

State of the University Address 2006

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Thank you, Professor Felson, for that introduction.

Good afternoon. Thank you for being here.

By university statute, the president is required to make an annual report to the faculty on the state of the university. It is my privilege to present that report for the ninth time, and my pleasure to report that the state of the university is strong, albeit with a set of particular challenges for the coming years.

In my office, we deal on a daily basis with a multitude of issues which reflect the complexity of this university, from admissions to the budget to good or bad service at a university office to football tickets to parents pleased or upset with a faculty member to research opportunities or concerns, and the list goes on and on. It is a mountain of paperwork with which, thankfully, I have an excellent administrative team to assist me.

One of the challenges of this job is to keep the focus on what is truly important amid the tide of lesser concerns, and that is my topic today.

I would like, as is the tradition, to begin with a review of some of the successes of the previous year. Then I would like to discuss four major policy issues confronting the University of Georgia.

2005 was another very good year for the University of Georgia. First, I want to express once more my gratitude for the way you responded to the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Even though this campus is hundreds of miles from the northern shore of the Gulf of Mexico, it did not escape the impact of Katrina, which flooded much of the city of New Orleans, obliterated stretches of the Mississippi coast and pounded southwest Alabama.

Immediately after the hurricane made landfall the morning of August 29 and the scope of the damage became apparent, my office began to receive calls. "How can we help?" people asked. "What can the university do?" What the university can, and did, do was to respond from a heart of service to the needs of those in the storm's wake and to those who showed up on our doorstep. Individually and collectively, the University of Georgia opened its arms, its classrooms, its wallets and its facilities, and demonstrated its spirit to people whose lives had literally been turned upside down. I was especially pleased to learn recently that many of the students who volunteered to work at the Northeast Georgia Food Bank during the crisis have continued that work, embarking on what will be a lifetime of service to their communities.

Not only physically, but attitudinally, UGA responded. Many will never forget your generosity and your caring.

America also learned what many of us already knew – that universities are uniquely qualified to respond to disasters of this scale. We have the resources, the expertise, the facilities and the staff to do what we did at Rock Eagle and what LSU did in Baton Rouge when thousands of people sought refuge there. I visited that campus a week or so after the hurricane, and while I was heartbroken at what I saw, I was also very proud to see the land-grant tradition at work. The scene harked back to the Morrill Act and the creation of the land-grant universities, which were to be owned by the public, to be responsible to the public and to serve the public. That tradition is alive and well on the LSU campus, on this campus and on others.

There were many other highlights during the year. The freshman class which enrolled in the fall was the best qualified in UGA history, with an average SAT score of 1241 and a 3.74 GPA. This year's undergraduate class is also the most diverse ever, with a 20 percent minority component; that number was 15 percent only last year.

The number of African-American students who enrolled at UGA rose significantly, with some 350 students, or 7.7 percent, identifying themselves as African-American, up from 202, or 4.5 percent, last year. We also saw increases in Hispanic, Asian and Native American students.

These successes were shared by many of UGA's graduate and professional programs. Both the School of Law and the Pharmacy School recorded yet again increases in the enrollment of students from underrepresented populations. Nearly a quarter of the first-year classes in each of those academic units are from minority groups.

These successes, at both the undergraduate and graduate level, provide the kind of foundation and momentum with which we can continue toward our goals. As the flagship institution of the University System of Georgia, it is important that UGA's student body reflect as much as possible the diversity of this state's college-prepared student population.

This is an increasingly popular destination for more and more of Georgia's best students. In the early action process for Fall 2006 admission, approximately 8,500 applications were received by the October 15 deadline – a 60 percent increase over the previous year.

UGA was ranked 19th among public universities by *U.S. News & World Report*, our sixth consecutive year in the top 20. While it is risky to put too much stock in any one such ranking, it is significant that this university is consistently ranked among the very best public universities in this country. We owe that ranking to the very hard work of the students, faculty and staff.

