



CONVOCATION

September 10, 2013

We come together today to launch our 141st academic year. Texas Christian University is indeed a special place. That is because of you — our students, faculty and staff, and all the Horned Frogs who have gone before us. We honor our mission, our vision and our values. And we are committed to becoming an increasingly better university.

In preparation for Convocation this year, I found it very helpful to review the remarks from years past. I read of steady improvement... a rising student profile... examples of the excellence and dedication of our faculty... a commitment to provide the best TCU experience possible... and deliberate strategic planning to ensure we remain focused on the journey before us.

I would like today to review where that planning has taken us, and where we stand on our journey of continued excellence. In 2012, the Board of Trustees approved our vision — in fact, our map — for the next decade. And from this map, our strategic plan, *Vision in Action: The Academy of Tomorrow*, evolved.

There are three imperatives of The Academy of Tomorrow:

- To enhance the University's academic profile and strengthen its reputation
- To fine-tune the size and balance of the student body
- And to create the optimal campus environment

Let us begin by taking measure of our progress, starting with TCU's academic profile and reputation.

- Underlining recent achievements, TCU moved up five spots in the 2013 U.S. News & World Report rankings of national universities to No. 92. We learned today that TCU is No. 82 on the 2014 list, which means the University has moved up 15 spots in the last two years.
- In 2013, U.S. News ranked the Neeley School of Business 5th in the nation for MBAs with the most financial value at graduation.
- The online Master's in Nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs placed in the top 25 in the same publication's ranking for online learning.
- In July, The Economist ranked the Neeley Executive MBA 21st in the world.
- Further evidence of TCU's academic excellence and global vision was the selection of five Horned Frogs as Fulbright Scholars.

To become The Academy of Tomorrow, TCU must retain its unique, personalized culture that provides opportunities:

- To learn from extraordinary teachers
- To engage in meaningful research
- To benefit from the wisdom of scores of mentors

- To learn to live in a diverse society
- And to grow in leadership and character.

Small classes and a low student-faculty ratio are vital to creating such a person-centered environment. Forty-six new faculty members have been hired for this academic year, and 17 new faculty positions added. Consequently, TCU will again maintain the student-faculty ratio at better than 14-1, an imperative of The Academy of Tomorrow vision. This is a foundation upon which we can do even more to benefit our students and our society.

Another essential element in TCU's quest to become academically stellar is to enroll students who will strengthen our reputation and benefit most from the TCU experience.

We seek outstanding students from around the world, as well as the most diverse population possible.

- For the past two academic years, some 40,000 applicants have vied for fewer than 4,000 places in the incoming classes.
- The SAT and ACT scores, as well as class rank, of these classes are among TCU's highest ever.
- To get the best of the best, this year the Board removed an original goal for The Academy of Tomorrow: that at least 60 percent of students come from Texas.
- When we look at this year's incoming class we see that 45 percent are from in-state, and the remaining 55 percent come from throughout the United States and abroad.
- While we want a national and international presence on campus, you can be confident we will not lose — in the words of *The Skiff* — our "Texas twang."
- And that we will stay true to TCU's roots.

The second element of The Academy of Tomorrow vision is fine-tuning TCU's size and balance.

The Trustees capped enrollment at 10,000 so that our students can continue to have the personalized TCU experience. What has changed is the 8,500 target for undergraduates and 1,500 target for graduate students.

- With a total enrollment of 9,925 this fall, we have approximately 2 percent more students than we did last year and remain below the cap of 10,000.
- This year's incoming class numbers around 1,934, about 80 more students than last year's class— and around 80 more than our admission target. The number of applicants accepting our offer of admission was simply greater than expected.
- In addition, freshman-to-sophomore retention improved to 89.7 percent in 2012-2013 and hit 90.2 percent this year.
- These are very positive statistics.
- Fortunately, we opened two new residence halls in August and did not take Colby off line for renovation as originally planned, easing the housing situation.
- While we are pinched in some respects, this is a very good problem to have in this day and age of higher education.

Total graduate enrollment at 1,285 is up 1.1 percent, but still below our target of 1,500.

- To encourage growth in the graduate student population, we have instituted three new master's level programs this academic year (more about these later)
- And four other graduate degrees are planned.

The Academy of Tomorrow vision states that TCU's student body will reflect the diversity of society.

This is an area in which we are definitely seeing progress.

- In fact, the most dramatic demographic change with the Class of 2017 is an increase of students of color to nearly 20 percent for the first time in TCU's history.
- The Board set the target ratio of men to women students at 1:1. Here — as well as nationally — recruiting male students remains a challenge. One tool that can help us achieve better demographic balance is competition in intercollegiate athletics.
 - We are committed to Division 1, Big 12 competition at the highest level and adherence to the letter and spirit of NCAA rules.
 - Recruitment of ethical student-athletes in this context can help us meet enrollment and diversity goals.

