

State of the University 2011

- *October 17, 2011*

- *Stephen V. Sundborg, S.J.*

Thank you very much for coming this afternoon to this first annual president's State of the University. Thank you for showing the interest in your university to come and learn more about how we really are, at least as I see us, as I try to make it known to you in a personal, frank, and transparent way. I have looked forward to this State of the University, scheduled in the middle of October, so that, having done all it takes to get an academic year going for all of us, we can catch our breath, settle back, and take a look more attentively and reflectively at the university, how it is doing, and what lies ahead.

For me personally this is a remarkable Fall Quarter because I have just celebrated 50 years as a Jesuit, which has allowed me to realize more than ever what a grace it is to be a Jesuit and to head a Jesuit university. My "career," so to speak, as a Jesuit is a bit unusual in that exactly the last 25 years of these 50 years have been years of being asked by the Jesuits to be in leadership roles as rector of the Jesuits here, as provincial of the Northwest Jesuits, and now in my 15th year as president of this Jesuit university. The 50 years are God's blessing, the last half is doubly so, as I feel that all I have experienced and learned is being put to use by the Jesuits for the sake of others and is lived with wonderful colleagues like you. You are looking on a very happy Jesuit and a person who sincerely believes he has the best job in Seattle. It is helpful to approach being president as a pastoral, priestly ministry of service and support it each day by prayer and by the brotherly love of a great Jesuit community.

This Fall Quarter is also especially significant for another reason. The president of Seattle U. is appointed by the Board of Trustees for five-year renewable terms. I'm in my last year of my third five-year term. The Board has already indicated their desire to appoint me for a new five-year term. They are authorizing an independent leadership review of me this fall asking what are the greatest challenges and opportunities facing us in the next five years and how should my leadership be leveraged and focused for them. Some of you—faculty, staff, students, administrators—will be asked to help in this confidential review. I hope to learn so much from it for the coming years. I think I have tipped my hand unknowingly about how long I hope to serve as I have recently talked about and will summarize today what I have called "Seven Big Goals for Seven Years!" That would just coincidentally fulfill the teasing challenge Fr. Bill Sullivan gave me when I started: "Steve," he said, "I'm the 20th president of Seattle U. and have served 20 years; you are the 21st and so you have to serve 21 years!" God willing and the creek don't rise, I'd like to rise to his friendly challenge. I seem to wear well with age, especially considering the fact I had a heart attack at the end of my very first year—not a very promising start! I learned then you've got to do it your own way, rather than the way others expect you to do it, or else perhaps literally it will kill you! I happened to meet a friend this summer who had not seen me for 15 years. She said to me, "You look really great after 15 years... too bad about the bald patch!" If that's the only part of me that's dying, I can put up with it!

I thought I would construct this first president's State of the University by telling you what I think most about, sometimes worry most about, though rarely am awakened by in the night. I'll give you the facts and my take on these things, and then end with what I see as our big goals, the ways I see of working our way through these challenges and opportunities.

Finances

Let's start with finances. I do think almost always about them. We are living in a very challenging economic time which will continue for many years and it affects our university in every way. We have presented 35 annual balanced budgets to the trustees and have had 35 years in a row in which we have come out in the black at the end of the year. The university has retained a financial A rating for twenty years and has an endowment of \$178 million which generates about \$1,000 a student per year to enrich his or her education with great teachers and with financial aid. We also carry a debt of \$143 million, which we will be paying off for the next 25 years. Our annual budget, not counting financial aid of about \$60 million, is \$190 million with fully 62% of that or \$117 million going for your salaries and benefits. We have capital reserves of less than \$10 million and an estimated deferred maintenance—mostly in the residence halls and Connolly—of about \$100 million. The squeeze is on between tuition levels and how much financial aid we need to give and can afford to give, and what our students and families can afford.