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Since fiscal year 2000, research funding has increased 56.3 percent, from \$101.9 million to \$159.4 million. This growth reflects a focus on meeting the needs of those carrying out the research mission of this university as well as the increasing quality of the faculty and the proposals they are submitting.

On August 1, 2005 a long and storied UGA research career came to a close with the retirement of Gordhan Patel as Vice President for Research. Gordhan served this university for almost 38 years, having come here in 1967 as an assistant professor of zoology and rising through the ranks, ultimately serving as Dean of the Graduate School before becoming the research vice president. Gordhan, will you please stand so that we may thank you for all that you have done for the University of Georgia?

Since I last reported to you, there have been several significant administrative and academic appointments that warrant recognition today. We have named three vice presidents: David Lee, formerly of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, is our new Vice President for Research. Rodney Bennett, who has served us well as dean of students, became Vice President for Student Affairs last summer. And Tom Jackson, who has headed UGA's public affairs office for 18 years, was named Vice President for Public Affairs just this week. Would the three of you stand so that we may recognize you?

We also filled three deanships. We learned that the best person to lead the School of Social Work was right here on campus. Maurice Daniels, a noted scholar of the civil rights movement has been a teacher, researcher and administrator in the School of Social Work for 26 years. Maurice is unable to be with us today, but please join me in recognizing him.

Sheila Allen was named dean of the College of Veterinary Medicine, after more than 20 years on the faculty and in administration there. It is always affirming when we find that the best available person for a job is one of our own. Scott Angle, the new dean of the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, has joined us from the University of Maryland. Sheila and Scott, will you please stand so that we may welcome you to your new positions?

We celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Performing Arts Center on East Campus, one of our most high profile venues. A truly great university must have a vibrant arts program, and the Performing Arts Center is an important part of the arts at the University of Georgia.

For the first time in several years, there was better news on the state budget. While we must continue to be aggressive in seeking additional sources of revenue, such

as research and private funding, state support remains the core of this university's budget.

The state budget for the current fiscal year included the first year-to-year increase for UGA since 2002. It fully funded the University System formula, providing \$103 million in enrollment-based increases that are providing some relief from three years of budget reductions. We also received funding for a new dining hall at Rock Eagle. We owe a debt of gratitude to the Governor and the Legislative leadership for their support of the University of Georgia.

I want to thank the Governor for the salary proposal that he made in yesterday's State of the State address, and for his continued support of higher education in Georgia. He and I share a belief that a strong and growing higher education system which provides opportunity to every Georgian who desires it is critical to the future of this state.

Not only is the Governor committing 72 percent of the state's revenue growth to education, but his proposal for a four percent salary pool, the best in several year, is sorely needed. I am also greatly encouraged by his statement Tuesday that his top three priorities are education, education and education.

During the summer, the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach hosted the third conference on issues related to the Latino population living and working in the Southeast. Entitled "Finding Solutions: Latinos and the Socioeconomic Development of the Southeast," the conference brought together business leaders, educators, public service professionals, community leaders and others with a stake in this growing demographic trend. It is our call as a land grant university to apply the vast resources of this institution to the issues that affect the people of this state and, increasingly, this nation and the world. In helping address the impact of Georgia's booming Latino population and in many other ways, we are doing just that. As you may know, UGA will partner with the University of Texas in a \$12.3 million grant from the Hispanic Scholarship Fund in the coming years; I will speak more to that project later. Much of our success in this area has its roots in the \$3.5 million grant we received from the Goizueta Foundation in 2002.

Along the lines of our responsibility to address issues of societal concern, I am pleased that UGA will be providing expertise to the Partnership for a Prosperous Athens, which Mayor Heidi Davison announced earlier this year. This, too, is exactly the kind of project that a land grant university ought to be involved in, and I look forward to that group's progress on addressing this critical issue.

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Five University of Georgia researchers, all faculty members of the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences, have been named Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). The five UGA faculty members are Michael Arnold, Jeffrey Bennetzen, Robert Ivarie and Richard Meagher, all with UGA's department of genetics, and Susan R. Wessler in the department of plant biology. This is a signal achievement which speaks to the quality of the UGA faculty and I commend these individuals.

