

# State of the University 2001

## The Chapel

January 11, 2001

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The state of the University of Georgia is strong, and it will get stronger. Today I want to speak with you about the strategic plan for the University of Georgia as we begin the 21st century. I want to tell you why I am more enthusiastic about this plan than I have been about any other venture in my higher-education career. I hope that when you leave here today, you, too, will be excited, first about what this plan means for the university, and second about the impact it will have on this state, this country and the world. But first, as is customary, I want to review quickly some of the highlights of the previous year.

Just this week, we commemorated the 40th anniversary of desegregation at UGA and rechristened the building where Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes registered for classes the Holmes-Hunter Academic Building. I can think of no more fitting place on this campus for such a memorial than the building where those two brave young people changed the history of this institution and this state, and where thousands before and thousands since and thousands more in the future will officially enter the University of Georgia. It was also an opportunity for all of us to consider how far we have come and how far we yet have to go, and to recommit to serving the educational needs of all Georgians.

- The Redcoat Band won the Sudler Trophy, given annually to the best college band in the nation. This award simply formalized what I and many of you already knew: There is nothing finer in the land than the Georgia Redcoat Marching Band!

- For the first time in this university's history, we are ranked among the Top 20 public universities in America by U.S. News and World Report.

- We received more than \$100 million in external research awards for the first time and are well on our way to another record-breaking year, with significant grants from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education to B.C. Wang, Susan Wessler, Michael Padilla, Linda Labbo and Steven Stahl. In an exhilarating flurry of announcements last fall, these researchers brought some \$40 million to the University of Georgia. Those are the kinds of grants we ought to be getting and I am confident that we have many more announcements to make in the near future.

- We presented the Peabody Awards for the 59th time, recognizing broadcast excellence across the spectrum of television and radio. And I still miss Barry Sherman.

- Annual giving to the Georgia Fund was up 20 percent over the previous year, a clear indication of the strong support our alumni and friends have for this university.

- We won national championships in women's swimming and diving and women's tennis. The women's swimming and diving title was a repeat of last year's championship; I was fortunate to be on hand in Malibu to give a commencement address - somebody has to do these things - when we won the tennis title.

- Kristy Kowal, who represented us in the Olympics and earned a silver medal in the 200-meter breaststroke, was named the NCAA Woman of the Year at a banquet in Indianapolis. She is also a recipient of the NCAA Top VIII award, given annually to honor eight student-athletes for achievement in athletics, academics, character and leadership. By the way, this makes four consecutive years that a UGA athlete has received this honor.

- Kelly and Coco Miller received the Sullivan Award, given to the nation's top amateur athlete.

- 18 UGA current or former athletes competed at the Sydney Olympics, where our swim coach, Jack Bauerle, was an assistant coach.

When I was inaugurated as the president of the University of Georgia, I spoke of this institution as a place of hope and vision. We have entrusted to our care the hopes of an entire state and of its people as individuals, and we accept those responsibilities humbly and with due care. Across this state, high school sophomores are beginning to think about college and many hope for admission to the University of Georgia. Perhaps they have come to campus for football games, walked across the lawns of North Campus, wandered through the bookstore, taken a turn ringing the Chapel Bell after a victory. Perhaps they've come here for the Georgia Science and Engineering Fair, having worked for months on a project that won first a school contest, then a regional contest and the opportunity to compete against students from across the state, their various displays covering the floor of Stegeman Coliseum. They may have come to the Georgia Museum for their first close exposure to fine art or to Hodgson Hall for a symphony. Many of them will wake up early one fall morning and come here to take the SAT; afterwards they'll stroll the campus, wondering if their performance on that test and their hard work in high school will earn them the chance to sit in one of the classroom buildings they see as they walk.

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I can almost feel the combined power of all that hope, radiating from every corner of this state, fixated on this place and on all of us. People want to be here. Their eyes are turned toward us. They expect us to be ready for them.

An ancient Japanese proverb says, "Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare." We will not have fulfilled our responsibility to the hopes of this state if we have not prepared ourselves and this institution fully for the expectations and challenges of educating the young people of this new century, of creating tomorrow today through our research and scholarship, and of serving Georgia in the global economy.

I believe we have done just that over the course of the past two years. "A Strategic Plan for the University of Georgia 2000-2010," approved by a unanimous vote of University Council in November - after some very healthy and productive debate - is the vision that will fulfill the hopes of this state and its people. This plan is very clear about how our traditional missions of teaching, research and service will expand in the 21st century. There is no task more crucial to the continued existence of the University of Georgia than carrying out the objectives of this plan. Concurrently, there is no institution more critical to the economic future of the state of Georgia than the University of Georgia.