In light of this financial picture, the 5-year initiative of the university to bring about equity in the salaries of our faculty and staff relative to our benchmarks, which will add \$5.6 million annually to our budget, is most significant and challenging. It is a priority. We are reviewing all job descriptions and salary ranges of staff and inaugurating gradual merit or performance-based adjustments for staff in addition to general wage increases. At the same time we are reviewing all health care benefits—as well as the retirement plan—in order to control and lower costs, provide more options, reduce the employee premium cost for family coverage, and promote personal/health wellness goals. We need to share the cost and the responsibility of benefits. If King County could save \$21 million with voluntary personal health programs for their employees, we as a university community can achieve very significant savings and be healthier to boot.

We have worked very hard on finances in the past three tough years and have come through quite well without slowing our pace or putting a drag on our momentum. But believe me this is a big concern, the biggest, affecting everything we do. I want to go out on a new six-year capital campaign far surpassing the last one, and within it raise \$100 million for a new science building and a redo of Bannan which will provide multiple new classrooms and offices for university use. But can that be done and how in this economic climate? What are the families of our students and our students themselves, especially graduate students, experiencing financially? Is their education with us still a pathway to a good job? What is our responsibility, not to live in a bubble or to educate the top 10% on the economic ladder, without being committed to the 46 million persons in our country living in poverty, which means a family of four living on \$22,113 a year, or about \$60 a day for that whole family for roof, food, clothing, utilities, doctor, life? What is our response and responsibility to the crushing reality that 22% of our children in

America—more than one in five—live in this kind of or even deeper poverty? We really must be delivering on that third part of our mission, empowering our students, all of them, to be leaders for a just and humane world. I don't think we can live with ourselves, or stand before God, unless we do that. That's the financial picture with some of its ramifications. I lay it out to you more fully today because we all really are in this together: ourselves, our families, our students, and those for whom we care. We need and can find our way forward.

Enrollment

Something else I think so much about as your president and which I think you too think about and need to understand more clearly is where we stand with enrollment. Our total enrollment this year is 7,755, only 62 students fewer than last year, which is less than 1%. At every level new students are quite close to goal with 888 new first-year students, 455 transfers, 494 new graduate students, and 318 new law students. That means 2,155 new students have joined us this fall. In effect we have stabilized our enrollment of new students and have done so while maintaining academic quality and while giving out significantly less financial aid than we did last year. This is good news and a measure of our becoming a more sought-after university. One downside of this is that we admitted a somewhat lower percentage of underrepresented minority students, though we still retain our status as the most diverse university in the State of Washington. Our international students are up, with fully 29% of our transfer students coming to us from other countries. Undergraduate continuation rates are good, but the economy has hit the continuation rate of our graduate students to a significant measure. People have run out of money to re-educate themselves, or do not see the likelihood of a new job at the end of their educational upgrading, or companies no longer can afford to subsidize the education of their employees as they once did. This will likely be an ongoing, big challenge for us and one calling for creativity and boldness in what programs we provide and how we deliver them.

I am very much reassured by the fact that we have stabilized undergraduate enrollment and are providing the predictability which we have needed. We can now anticipate and plan for modest undergraduate growth, focus more on the composition and quality of the student body, and most importantly work on improving our already-good retention and graduation rates. As we believe in our university and our kind of education, we want our students to graduate from our university and to impact society with our values. We are not in this just so that our students get any kind of degree. We all await with anticipation the undergraduate strategic enrollment plan which enrollment's incredibly hard-working Marilyn Crone and her broad-based steering council have been working on this past year and, on its heels, the development of the graduate strategic enrollment plan next year.