UGA's Food Services department was ranked in the top one percent of 245 universities in a study conducted by Educational Benchmarking Incorporated. That unit has won 59 national awards since 1986.

In the area of facilities, there were several significant accomplishments. We continued our work to preserve and restore the historic structures on North Campus. Phi Kappa Hall was rededicated and the renovation of Old College, UGA's first building, was begun. On South Campus, the Coverdell Center for Biomedical and Health Sciences was substantially completed and the first occupants are scheduled to move into the building in the very near future. We will dedicate that facility on April 7, with former President George H. W. Bush participating in that ceremony.

This innovative facility will house the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute, the College of Public Health and interdisciplinary teams of laboratory scientists pursuing research of direct relevance to human health and well being. The Coverdell Center is sure to have a dramatic impact on UGA's research in the life science arena.

On April 14, we kicked off the public phase of the \$500 million Archway to Excellence campaign at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. It was a night to celebrate our students, with more than 300 of them on the program as emcee, speakers, dancers and musicians. We were able to announce that night that UGA's supporters had contributed and pledged almost \$300 million to the campaign; today that total stands at more than \$374 million. The six themes of the Archway to Excellence campaign, which were developed out of our strategic plan, are:

- Attracting and Supporting the Best Students
- Recruiting and Retaining Top Faculty
- Strengthening Programs to Serve the State and Beyond
- Advancing the Quest for Knowledge and Achieving Pre-eminence

- Enriching the Campus and Building the New Learning Environment, and
- Ensuring Annual and Long-Term Unrestricted Support

The realities of modern-day public university budgeting are clear: Private money is what separates great universities from the merely good ones. Becoming the kind of university that I know UGA can be and that all of us want it to be will require significant increases in the level of private support.

During the fiscal year which ended June 30, 2005 we set another record for annual fundraising with \$96.9 million in gifts and pledges from more than 51,000 donors. There is great depth and breadth of support for the University of Georgia in this state, across the nation and even around the world, and each of us should be very grateful.

The Arch Foundation for the University of Georgia was incorporated in May and held its first meeting in the Student Learning Center in June. Now the primary fundraising organization for UGA, the Arch Foundation is led by a board that is committed fully to the task of raising, managing and disbursing funds in support of our missions to teach, to conduct research and to serve the public.

The student-athletes and coaches who represent the University of Georgia in athletic competition had a very successful year. The women's swimming and diving team won its fourth national championship, and swimmer Samantha Arsenault was named last weekend at the NCAA convention as one of the nation's Top VIII student-athletes. The gymnastics team won its sixth national title and the men's golf team won its second national championship. The women's basketball team made it to the Sweet 16 round of the NCAA championship. The football team won the 2005 SEC East title and beat LSU in the SEC Championship Game. Unfortunately, the team's comeback effort in the Sugar Bowl against West Virginia fell short, but the Bulldogs finished the season 10-3 and ranked in the top 10 for the fourth consecutive season. Only one other team in the nation has finished in the top 10 each of the past four seasons - USC. The athletic department overall was seventh in the United States Sports Academy Directors' Cup competition.

While I had hoped to have a proposal ready today for the future of the Navy School property, there is still some work to be done over the next several weeks before we are ready to come forward. The closing of the Navy School is an unfortunate event for Athens, but I believe that the impact of that closing can best be minimized by using that property in the future in the manner in which it has been

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used for decades – education. Such a use would be consistent with the history of the Navy School and UGA and with the character of the community.

Education is at the forefront of all that we do, and ours is an institution that is moving in the right direction. But continued progress toward our goals will not be without challenges.

Let us look at four major issues that the University of Georgia must face in the coming years.

First is the issue of race. From my first day on this job to today, and probably tomorrow and well into the future, the issue of how to increase minority participation at the University of Georgia has been a pressing one. It has at its core the painful legacy of a segregated society which lingers today in a bimodal system of public education in Georgia, which too often poorly prepares minority students for the academic challenges of higher education. As the highest profile institution in the state, we find ourselves at the forefront of what is a national issue in selective higher education.