Let me take this opportunity to thank once again the more than 600 faculty, staff, students and administrators who helped develop our strategic plan. The process that we have all been through and which culminated with that University Council vote will, I believe, be seen as a high-water mark of shared governance at the University of Georgia.

The University of Georgia in the year 2010 will be a vastly different place than it is today. The reality facing us at this moment is that that statement will be true whether we act or not. The environment of higher education, as we all know, is changing more rapidly today than it has ever before. The rising quality and number of the students who seek to enroll here, the new technologies of teaching and learning, the highly competitive nature of the external funding environment, the rapid growth of for-profit and distance education, the vagaries of public funding - all of these factors and more are acting on higher education in ways we could not have imagined even five years ago. The University of Georgia is not immune from these forces.

Last summer I read a story in the newspaper that, while it sounds apocryphal, is true and seems to me to be an apt metaphor for higher education at this moment in

history. There was a family in New Jersey that took a two-week vacation to the shore every summer. This vacation was a family tradition, taken every year at the same time, and all the neighbors knew when they went away. In fact, as neighbors often do, they offered to keep an eye on the house while the family was gone.

This year, however, the family was a little short on finances. The pressure to keep up appearances was so strong, though, that instead of simply admitting that they couldn't afford a vacation this year, they sent the dog to the kennel, called to stop the mail and the newspaper, loaded up the family car, waved good-bye to the neighbors and drove off at sunset as they had done every year.

Several hours later, having driven around to kill time, they crept back into their driveway about midnight, quietly unloaded the car and moved into the basement to spend what the father promised would be a quiet and restful secret vacation.

All went well for the first few days. They read books and played checkers - all the things we say we should be doing as families if we only had the time. But one night, the mother realized that she had left upstairs an item she really needed, so she crept up to the bedroom in the middle of the night, turned on the light, found the item and headed back downstairs.

A few minutes later, the family was awakened by the sound of police sirens. It seems a neighbor had seen the light on in the house and called the police to report a burglar.

Some of us in higher education would look at our circumstances today and suggest that we metaphorically hide in the basement, pretending that all is well and that what has gotten us this far will carry us successfully into the future. It won't work. This is the moment for us to respond to our circumstances, to address the pressures at work on us so that we may continue to do those things which we do well, do them differently and do them better.

The work of the University of Georgia in the next decade is to put a new focus on our traditional missions of teaching, research and public service. As a land-grant institution and America's first state-chartered university, we take great pride in our history, in the young men and women we have educated who have gone on to be leaders in their communities, their professional lives, this state, this nation and even the world. We take great pride in the remarkable research that has been performed by faculty at this campus and we marvel at the amount of new knowledge that has been created here. And we also

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take great pride in our commitment to public service, in connecting the knowledge and expertise of the University of Georgia with the people of this state for the betterment of their lives and communities.

But our history, as cherished and precious as it is, and with all due respect to any historians in the audience, is not what motivates me today. I am far more intrigued by the future than the past. The poet Michael Cibenko has said that "One problem with gazing too frequently into the past is that we may turn around to find the future has run out on us." Our challenge is to prepare the University of Georgia for the future. We will have many decisions to make; we will face many crossroads. If we do not plan - and plan carefully and strategically - we run the risk of making the wrong decision, of choosing the wrong path.

We will stay on the right path by heeding the benchmarks that are a critical part of this strategic plan. Just as we have closely examined our position at present throughout this planning process, we have also thought very carefully about how we will measure our progress in the future. These benchmarks are detailed in the strategic plan and are ambitious, but realistic. Moreover, they send the important message to the public that we are serious about the commitment to our goals. We cannot measure our progress if we have not defined our goals clearly and specifically. The benchmarks in this plan will tell us and all our constituencies how much progress we are making.

Elbert Hubbard, who established the arts and crafts guild known as the Roycrofters in the early days of the 20th century, said, "The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it." We stand at that very point at the University of Georgia and higher education in general. Will we be the ones saying it can't be done or will we be the ones doing it? I fully intend to be on the action side of that equation.

We are faced, then, with a choice: Will we respond or will we hide? I believe we're ready to respond.