Academics

I actually don't worry much about academics. The facts make clear that academics is leading the university both in investments and accomplishments:

- The design and work on implementation of a new Core Curriculum;

- Determining clear learning objectives for undergraduates and turning now to do the same on the graduate level;
- Five new academic programs approved this past year;
- The reaffirmation of the university's accreditation with the hard-fought-for commendation on our progress in creating a systemic framework for assessment;
- A university strengthened now by 26 endowed professorships and chairs;
- A record 54 active funded research grants or projects with an unprecedented total award amount of \$7.6 million;
- An investment of \$8 million a year in technology;
- Global education now assertively led and coordinated according to an exciting strategic plan for development;
- The Center for Service and Community Engagement working last year with 122 faculty, 4,071 students, in 257 courses in service learning;
- The Seattle U. Youth Initiative winning \$1.4 million from donors, getting 911 students working in the neighborhood, with five new community-based research faculty fellows, 86 students as assistants and tutors at Bailey Gatzert Elementary School alone, a very strong summer program for kids, the S.U. Math Corps (that spells "SUM") active in the schools, and the Youth Initiative now focusing also on family engagement;
- The best ever rankings of the university and its programs especially in business, engineering, law, ROTC, sustainability, community service, and even 21st in the country in the Fiske Guide for Best Buy Private Colleges, and to fuel all that academic work, ranked by The Daily Beast as 17th in the nation for best college food!
- Law and Nursing top exam pass rates; Education excellent in placements; the School of Theology & Ministry energetically reaching out and winning grants beyond all expectations;
- And all of this within the "Mother of All Strategic Plans", the Academic Strategic Action Plan.

Academics is very much on track. Isiaah Crawford, Bob Dullea, deans, faculty, thanks for setting the pace in what is unquestionably our strongest years of advancement as a university in quality and educational mission. When academics is right, all else can go right.

Soul of the University

Something else I think about—which is as large as finances, enrollment, compensation and benefits, and academics—is what I would call the “soul of Seattle University.” This soul is constituted by the actual experience of our students, by our Catholic-Jesuit-spiritual foundation and values, by the quality of our own community and care of one another as colleagues, and by how our alumni are living out our mission. You might call these the “softer side” of who we are, the “soul side,” but as we all know about ourselves, these softer dimensions are where we most often live as persons and they also determine how well we live as a university.

It is this concern for the soul of Seattle U. which gives rise to three of our five strategic priorities: our Catholic Jesuit character, the formation of our students for leadership, and our investing in the excellence of our faculty and staff. If I were to add a further strategic priority—though it has not yet taken on its full scope or gained its potential significance in order to be fully strategic—it is our relationship with our alumni, their relationship with us, and what together we can do. I believe that in the long run a university is as healthy, as impactful, and as known as who its alumni are as persons and in what they do, and in how they are connected with and a critical support of and voice in the progress of their university. I welcome the new efforts and leadership we are currently developing in regard to our 66,000 alumni. Let’s push vigorously in that direction and let’s all seek to connect more with those who have graduated from Seattle U. After all, you should never really finish a Jesuit education.

In terms of the soul of the university, I love what Student Development is doing in student housing in which they have increased the number of students living on campus, from the 700 when I started as president to the current 2,047, and have integrated this with academics through eight unique living-learning communities, encompassing 1,671 residential freshmen and sophomores. I also appreciate and admire the ever-increasing and sometimes overwhelming services they provide our students in Career Services, the Health Center, in Wellness, in Counseling and Psychological Services, Leadership, Activities with more than 100 clubs, and University Recreation now expanded by the new fitness center which was a hit from the start with 2,700 users in its first five days of operation. My hopes in all of this, so that this becomes part of the soul of Seattle University, is that as a university, with Student Development leading the way but calling on all of us, we can do two things: 1) create a truly great, transforming, and memorable undergraduate student college experience; and 2) get greater traction on the formation of all of our students for leadership in a sequenced and concrete program. This is not easy, but I believe that only with a certain depth of this college experience and this formation for leadership does our soul as a university really thrive. This is a very fond hope of mine as president.

The soul of Seattle U. is Catholic and Jesuit. I find emerging a new, more positive understanding of and confidence in this reality of ours. It is very significant that in the past seven years over 200 faculty and staff have eagerly participated in the in-depth understanding and application to education of our religious and spiritual soul through the Arrupe Seminar, that last year MAGIS served 1,300 Jesuit-educated alumni, that the inaugural year of the Catholic Heritage Lectures drew over 1,000 people, that 500 students—in addition to faculty and staff—participated in retreats, and that Campus Ministry even started a group called “Bagged Catholics” for those

struggling with their faith. Our Catholic Jesuit soul is alive but it needs strengthening for the long haul for what we will remain and who we will become as a proudly and positively Catholic and Jesuit university.