The freshman numbers this year were very good, but solving this problem is not a one-year process any more than slight dips in minority enrollment in previous years demonstrate a lack of commitment to the issue of increasing diversity. What this year's increase in minority enrollment does indicate is that our long-term focus on identifying, recruiting, admitting and enrolling minority students is working.

The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* reported that “deans, professors, students and even alumni put in long hours on phones and in person reaching out to qualified African-American high schoolers, telling them what the University of Georgia has to offer. Recruiters targeted schools heavy with underrepresented populations and visited them frequently during the school year, shepherding them through the application process and then, once admitted, encouraging them to commit to UGA.” That is the kind of dedicated and devoted work that will get us to our goal, and I am grateful to everyone who has assisted in this effort and ask for your continued efforts as we move forward.

When I came to the University of Georgia in 1997, there was a formula-based admissions system which favored minorities, males and legacies. Because I thought such preferences were wrong, and particularly because I believed they would not stand a court test, we voluntarily dropped the gender and legacy preferences from the admissions formula beginning with the freshman class which enrolled in the fall of 2002.

We went as far as the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals in 2001 to try to maintain as much flexibility as possible on the question of how we would admit students to the university. At the time of that decision, the prevailing opinion was that there were other cases in the Supreme Court pipeline that were better suited to provide much-needed guidance on the use of race in admissions, the Michigan case chief among them.

We fought the good fight, but did not prevail.

In 2003, the Supreme Court ruled on the Michigan case in a manner which frankly raised as many questions as it answered and could open us, if followed, to further litigation.

Many individuals at UGA have been examining carefully the Michigan case and its implications for this campus. Faculty and administrators serving on the Freshman Task Force, a subcommittee of Faculty Admissions Committee of University Council, have spent months examining the broader issues framing the use of race in admissions. They have been considering the various dimensions of diversity – racial and ethnic, geographic, linguistic and experiential – as well as the body of research on the value of diversity on campus and in the classroom.

I am very grateful to this Task Force, because I believe its work to be of vital importance to our ongoing dialogue on these issues. It is critical that we measure the effectiveness of recruitment efforts and financial incentives in enhancing diversity, and it is also critical that we put in place appropriate assessment tools to track our progress. We must continue to communicate to people in Athens and across the state the benefits of a broadly diverse learning environment. This is a critical issue, and one that we must constantly monitor.

The use of race as a factor in admissions decisions differs, however, from targeted recruitment of students from underrepresented populations. For four years running we have used no racial, gender or legacy preferences in admissions, instead admitting students on the basis of demonstrated academic achievement and some additional file reading, while becoming much more aggressive about recruiting. Given the litigious nature of American society today – the value of a spot in the UGA freshman class is so great that people are willing to sue us to get in – I believe that, after thinking this through carefully and monitoring closely our collective efforts over the past four years, the best course for UGA in the immediate future is to keep the focus on recruiting and enhanced scholarships rather than on questionable legal remedies. In other words, I prefer to spend the available resources on potential students rather than lawyers.

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It is important that the positive news about the diversity of the freshman class this year be repeated next year, and the year after, and the year after and on into the future. The University of Georgia must never forget that it is the people's university. The student body should reflect the best that all of Georgia has to offer. The \$12.3 million grant from the Hispanic Scholarship Fund which we are sharing with the University of Texas at Austin will play a significant role in achieving that goal. The grant is designed to identify, implement and evaluate the best practices for recruiting, retaining and graduating Hispanic students. As the state with the third-fastest rate of growth in its Hispanic population during the 1990s, Georgia must be a leader in ensuring educational opportunities for these new Georgians.

We will also strengthen and enhance the identification and recruitment of other minority students. To help fund this initiative, we will apply one-half million dollars per year from bookstore revenues over at least the next four years to recruiting and enrolling students who are underrepresented within the UGA student body, with particular attention to first-generation college students from accredited Georgia high schools. We will deposit \$250,000 per year in an Arch Foundation endowed fund established for the same purpose, and we will apply an additional \$250,000 per year to financial support for current student needs. Such scholarships are an important component of the Archway to Excellence campaign.

