to get behind the most ambitious campaign in our history and the history of the MnSCU system. This goal will require everyone at the university to continue your outstanding work. We need everyone’s help! By asking for “your help,” please know that I am speaking in broad terms; not everyone has to be involved in fundraising, but helping to showcase our university is equally important. You have already heard me talk about why our university is one of the most attractive and popular institutions in Minnesota. This is because of you and the role you play here at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Please continue to help make this the best state university in Minnesota. Also, one last point, our institutional giving rate among staff is around 35%, which is excellent. This is another reflection of our institutional pride. Thank you everyone. Vice President Doug Mayo will continue to provide the leadership to accomplish our comprehensive campaign goals.

## **Goal 2 – Enrollment Management Plan**

Last year, I emphasized that successfully managing our enrollment is one of the most critical areas to study and monitor. Success in enrollment management leads to institutional financial stability and allows us to invest in innovative big ideas to enhance the quality of our education and plan for the future. It is really everyone’s business on any campus. That is why this goal ranks as one of the most important, if not the single most important goal, for our university. I understand our overall enrollment may be down by close to 150 students this fall and that equates to a tuition revenue loss of \$1.0 million, which if multiplied over 4-6 years equals \$6 million of lost revenue that could obviously be used to support our university. We need to turn

this picture around by next Fall. The only consoling fact is that we are not alone and we understand that enrollment is down this fall at most universities around the country and in Minnesota. These changes were predicted years ago by long-range demographic studies of high school graduation and population trends.

Enrollment of students is only the first step. We need to make certain our students graduate and find jobs in the Minnesota workforce. Our persistence and graduation rates are similar to other institutions, however, these figures demonstrate that we only graduate about half of our entering new students in 6 years.

During last week's university retreat we listened to some interesting facts and statistics in regards to our ambitious 2017 enrollment goals presented by Dr. David Jones. However, it is interesting to look back five years ago and compare how far we have come. Since 2007, Minnesota State Mankato has grown:

- Total headcount increased by 7.6 percent;
- Undergraduate enrollment is up 6.6 percent;
- Graduate enrollment is up 14.6 percent and represents 1,962 students;
- Transfer student enrollment is up 4.1 percent;
- Ethnic minorities grew to be 9.6 percent of our student body;
- Non-traditional student enrollment increased by 3.8 percent;
- International students are now 4.2 percent of our student body and we currently enroll 750 international students;
- Online and off-campus coursework grew by 14.3 percent

These figures represent our growth and changes since 2007. As we look to the future you will see that our 5-year enrollment goals are very ambitious, but definitely achievable with everyone's help. By 2017 we plan to:

- Increase our 4-year completion rate from 20 to 35 percent;
- Increase our 6-year graduation rate for all populations from 49 to 65 percent;
- increase our transfer 2-year completion rate from 42 to 52 percent;
- Increase our first year student retention from 77 to 85 percent;
- Increase graduate enrollment by 10 percent to 2,200 enrolled students;
- Increase international student enrollment by 25% to 1,000 students; which will represent 6% of total enrolled students;
- Increase underrepresented student enrollment by 7.5 percent, or 2,100 students.
- Increase total student enrollment through recruitment and retention to more than 17,000;



In the coming year, we will maximize our use of analytics to learn more about our student profiles, enrollment trends and important behaviors that will help us plan for the future. I am asking Associate Vice President for Student Affairs David Jones to assume the leadership for implementing our 5-year enrollment management plan. Dr. Jones will present the plan early this fall and will continue to work with all university divisions as he moves forward with the most ambitious enrollment plan in our history.

### **Goal 3 – Develop a Plan to Improve Student Academic Performance on Statewide and National Measures**

Our NSSE student engagement results for the past 3 years demonstrate that our students scored lower than other MnSCU universities and comparable campuses in our Carnegie Class. Our student scores were lower in all measures including academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student faculty interaction, enriching educational experiences and a supportive campus environment. We will be engaging in important campus discussions centered on strategies to enhance student engagement at our institution. We will continue to emphasize excellence and best practices in the classroom. We have lots of work to do in all of these and other academic areas as we prepare for the forthcoming Higher Learning Commission accreditation visit. HLC will also be looking for institutional and national measures to demonstrate the quality education that students receive at Minnesota State. As many of you learned at the university retreat last week, it is critical that we incorporate analytics literally in all areas of the university, especially the academic and student affairs divisions.

Our Institutional Research Office led by Dr. Lynn Akey has stepped up efforts to provide analytical data to assist in our university decision-making. I have talked to faculty and staff who are thrilled with the idea of our IR Office's assistance in providing much needed analytics for planning throughout the university, as well as in the classroom.

Also, assessment of student outcomes has taken on a new meaning as it is tied closely to accreditation and finding new pathways for learning and evaluating student success. The important work of all great universities is making certain the quality of its education is constantly on the cutting edge and is defined by excellence. We will want to track our progress in all educational delivery so we can better serve our students, but this will require everyone's help. I am asking Interim Vice President Linda Baer to provide the critical leadership for this institutional goal. We are so fortunate to have Dr. Baer on our team this year for many reasons, including her incredibly extensive academic experience and national reputation in the area of analytics and student assessment.

#### **Goal 4 – Design an Academic and Financial Infrastructure for the College of Extended Learning**

As our extended learning program continues to grow it has naturally placed increased demands on the campus for resources with the most important resource being our faculty. The same is true regarding student services. The off-campus program is built on a financial model that will result in a positive return on investment to the general fund and main campus. While our institution is committed to providing an educational alternative to a campus experience, we also realize that we need to provide additional support for our campus departments and support services. Therefore, I am asking Vice Presidents Hoffman and Straka along with Dean Becky Copper-Glenz to assume the leadership for designing a transparent financial infrastructure for our extended learning programs to be implemented this coming year. My goal here is making certain we invest in extended learning with a parallel goal of reinvesting in campus programs that participate in delivering off-campus courses.

#### **Goal 5 – Design a Futuristic Campus Master Plan**

You may recall that in 2010 we initiated a strategic priority for designing the campus of the future. We have been making steady progress on that priority. Coinciding with this strategic priority, the System office requests that we upgrade our campus master plan every five years. During this coming year, one of our important discussions will be to discuss what projects and goals will be included in that plan. I have asked Vice President Straka to continue his leadership with this important goal. He will be hosting a variety of open forums and soliciting input from the campus community, as well as working with the budget submeets.

It is important that this budget plan coincide with the 5-year enrollment management plan. Today, we have approximately 1,600 employees and close to 16,000 students and we expect the enrollment to grow to more than 17,000 students in the next five years. At the same time, we hope to receive funding to complete construction on a new Clinical Science Building and private support for a new College of Business Global Solutions Building, as well as moving forward with a new Carkoski Commons Building. And, if financially possible, we hope to add a third new residence hall, but this is likely to occur beyond the new 5-year campus master plan. In addition, we will continue our efforts to build a green pedestrian campus linked to our major outdoor beautification project. From a physical standpoint, we are building the campus of the future. From an academic perspective we are building the academic campus of the future.

These goals are ambitious, but attainable.

If anyone asks me why Minnesota State, Mankato is the most popular and successful state university in Minnesota, I simply tell them that we engage in Big Ideas and Real World Thinking and this leads to Big Innovations! Anyone can propose good ideas, and great ideas abound, but

the secret is to execute on those ideas today, not tomorrow! We have set some extremely high aspirations and standards for our university and I am positive we will achieve our vision.

Thank you for all you do on behalf of this great university. Everyone, have a very energetic and successful year!