The third element of The Academy of Tomorrow strategic vision is the creation of the optimal campus environment.

As we add modern facilities innovative enough to realize The Academy of Tomorrow vision, our campus continues to evolve from the stately, classic appearance seen in historic photos. Project architects are doing a splendid job of designing new, state-of-the-art buildings, while maintaining the University's cohesive visual identity.

Work is well under way on the Intellectual Commons on the east campus. The buildings under construction are designed to foster innovation and collaboration and create interdisciplinary connections.

- Rees-Jones Hall will house classrooms, faculty offices and interdisciplinary space. The facility will also be the home of the TCU Institute of Child Development and the TCU Energy Institute.
- An addition to the Annie Richardson Bass Building will feature classrooms with the latest enhanced health care technology. When construction is complete, we will begin renovation of 52,000 square feet of existing space.
- After completion of Rees-Jones Hall, we will begin an amazing transformation of the Mary Coats Burnett Library into a technology and multimedia-rich environment.
- If other philanthropic resources become available, we will also add:
 - A new facility for the Neeley School of Business
 - And a facility for the School of Music

Under our strategic plan, TCU hopes to become a 100 percent residential campus.

- This includes construction of the Greek Village and parking garage in Worth Hills.
- Then we will construct one residence hall annually until all undergraduates live on campus, or demand ceases.
- Two residence halls in the Worth Hills development opened this semester: Marion Hall and Pamela and Edward Clark Hall.
- A third residence hall is under construction in Worth Hills. Designed for upper division students, it is scheduled to open in August 2014.

These are ambitious plans. Our pursuit of the resources necessary to achieve them must be equally ambitious.

- A little more than a year ago, we completed the most successful fund-raising effort in TCU history. *The Campaign for TCU* raised \$434.1 million.
- The Campaign Scholarship Initiative, the top priority of the campaign, raised \$108.7 million, and donors established 200 new endowed scholarships.
- Fiscal Year 2013, which ended June 1, marked the beginning of the Foundation Phase of a new fund-raising campaign.
- Our three-year goal for the Foundation Phase is \$150 million.
- This effort already has raised \$74.5 million in Fiscal 2013.
- So we are halfway toward achieving that goal in only 15 months.

The Annual Faculty/Staff Campaign provides those who work in this amazing community an opportunity to give back and voice belief in TCU's future.

- The Faculty/Staff Campaign set a record participation rate of 75 percent in 2012.
- 2013 was another record year at 78 percent.
- This is no less than miraculous in the world of university advancement.
- And our Development staff are indeed fund-raising superheroes.
- It's gratifying to know that so many of our faculty and staff participated in such a worthy effort. Thanks to all who contributed — you're heroes too.
- You are sending a very loud message of unity and support of TCU to the world of higher education.

As we move forward, our fund-raising goals are focused on TCU's people and programs. Scholarships, academics and annual support accounted for more than 74 percent of the total new commitments in FY13. Almost half of the total has come in the form of endowed support, essential in strengthening TCU now and in perpetuity.

Here are a few highlights of our efforts to elevate TCU's people and programs over the past year:

- The 2013-2014 budget for financial aid has increased to \$120.8 million.
- The TCU Institute of Child Development has received a \$20 million gift from the Rees-Jones Foundation, primarily for endowment. This internationally recognized program works with vulnerable children across the world.
- Our pre-eminent fine arts financial aid award, the Nordan Scholarship, has received \$8 million in new support.
- Demonstrating the power of philanthropic support, the Andrews Institute of Mathematics & Science Education works with hundreds of school students and teachers each year. During the summer, 30 immigrant FWISD students strengthened their science, mathematics and language skills at a camp presented by the institute.
- The TCU Energy Institute has established The Kenneth Davis, Jr., Endowed Lectureship to strengthen the community's understanding of domestic and global energy-related issues.
- The Neeley School of Business, which celebrates its 75th anniversary this year, has launched the MBA for Energy Professionals and the Master of Science in Supply Chain Management.
- Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences welcomes its first Master of Social Work class this semester.
- By supporting graduate education in history, the new Benjamin Schmidt Memorial Scholarship in AddRan College strengthens efforts to expand graduate studies.
- Two TCU professors have been named Honors College Faculty Fellows and granted three-year appointments to the John V. Roach Honors College to bring new expertise and research to the college.
- Tomorrow the Schieffer School of Journalism and Strategic Communication, in conjunction with the Fort Worth Star-Telegram, will present "Fort Worth Remembers JFK," further strengthening ties with our community.