This strategic plan for the University of Georgia in the year 2010 focuses on our three traditional missions and what we must do to carry those missions forward into this century. First, we must enhance the total student experience. Second, we must maximize our research opportunities. Third, we must serve Georgia in the global economy. The plan also addresses the funding necessary to implement these missions. We will seek private, external funding, counting on the loyalty of our alumni and friends as well as the convincing arguments made for support of the University of Georgia by the plan itself. We will look at our own budgetary priorities, basing our

decisions on the goals of the strategic plan with the understanding that those goals originated, in almost every case, from the unit level. And we will ask for state and federal funding, for we are a public institution with a significant impact to make on this state and the nation.

There is no greater priority at the University of Georgia than our students. Our charge was set forth in 1785 when Abraham Baldwin described Georgia's young people as : the rising hope of our land." Just this week, there was at the State Capitol a celebration marking 250 years of representative government in Georgia. I am struck again by the fact that education was so important to the first legislators in this state that they created the University of Georgia. From that day until this, Georgia has recognized that the key to a vibrant future is an educated population.

We are first and foremost an academic institution.

What I want to emphasize to you today is the total student experience. I believe that our tradition as a place where students enjoy their college experience is one of our greatest assets. In the University System's annual student satisfaction survey, we rank first almost every year. When I talk to alumni of all ages, they reminisce about the experience of being a UGA student, of professors and dining halls, of dances and football games, of downtown Athens and the intramural fields, of buses and the bookstore and baseball games in the spring.

One thing that is missing from the total UGA experience for far too many of our students is a residential experience. Only one in five UGA undergraduate students lives on campus; we have not built a single residence hall room for more than 30 years.

I believe that students should live on campus, at least for a couple of years. Their presence on campus beyond simply attending class and labs is what builds a learning environment. It builds a sense of identity and community among students who attend UGA together. We border on being a commuter college today, with the attendant vacuum of common identity that comes with that designation.

I spoke earlier of my conversations with alumni and their remembrances of this place. They were bonded by the common experience of living, eating, studying, playing and working together. They learned important life skills like conflict resolution and shared responsibility. They had a common experience which made their individual ties to this institution even stronger.

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We will seek to rebuild that sense of community at the University of Georgia. We have already begun the construction of the Student Learning Center, which will be the centerpiece of the new learning environment here. We will double the number of residence hall beds to some 10,000, with the goal of offering at least every freshman and sophomore a room on campus. And we will continue to seek ways to provide the facilities and infrastructure necessary to sustain an academic community like that envisioned in the strategic plan.

We will also continue what I consider to be one of the most important programs at the University of Georgia: The placing of classrooms and academic advising facilities in our residence halls. If we only talk of a learning community, we will never achieve it. By holding classes in the residence halls, we begin to blur the boundary between in-class and out-of-class learning, between formal education and informal education. We begin to create, in the spaces where our students live, the kinds of academic conversations that college students ought to have, conversations between people of different backgrounds but similar interests, conversations between people of different points of view who learn to listen to each other and to appreciate the simple but powerful fact that there might be something to learn from someone who disagrees with me. We begin to instill a sense of collegiality in its truest meaning.

The idea of campus life as a real and ongoing academic experience for our students is very appealing to me. I think we have taken important first steps toward that goal and we will continue to do so.

The Student Learning Center is central to the concept of a learning environment at UGA. When completed, this will be a one-of-a-kind facility, combining fully wired classrooms, an electronic library, study space and meeting space. At 200,000 square feet, it is the largest construction project in this university's history, and as it rises from the ground one can begin to appreciate the role it will play as the literal and symbolic heart of campus. It is fitting that the largest building on this campus will be dedicated to improving the academic lives of our students.

Soon, we will construct a parking deck near that site and move the bookstore on top of it, increasing even more the space dedicated to student activities and amenities.

We will also continue to upgrade and improve the technology of learning and communicating on campus. Ten years ago, university presidents did not talk of port-to-pillow ratios or network backbones. Next month, I will preside at the annual meeting of the American

Council on Education, and on that agenda are several panel discussions and sessions on technology in the classroom and on campus. The technology of communication is changing the way our students learn, and we must adapt the way we teach to accommodate those changes. I'm not advocating a virtual UGA; I'm still fairly conservative in my view of education. I think it is our job in administration to put good students with good faculty in good facilities and get out of the way. But I also recognize that there are some effective tools among the new technology that can have a positive impact on that simple equation.

Some of the new tools of teaching and learning are costly, especially when we are trying to serve some 32,000 students and the attendant faculty and staff. But if we are to serve our students well and serve them responsibly, we must commit the resources necessary to ensure access to the technology of learning. Just as importantly, we must teach our students to be discerning in their use of this technology, to distinguish good information from bad, to recognize that cutting and pasting can be electronic plagiarism, and even to acknowledge the simple advice that all of us would be well-served to remember: Take a deep breath before firing off an e-mail response.