Some may wonder why after evidently strategic priorities of academic excellence, global and local engagement, Catholic Jesuit character, and formation for leadership, we added a fifth priority: “Investing in the Excellence of our Faculty and Staff”, which may seem more like a means to an end rather than an end in itself. My view and I hope our view is that the quality of who we are, the reality of our community, our shared commitments and participation in shaping the university, our salaries and benefits and opportunities for development, and how we help one another to live the mission and care for one another is truly strategic and truly an end we seek rather than only a means to something else for our students. I still remember very well how frequently I heard back from faculty and staff that it was not enough for me to state our first value as “We put the good of students first,” but that this value had to be quickly accompanied by and could only be lived if we also state “We put the good of one another first.” That may not be true of all universities, but it is true of a Jesuit university in its commitment to *cura personalis*, care of persons, as central to what it is and what it does. In Jesuit language “community is mission.” I think we have much to build on and are doing better in how and when we gather, how we honor and acknowledge people, the opportunities for development we make possible, addressing together issues of compensation and benefits, supporting a proper role of faculty in academic governance, new initiatives to broaden participation in shaping decision-making through wider consultation, and a more frank and transparent manner of making all aware of the facts and realities of our university. We can strengthen this, but we are already clearly moving in the right direction. This goal of shared community or the priority of “investing in the excellence of our faculty and staff” is part of the soul of Seattle University and it holds together all else which is our soul. I don’t think you need to be told that these elements of the soul of our university are my strongest commitment as president and I hope a part of my legacy. They also allow me to see what I do as ministry and as an expression of my priesthood.

I want to now take you further into the State of the University by making known to you some aspects of the university to which I give significant time and attention but may be less obvious than the ones I have already spoken of concerning finance, enrollment, academics, and the soul of the university.

Athletics

One of these which takes constant attention is athletics. I am grateful to Bill Hogan and his crew for the daily management of athletics operations, and am grateful to Tim Leary for his exercise on my behalf of the institutional oversight of athletics. I don’t think I realized how big our decision about intercollegiate athletics would be. I’m told I am the only president ever to take the same university from D-III, to D-II, to D-1. Doing so is not for short-termers, nor for the faint of heart. I really need to be a two-decade president to make sure this is done well and done in accord with who we are as a university. We recently concluded a year-long self-study, led superbly by Joe Phillips, of our entire athletics program and all of the ways it is integrated with and governed by the university for the sake of certification as part of our transition next fall to

full-time D-I status after these four years of transition. The report by the NCAA peer review team was very laudatory of both where we are and what our plans of improvement are for the academic integrity of the program, its governance, the well-being of our student athletes, and our efforts to assure gender equity. We stood out in their minds for the integrity, systems of compliance, and close scrutiny of athletics. That's what we promised you and that's where we are.

I am thrilled that next year we'll be in full status and a full member of the Western Athletic Conference. That conference warmly welcomes us and already gives us our voice. Being members of the WAC will both give greater opportunities to our coaches and their teams, and will assure that our student athletes will miss fewer days on campus because of travel. Of our total \$190 million a year university budget, we are, as planned, keeping athletics at about 5% of that budget, spending \$9.2 million of university money. This includes all of the athletic financial aid which helps to bring us and support 315 student athletes who, after this athletic financial aid is subtracted, pay over \$4 million in tuition. The average G.P.A. of all student athletes is 3.18. That's a good report about a good program. Currently we are winning 42% of our games, which is unheard of for a reclassifying team, and our programs just since June have generated 109,000 mentions or articles in newspapers, T.V., radio, and blogs. Athletics is both achieving the strategic purposes for our whole university which were the rationale of our making this decision, publicly positions us as we have wanted to be, provides spirit for our students, gains the greater engagement of our alumni, and is being carefully monitored so that we do it right and we do it in our way. We even gained this month the strong endorsement of the Spectator editorial board with their editorial titled, "The Smell of Spirit," calling on former nay-sayers like themselves to reconsider their views about S.U. athletics. We intend to win in all ways in athletics and make it part of the way in which we are proud of the whole of our university.