Since The Academy of Tomorrow signifies TCU's future, I would like you to hear directly from some of those are on the front lines in making this strategic vision a reality and give you a broader perspective of our aspirations for Texas Christian University. After this brief video, we will return to our program.

Before we move on to the award presentations, I would like to comment on two other initiatives that are important elements in TCU's forward momentum.

TCU's Pre-Health Professions Program boasts an 80 percent acceptance rate to professional schools that is twice the national average.

- This year, it celebrates 100 years of highly rigorous, highly personalized instruction.
- It is, according to the Austin American-Statesman, "generally regarded as the best [pre-med program] in Texas."*
- I am pleased to announce today that this stellar program has been elevated to institute status.
- Because of this added prestige, we are confident that Pre-Health at TCU will become even more distinctive.

Another vital initiative is the Quality Enhancement Plan.

- We had our 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation visit in spring, and an incredible amount of work went into preparation.
- I am delighted that, out of 98 standards, TCU is fully compliant with 94 of them.
- That's an "A"!
- We are working on our response to the on-site committee for the remaining four standards and are looking forward to hearing the final report from SACS this December.
- That response will be in part focused on the Quality Enhancement Plan — "Discovering Global Citizenship: Building the Foundation for Comprehensive Internationalization."

We are delighted that this fall's QEP Global Innovator, Mr. Gerald Oriol, has been with us today.

- As you learned earlier, Mr. Oriol is Haiti's Secretary of State for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities.
- The bureau that he heads provides services to some one million disabled persons and works to further rights and opportunities for persons with disabilities.
- Secretary Oriol collaborates directly with organizations such as USAID, the World Bank, the United Nations and the Organization of American States, and represents Haiti at conferences throughout the world.
- With extensive experience in the private and nonprofit sectors, he is co-founder of a foundation that champions the rights of disabled and impoverished persons in Haiti.
- This organization awards scholarships to children of low-income families and developed the Sainte Marie Cyber Center, a learning center that serves approximately 250 children.
- In his role as a QEP Global Innovator, he is:
 - Visiting classes, making presentations and allowing us to continue the dialogue started by Ms. Edwidge Danticat, author of *Brother I'm Dying*, the book chosen for this year's Common Reading.
 - He also is working with Dr. Dawn Elliott and her students on a long-term project to develop an emergency savings program for persons with disabilities.

Secretary Oriol, please join me at the lectern. It is a pleasure to present this small token to you in appreciation for being a vital part of Discovering Global Citizenship, a program that is essential to TCU's future.

Local artist Kevin McGehee of SiNaCa Studios created this TCU Global Innovators award. It consists of multiple layers of hand-blown glass representing water, land and atmosphere. Sec. Oriol, thank you for coming to TCU and participating in this important initiative.

Several years ago, I mentioned our commitment to thank each student who has chosen TCU. Our commitment is:

- To help each student achieve personal higher education goals
- To consider each student the amazing result of an educational experience at its finest.
- To appreciate each student. We must never jeopardize our philosophy that our students are the assets that make our university a viable institution of higher learning.

- And we must never forget our mission: To educate individuals to think and act as ethical leaders and responsible citizens in the global community.
- Simply put, we must not only provide an optimal educational experience during students' TCU careers, but we must also provide them with the qualities and commitment needed to live out our mission.

To provide the finest educational experience, we must continue to foster a culture of gratitude among our faculty and staff.

- I would like to quote from an article from the *Harvard Business Review* HBR Blog.
- The author, Dr. Christine Riordan, is Provost and professor of management at the University of Kentucky.
- She previously held the Luther Henderson Chair of University Leadership here and was associate dean of the Neeley School.
- She observes:
"...Teams that foster cohesion with a sense of appreciation and gratitude among the team members maximize performance on a number of dimensions... At the end of the day, this principle is really very simple: we all want to feel valued and appreciated."

When our team members maximize their performance and express appreciation, our students are the beneficiaries.

- The Chronicle of Higher Education has listed TCU among its "Great Colleges to Work For" for the third straight year.
- I attribute this recognition to our culture of gratitude. It is an essential element of TCU's identity, one we must cherish and perpetuate.

I have now been a member of this community for a decade. It's the longest (and most fulfilling) tenure of my career. With a spirit of appreciation and gratitude, I would like to say:

- Thank you for the amazing example you set for me ten years ago when I came to interview here. You made me want to come to TCU!
- Thank you for continuing to live out that example. I never cease to be amazed at the level of commitment exhibited by our faculty and staff!
- Thank you for engaging with each of our students and actively being a vital part of the fulfillment of each student's personal vision.
- Thank you for allowing me to work alongside you and share our uncommon sense of community with you. It truly is my privilege!
- Thank you for the special role you play at TCU.
- And God bless you and Texas Christian University.