Our obligation extends beyond simply wiring every room and equipping an electronic library. Just as no chemistry professor would ever stock a chemistry lab and send his or her students in unattended and uninstructed, we cannot simply install the equipment of the Information Age without guiding our students in its use.

We will seek ways to deliver our expertise electronically. The provost is convening a committee to look into how we can expand and improve our use of technology in education. The new technology of education is important to our students on campus, but it also offers opportunities to take the University of Georgia off campus.

But the kind of education I believe we want all our students to experience involves much more than buildings and computers. As I have also said before, I believe that a truly great university must have a top-quality arts program, and we do. To support the excellent faculty and students in those programs, we will expand the Georgia Museum of Art, construct a new facility for the Lamar Dodd School of Art, and build a facility for our theater and dance programs. Those three projects will complete quite nicely the East Campus arts complex and be of benefit to both on- and off-campus constituencies.

Finally, we must continue to strive to meet the challenges and demands of the increasing quality of our

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student body. Every year I think our freshmen cannot top the previous year's average SAT and GPA, and every year they do. This year's class brought a 1203 SAT average and a 3.66 GPA average; such quality brings out the best in our faculty and demands that we improve our curriculum and teaching so that the good students who come here will leave here even better.

Good students, of course, require good teachers. We have many, and we need more. So that more of our students will have the opportunity to learn from the best teachers, we will commit \$25 million to a Superior Teachers Program, to retain the great teachers already here and attract even more.

You might be interested in a conversation I had with an editorial page editor at one of this state's newspapers when I met with him and his staff last fall. He asked me if I would consider lowering the admissions standards at UGA so that we might admit more Georgia students. First, I responded that approximately 85 percent of our students are Georgians. Then I reminded him that it wasn't too long ago that the media were decrying the brain drain of Georgia's best students. Thanks in large part to the HOPE Scholarship, we are keeping Georgia's best students in Georgia. Before the HOPE Scholarship, only 31 percent of those Georgia students who scored between 1500 and 1600 on the SAT stayed in Georgia for college; today, 76 percent of those students stay in Georgia. Before HOPE, only 30 percent of those students scoring between 1400 and 1500 stayed in Georgia; today, 84 percent of those students stay in Georgia. And when they graduate, the overwhelming majority of them stay in Georgia to work and raise their families and improve their communities.

So the HOPE Scholarship and the rising academic standards for admission to the University of Georgia are helping this state by keeping the best students here, educating them here and employing them here. The short answer to those who ask for lower standards at the University of Georgia is "No."

The second focus of our strategic plan is maximizing our research opportunities. Creating new knowledge, solving societal problems, advancing the arts and literature through scholarship and creative endeavor are the hallmarks of a great research institution. We are doing all those things and more at the University of Georgia.

This new century depends on us as well, perhaps even more than the last. The challenges are greater, not lesser; more complex, not simpler; more daunting, not less. The environment is under great pressure. Water is fast becoming our most valuable commodity, as the

ongoing discussions between this state and our neighbors in Alabama and Florida have shown. The economic boom of metro Atlanta during the past decade is the silver lining around a cloud hanging over 106 of this state's counties where the poverty rate is higher than the national average. How will we help those Georgians feel the benefits of the economic prosperity others have felt? Discussions about urban sprawl and residential densities, once heard only in Atlanta, have begun in Athens and other cities in Georgia. This state's popularity is both driving an economic boom and forcing her citizens to confront questions they may not be able to answer. Health and wellness issues are becoming more and more prominent as our society ages.

In these and other areas, I believe the University of Georgia can help.

I mentioned earlier the remarkable external funding news we announced last semester. For the first time in our history, we received over \$100 million in external research awards, grants and contracts. Combine that with the extraordinary level of institutional support we provide for research at the University of Georgia and you see that we spent almost one-quarter of a billion dollars on research here in the 1999-2000 fiscal year.

I want to be clear about one thing today: This institution can do more to support research, it should do more to support research, and it will do more to support research. The pride that I felt last semester when we announced a string of major research grants totaling almost \$40 million - and when the potential lifetime of the contracts is taken into account, significantly more than that - was made even greater by my understanding that our researchers won those awards in less than ideal circumstances. We have not done as much as we should have, particularly in the areas of facilities and graduate education.