In short, we will dedicate \$2 million in bookstore revenues over the next four years toward accomplishing the institutional goal of increasing the diversity of the UGA student body.

Second, despite all the progress at UGA over the past three to four years, one area where we have not made the progress we need to make is faculty and staff salaries. In preparing the FY 07 budget, I have already recommended to the vice presidents, to the Governor and to the legislative leadership that our top institutional and state priority has to be salaries. We need a substantial pool this legislative session to address faculty and staff salary deficiencies. I want to thank the members of the local legislative delegation for their assistance in this regard.

As I mentioned, the Governor yesterday expressed his support for such a salary pool, and I am hopeful that the members of the General Assembly will support his proposal. We must be able to recruit top faculty and staff from the best institutions in this country as well as retain those who are already on campus.

With the exception of filling vacancies necessary to keep the core teaching faculty at the FY 06 level, we will limit the number of new positions and put any available resources into the salary pool. The state of Georgia ranks fourth in the latest Southern Regional Education Board ranking of faculty salaries, behind only Delaware, Maryland and Virginia; essentially, Georgia has the highest salaries in the deep south. But we trail the national average, and salaries at UGA trail well behind those at flagships in Michigan, California, Wisconsin and New York. That is the level at which the University of Georgia competes for faculty today, and that is the level at which we must be competitive.

The third challenge, and one which impacts resources, is tuition. We need a major, realistic three- to four-year tuition policy at the System level which reflects the complex character of a comprehensive research university. This will be one of the first issues I address with Chancellor Davis. Georgia is 16th, or lowest, among Southern Regional Education Board states in tuition and more than \$1,100 below the median of SREB flagship institutions. We cannot compete long-term at the highest levels with the lowest level of tuition. Being perennially on the "Best Values in Higher Education" lists is a short-term benefit with negative long-term consequences.

Fourth and finally is the issue of curriculum breadth and reform. In last year's State of the University address, I focused on the need to increase academic rigor at UGA. In particular, based on the findings of the National Survey of Student Engagement, I asked whether the curriculum here had kept pace with the dramatic rise in student quality over the past decade or so. We have now completed a year's study of the curriculum through the good work of the Task Force on General Education and Student Learning, under the direction of Vice President for Instruction Del Dunn and Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Jere Morehead. The *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* called the report "a workable blueprint for transforming UGA from a good institution into a great one." CBS News also reported on UGA's focus on increased academic rigor. The results of our second participation in the National Survey of Student Engagement show some good progress toward increasing the academic rigor on campus, but we must continue our efforts. Our students still feel less challenged by their classes than students at our peer and aspirational institutions, still write less and still study and prepare for their classes less.

The Task Force, whose report is available on the Provost's website, made a number of thoughtful recommendations, the following of which have already been implemented or will be implemented very soon:

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- 1) The Task Force joined the nationwide conversation on the use and abuse of alcohol by students. In February, the Cabinet approved a parental notification policy for certain alcohol violations. The task force recognized that the excessive indulgence in alcohol is detrimental to the health and safety of our students as well as to the academic environment at UGA. I want to thank the students for their efforts this year at more responsible alcohol use. We will be successful in this area only if the students take the lead.
- 2) We have petitioned the Board of Regents, in conjunction with a similar request from Georgia State University, for permission to create a pilot program for a plus/minus grading system. The task force believes that such a grading system will provide incentives for students to improve their class standing and to remain engaged in their course work through the end of the semester.
- 3) We have also decided to include an academic component in the construction of new residence facilities and the renovation of existing ones. Integrating learning with living is an important element of raising the academic profile of the institution.
- 4) The Office of Service Learning was established on July 1 as a collaborative effort between the offices of the Vice President for Instruction and the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach. The task force found that today's students want the opportunity to serve the community and that they become more engaged in learning when they are given the chance to relate what they learn in the classroom with real-life tasks in the community.
- 5) The General Education subcommittee of University Council is meeting regularly to act on the various recommendations pertaining to the core curriculum and learning goals.