Fundraising

You won't be surprised when I tell you that something to which I give much attention and energy is fundraising and university relations. We are not resting on our laurels of having raised on average in that last campaign \$542,000 every single week for six years to gain the \$169 million. This last year we also raised \$19.8 million, so were successful at a much higher annual pace than earlier. Under Mary Kay McFadden's excellent leadership of her professional colleagues, we did this while gaining 2,596 new donors, being in contact with 62,115 alumni, and with what Mary Kay most of all loves to recognize, having 44% of you, our faculty and staff, contribute to Seattle U. last year. You must really believe in your university, because any university we know would be envious of your level of participation as donors. Thank you! We plan on using your generosity to challenge our alumni to contribute as strongly as their teachers and mentors do.

There are three aspects of fundraising and university relations as critical dimensions of the health and future of our university—for we all depend on what happens here—which call for my attention and raise some concern. The first is how will we ever mount within these uncertain economic times a new, bigger, and better comprehensive campaign to gain the resources we need?

We do not lack for determination and I do not lack for willingness and energy to lead that next campaign, but it is no small concern and challenge how this year we will plan for, design, recruit the leadership, and build the connections and commitments which will make our new campaign successful . . . and then to pull it off!

My second area of attention and focus is a new one: we can only be successful with those who believe in and support us if we can prove to them that a great education at Seattle U. leads to a great job. That is *the* question on the table. I welcome Beth Kreitl's leadership and all of the point persons in all of the schools who seek to improve this link between our education and jobs. We all need to put this on the front burner because it has become the test of the truth of our mission. You don't educate the whole person, form professionals, and empower leaders for a just and humane world, unless they can do something, have work, support themselves and their families, and make a difference for others. We need to all get behind this new realistic challenge of the times. Currently 50% of our undergraduate students do internships which frequently lead to jobs. I've heard Beth Kreitl say she'd like to see that be 90%. Can we help her and others in the schools and colleges who work on finding internships?

The third area of my attention—and perhaps my most felt or heart-held hope—is the reanimation, reorganization, even reconceptualization of our whole engagement with our alumni, all 66,611 living alumni, about 25,000 of them graduating since I became president. I am more and more convinced that a university in the long run is as healthy and as successful as its alumni who are living out the mission, connected with and telling the story of their university, generously supporting what they most prized, and having a real voice in shaping the direction of the university. We have brought on bright, committed, professional, enthusiastic new leadership of our alumni efforts in Susan Woerdehoff. She and all those who work with and reach out to alumni in all the schools and colleges need the help and the affirmation of all of us of the importance of what they do for the sake of the very health and future of the university we believe in. Alumni must become a new priority for us all.

Legal Matters

Let me update you on two legal matters. The first is that we have worked hard and consistently over several years to adopt and implement policies, respond to an ever-growing number of regulatory requirements, put in place measures to protect data security, and assure the propriety of all contracts and financial transactions. Mary Petersen has led a wide range of university officials across all divisions of the university to take on these issues in a comprehensive way. We can never let our guard down in these initiatives concerning legal matters. This part of our house is now repaired, remodeled and in very good order. I appreciate your understanding of the need and the cooperation of all of you in caring for these important legal necessities.

The second legal matter is that I have sought the opportunity to inform you that the bankruptcy of the Northwest or Oregon Province of Jesuits has come to an end. The bankruptcy was caused by the need for the Province to find just settlements for persons who were sexually abused by some Jesuits many years ago. Although Seattle University is fully independent and legally separate from the Jesuit province, some of you were concerned whether the assets of the

university would be at risk to pay claims against the Jesuit provinces. They are not and that matter has been laid to rest by the agreed-upon terms of the reorganization of the province. This is a most important and reassuring outcome for us as a university. The university is responsible to reply only to claims which are made against it.