These shortcomings were apparent in the strategic planning process, when the needs for research space were made clear from a number of units. One of the realities of conducting and sponsoring research in an increasingly technological age is that it is virtually impossible to keep up with the advances in equipment and the space requirements. It's the rule of technological obsolescence on a grand scale. Just as I know that if I purchase a VCR or digital camera today there will be a better and cheaper model on sale tomorrow, we as an institution must ensure that research-facility maintenance is an ongoing, not sporadic, process. Much of the dedicated research space at the University of Georgia was state of the art in its day, but the past tense is cruel to the process of pushing back the boundaries of knowledge.

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I pledge my full support to the research facility goals outlined in the strategic plan. We will seek \$80 million in funding for two new research facilities, \$60 million of which will be private funds. These facilities will be designed and constructed to support a variety of disciplines, but one focus will be our biomedical initiative. The next great frontier of knowledge is the field of human health, and the University of Georgia is poised to be a leader in this endeavor. From pharmaceuticals to genomics to behavioral studies to mass communication and beyond, we have strengths unrecognized and, I believe, virtually unprecedented at any other land-grant institution. The fact that the federal government, through the National Institutes of Health, is increasing funding for biomedical research at a higher rate than any other type of research is simply an incentive to continue doing well what we have been doing for some time now.

Universities have long been the places where groundbreaking research takes place. I read with interest just a few weeks ago a story about the state of California's initiative to spend \$300 million on three Institutes for Science and Innovation. That state's governor, Gray Davis, said, "The most important thing a state government can do to improve local economies is to support research universities."

Now, California has been the birthplace of some fairly odd trends that have swept across the nation, but I'd be perfectly happy to see this trend come our way.

The University of Georgia is today one of those places where such important research is being done, but we can do more. I want to do all I can do to sustain a climate of inquiry at UGA, so that researchers are supported in their search for new knowledge and their efforts to solve problems in society, science, medicine, agriculture or wherever their interests lie.

We have begun to form interdisciplinary collaboratives to address complex problems. The recently created River Basin Science and Policy Center is a good example; it brings together experts on government with experts on ecology and water with the goal of providing good science to the people who will make critical decisions about Georgia's future. We also provide digital access to a database of state maps, allowing decision makers to tailor searches for such factors as political boundaries, transportation routes and educational institutions. Such collaboratives must become a consistent and prominent part of our service to Georgia.

Another area of focus is the need for more and better graduate students. No university can aspire to the ranks of the elite institutions without a commitment to graduate education. Research programs across the disciplinary spectrum depend on top-quality graduate students. Over the course of this decade, we will increase our graduate enrollment by approximately 1,200 students so that graduate students comprise one-quarter of the UGA student body. We will also establish funding for graduate student fellowships and scholarships so that we will be competitive in recruiting and retaining the graduate students we need.

The research faculty of the University of Georgia is strong. The standard has been set and set high by those whose work is recognized nationally and internationally. To maintain that level of excellence, we must endow another 100 research professorships and chairs. Such an infusion of research talent will be an incredible stimulus to the academic climate and will be an important factor in our progress toward the upper echelon of public universities in America.

Third and finally, we will prepare our students and this state for competing in a global economy. As a land-grant institution, we have a legal and moral responsibility to connect the people of Georgia with the knowledge that resides on our campus. We have done that to great effect for over 100 years, but I am convinced that the need for our service to this state and beyond will be even greater in the 21st century.

I'm not advocating that the University of Georgia become a job mill, training students in particular skills with specific applications to identified occupations. But I am enough of a realist to acknowledge that a majority of our students will begin work shortly after graduation. We would not be fulfilling our obligation to them - and to this state's economy - if we did not have as one of our goals preparing them for the world of work they will enter.

And how that world has changed. The state Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade reports that there are 1,636 international facilities located in the state of Georgia. Those facilities have created 125,000 jobs while generating \$15.7 billion in capital investments. In 1998 alone, international businesses and corporations announced industrial developments of \$278 million and over 3,200 new jobs.

During the 1990s, Georgia saw a 357 percent increase in international investment.

In the first three quarters of 2000, Georgia exports grew by seven percent to a total of \$11.9 billion, with

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Canada, Japan and Mexico being the top importers of Georgia goods. The leading exports for our state are transportation equipment, industrial machinery, paper products and computer equipment.