We simply must broaden the curriculum at both the lower- and upper-division levels if UGA is going to be one of the top 10 or 12 public research universities in America. Two areas in particular hold the promise for large amounts of federal research dollars, and we must enhance our capacity to attract those dollars – engineering and public health.

There is no need to replicate any institution – and goodness knows, UGA has no desire to become Georgia Tech – but engineering is an area ripe for expansion. We had proposals approved last fall by the Board of Regents in five areas: bachelor's and master's degree programs in biochemical engineering and environmental engineering, and a bachelor's degree in computer systems engineering. This is a good foundation on which to begin to meet the demonstrated need for more engineers in Georgia and to engage our Faculty of Engineering more effectively.

In 2002, when we initially proposed those engineering degree programs to the Board of Regents, we offered the following supporting data:

- Georgia relies on in-migration from other states and countries to fill almost half of the engineering jobs in the state.
- Less than half of the qualified Georgia high school graduates with an expressed interest in engineering enroll at Georgia Tech.
- The Georgia Department of Labor projected a 46 percent increase in the number of engineering jobs in Georgia from 1996-2006.

Expanding the availability of engineering education in Georgia will also address an issue of much broader significance in America today. I am shocked at the numbers I have seen regarding the nation's, and therefore higher education's, inadequacies in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (or STEM) education. I agreed to be the principal investigator on an NSF grant – the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation – that would lead us to help five Georgia colleges – Bainbridge College, Fort Valley State University, Georgia Perimeter College, Savannah State University and Southern Polytechnic State University – improve their teaching and increase the number of minority graduates in those areas. This grant, which will be managed by the Office of Institutional Diversity, will be an important component of our ongoing efforts to enhance diversity at the University of Georgia.

As I have contemplated UGA's responsibility in this area, several things have focused my thinking.

Thomas Friedman's "The World is Flat" is among a number of books and articles I have read which highlight how far the U.S. trails the world in science and mathematics education. Some of the facts are staggering.

The Business-Higher Education Forum reports that "U.S. student achievement in science has been largely stagnant,

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with today's students achieving at about the same level as their parents." U.S. colleges awarded 17 percent of their bachelor's degrees in the sciences, among the lowest level of 20 countries included in a recent study. At UGA, the numbers are even lower: 14 percent of undergraduate students this year are majoring in the sciences.

Bill Gates noted in a recent speech that Microsoft cannot hire enough skilled workers: "The jobs are there and they are high-paying jobs, but we are not seeing the pipeline as is used to be. This creates a dilemma for us on how we get the work done." And according to the *Washington Post*, 25,000 technology jobs are unfilled in the Washington, DC area alone, costing the region more than \$1 billion a year in lost wages.

This is my concern: Ours is increasingly a culture which continues to tell our children that afternoon sports are more important than algebra homework and science projects. Too many of our best students are staying away from science, technology, engineering and math, and we are falling dangerously behind the rest of the world in these fields.

I believe that we can address this issue, and that American higher education must lead as it has done before. We built the largest agricultural force in the world in the 19th and early 20th century following the Morrill Act. We built the best peace- and war-time nuclear program in the world at the end of World War II. We responded to Sputnik in the 1950s and, answering the call of President Kennedy, put a man on the moon by the end of the 1960s.

Just as engineering will fill a critical need in this state, another curricular area which we must continue to address is expanding public health education. According to the advocacy group Healthy Americans, Georgia is above the national average in adults with asthma and diabetes, above the national average in new cases of cancer in men, above the national average in deaths caused by heart disease, above the national average in infant deaths, below the national average in the percentage of children who are fully immunized by age three, above the national average in the number of babies born with low birth weights - the litany goes on and on. Our own researchers have addressed the issues of childhood obesity, diabetes and Parkinson's.