We cannot escape the fact that Georgia is a competitor in this global economy, nor should we. That fact represents a world of opportunity for our students. It's why study abroad is so important to me. I recently asked a vice president of a major international pharmaceutical company this question: Would you rather hire a student who had taken extra chemistry and physiology courses over the summer or a student who had spent a semester overseas? His answer was unhesitating: The student with the overseas experience.

So I am not talking about job training. I'm talking about life training. I'm talking about the kind of education which is cognizant of the world out there and which prepares our students to succeed in it. I'm talking again about a true liberal education, an education which turns wide-eyed freshmen into capable writers, critical thinkers, competent communicators and potential leaders, all while challenging them to excel in their chosen fields of study.

This process of preparing our students for the world they will enter also has benefits for the state of Georgia. Students with the skills I mentioned are in high demand. They are the fuel for the economy of this state and we graduate more of them than any other institution in this state.

We now have two residential study-abroad facilities, one in Oxford, England, and one in Cortona, Italy. We are looking for others, and I hope that Latin America or Asia will be the next site for a University of Georgia study-abroad facility. Ten percent of the graduating class of May 2000 had an international experience on their résumés; our goal now is 20 percent. As I have said many times, I believe that a semester abroad is one of the most powerful educational experiences a student at the University of Georgia can have. We are coordinating our programs so that students can easily find information about these opportunities; we must also find ways to make it financially feasible for more of our students. No UGA student should be denied this opportunity because he or she cannot afford it.

Our students should also understand and appreciate other cultures, and learning a second language is perhaps the best way to do that. The strategic plan calls for 25 to 30 percent of our graduates to have conversational fluency in a foreign language. I wholeheartedly support that goal. We must also expand the number of languages we teach so that our students will have the opportunity to

learn the skills they need to take them anywhere in the world.

We will also continue the work of the International Center for Democratic Governance, which trains local officials of new and emerging democracies. I can think of no greater service that we can provide to the world than training which stabilizes such governments. We will also continue our efforts to reach cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education around the world; such agreements extend our impact and offer opportunities for our students and faculty in more and more locations.

It is important for us to remember that the University of Georgia is a mosaic. And in a mosaic, all the pieces are important. Pull one out of the picture and it becomes glaring in its absence. Remove all the pieces but one and the meaning is lost. Stand too close and you can see a handful of tiles, almost abstract in their appearance.

It is only at full range that the big picture - literally - can be seen. All of us, students and faculty and staff and administrators, have our roles to play, our piece of tile to lay in the mosaic. For each individual, that piece is very important and you dedicate yourself to it. But it is important to see the big picture as well, to see how all the pieces come together to create that life-changing experience for our students, to create new knowledge and to serve society.

I hope that now the big picture of the future of the University of Georgia is clearer for each of you. We are beginning to create the mosaic of that future and each of you, each student, each faculty member, each staff member and, yes, even each administrator has a critical role to play. The strategic plan is, in a very real sense, a guidebook for creating that mosaic.

Now four years into my tenure at the University of Georgia, and having spent much of the past year working on and looking forward to the completion and implementation of this strategic plan, I understand more fully why people really do bleed red and black, why people in every city and town and village, in every rural community and every city block feel a connection to this institution. Given the challenges we have faced and the opportunities that will come our way in the coming years, there is no doubt that this place will continue to strike a deep and meaningful chord with most of the people of Georgia.

What we are doing through this strategic plan is helping this institution prepare for the future in a way that ensures that we are ready to maintain and improve and strengthen that emotional tie between the University of Georgia and the people of this state. We are doing this

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because we are committed to serving all eight million people who call Georgia home and to have a meaningful impact on their lives.

When the restored ceiling of the Sistine Chapel was revealed a little more than one year ago, many art historians and scholars were amazed at the vibrant colors in Michelangelo's masterpiece. Some even questioned the legitimacy of the restoration, insinuating that the restorers might have stripped away too much of the paint or removed a varnish that the artist used to coat the original.

It is my hope that when the University of Georgia reveals itself after the implementation of this strategic plan, some observers will not believe what they see, so dramatic will the improvement be. They will squint at our renovated mosaic; they will look closely at each tile and then try to see the whole image; they will question our methods. But eventually they will see what we envision today: A University of Georgia stepping confidently into the future from the foundation of its distinguished past.

My enthusiasm for this strategic plan is genuine and ongoing. The course for our future has been set; the guideposts are laid before us. We can now see our destination. It will take even more dedication and hard work to achieve the goals than it did to develop them, but we are ready for that hard work. At the end of this decade, those of us who did that work will look back with great satisfaction, knowing that we secured a bright future for the University of Georgia.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to the University of Georgia.