We took a first step toward meeting these needs with the creation of the College of Public Health a year ago. The College already enrolls 245 students, with 160 undergraduates enrolled in the environmental health or health promotion degree programs, and 85 graduate students, 40 of whom are in the new masters of public health program. The 18 faculty in the College have made

good strides in securing grants, garnering \$2.4 million in the unit's first year of existence and ranking eighth out of UGA's 15 colleges and schools in external funding.

Under the direction of interim Dean Phil Williams, the College of Public Health has made significant progress toward earning accreditation from the

Council on Education for Public Health. One site visit has already been completed, for which the College earned high marks. We anticipate accreditation in 2009.

Creating a College of Public Health has helped us retain graduate students who previously left UGA for schools offering degree programs in public health. The masters of public health and the proposed doctorate in public health will allow UGA to compete for the best graduate students in an area of significant need for this state.

The College has also had a significant impact on the research program here. With a focus in three areas that are new to the university - biostatistics, epidemiology and health policy - as well as existing strengths in the faculty, it offers interdisciplinary opportunities under an academic structure that did not exist even 18 months ago. Prior to the creation of the College of Public Health, faculty in units such as the Center for Tropical and Emerging Global Diseases, the Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute and the Cancer Center had to look to other institutions and agencies for collaborators. Today, the College helps facilitate such collaboration on campus.

Perhaps most importantly, the College in the coming years and decades will play an important role in improving the health of all Georgians by participating fully in our land-grant mission to serve the people. One faculty member holds a joint appointment with the Office of the Vice President for Public Service and Outreach, and the model for outreach that exists there and through the Cooperative Extension Service is one that the College of Public Health intends to employ. Georgia is the largest state in the nation with only one public medical school and, until last year, no public school of public health. As the state's flagship university, the University of Georgia is uniquely positioned to deliver services in a way that no other institution in the state can. With continued attention to additional opportunities for academic enhancement, I am confident that the College of Public Health will play a critical role in improving the health status of the citizens of Georgia, and especially those in rural areas, where the need is greatest.

Much of this progress is made possible through collaborative efforts, and we have a long history of working with the Medical College of Georgia to try to meet

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Georgia's need for public health professionals and to conduct research that will improve the health of all Georgians. Since 1974, MCG has operated the School of Nursing at Athens; UGA students take 60 hours of the pre-nursing curriculum here and then begin their junior year in the nursing program.

Additionally, UGA and MCG faculty are collaborating on research into the long-term effects of drugs prescribed for schizophrenia, pediatric echocardiography, cardiovascular health and more. The College of Pharmacy operates a program on the MCG campus, and the College of Family and Consumer Sciences offers a joint child life program with MCG. The UGA Research Foundation manages technology commercialization efforts for the Medical College of Georgia. The Biomedical and Health Sciences Institute works with MCG and our own Center for Undergraduate Research Opportunities to place students in the clinical research environment. The cancer program based in Augusta has an institute here. Our College of Public Health has an institute in Augusta.

A continued relationship with the Medical College of Georgia which takes advantage of the comprehensive nature of the research program and curriculum here and the clinical expertise there is critical if this state's public higher education system is to play a role in improving the health of Georgians.

The two curricular areas I mention here today, engineering and public health, enjoy the strong support of faculty, staff and students across campus. Dedicated people have worked tirelessly to build the foundation for advancements in both of these arenas, and as a leading research institution the University of Georgia has a responsibility to answer the call.

For more than two centuries, the people of the state of Georgia have looked to this institution with high expectations. They look to us for leadership. They look to us to have a positive impact on their lives. They look to us to make the future of this state brighter. By responding aggressively and successfully to these four issues - diversity on campus, a well-crafted tuition policy, improved salaries, a broadened curriculum - we will have lived up to, and even exceeded, those expectations.

We face significant challenges, but out of challenge rises opportunity. What will be important as we move forward, and what will be recorded in history in years to come, is how the University of Georgia responds to these challenges and how we make the most of these opportunities. As always, our greatest asset in responding to these challenges is people. I trust that we will address these and other unforeseen challenges head-on, transforming opportunity into accomplishment.

Thank you.