At the same time as a Jesuit, and together with my brother Jesuits and our provincial, we personally apologize and grieve the harm caused by the actions of some of our fellow Jesuits in their sexual abuse of the innocent and we personally seek reconciliation with those harmed. I could not as your Jesuit president give you the reassuring good news about the university in this matter without personally expressing my own feelings shared by the Jesuits you know and with whom you work. For us as Jesuits the legal and financial resolution does not end our shared shame and our hope for and commitment to healing and reconciliation.

There are of course many other things on my mind that I am more than willing to share with you so that you know the state of your university. However, for this occasion I believe that what I have said will suffice to give you a wide enough and deep enough understanding of our state of affairs. I am eager to move on now to some comments about the future. Before I do that let me summarize that essentially the university is healthy financially and legally, has a solid and stabilized enrollment (though with some current concerns in some graduate programs), is being powerfully advanced academically, is strong in its commitment to what constitutes its soul, is investing in you as faculty and staff colleagues while asking you to share responsibility for the benefit options we choose, is handling its movement into top-ranked athletic competition enthusiastically and responsibly, is getting ready for a major campaign for needed new resources in daunting economic times, and seeks to make strides with our alumni and in creating pathways to jobs for our students. That's about where we are. That's a good place to be. Where are we going?

Seven Goals for Seven Years

When I look to the future of our university, extrapolating from our past and from where we are, and putting a good cupful of hope and aspiration into the recipe, I came up with what I call "Seven Big Goals for Seven Years." Some have kidded me that I have got "the seven year itch," others—mostly my Jesuit brothers—say that this is like the movie "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers!"

Let me recap these markers of our future, tell you what I think most needs to happen for this hopeful future to be realized. What I say about these goals very much comes from me personally—though based on our strategic planning and all we've accomplished together—and are not in any way yet officially sanctioned or endorsed by trustees. As what I have told you in this State of the University comes from what I personally most think or am concerned about, so this future comes just as much from me, from my thoughts, hopes, and enthusiasm. I'd love to know if you are with me on this, and what hopes and goals you have for our future.

So here they are, my seven big goals for seven years:

1. Become the first-choice school for all of our students by continuing and upping the pace in enhancing the academic quality of the university. When people hear or say “Seattle University” I want them first of all to think “academic excellence,” then service, social justice, community engagement. I am convinced that if we can fund it, the Academic Strategic Action Plan will take us to being this “first-choice university” for all of our students – undergraduate, graduate, and law—and that it is the blueprint for constructing an academic future of excellent reputation.
2. Distinguish ourselves as one of the nation’s best universities for undergraduate science education and research. This is an educational invitation and challenge we can accept and take on. It’s about linking our students’ research to the research of their professors, and linking our professors and university to the incredible scientific centers of our region. It is also about building—not a science facility, or science building, or science center, or science commons, but—the “Science Galaxy” which will both make possible and symbolize our national distinction in undergraduate science education and research.
3. Seize our unique opportunities for a great Jesuit global education. The kind of students we attract, our large number of international students, our city’s location as a global crossroads for trade, our Pacific Rim prominence, our growing faculty international scholarship and outreach, combined with new leadership and the opportunity to pioneer the development of the worldwide network online or in person of Jesuit universities, all invite us to a unique new global engagement at the heart of our education for all.
4. Assure the success of the already vibrant and promising Seattle University Youth Initiative. This Initiative, most ably led by Kent Koth, encompassing 100 square blocks, focusing on creating a pipeline of success for kids in public schools, while engaging their families and communities, gives ample room for the involvement of all of us and of all of our students in service, and perhaps more importantly in learning to listen, to partner, to be educated by our neighbors, and to make our education real in its application. The Initiative can become definitional of our educational identity and distinguishing of us as a university.
5. Become more dynamically and positively Catholic and Jesuit and establish ourselves as the center in the Northwest for inter-religious dialogue. We can build on our strong Jesuit tradition and our more fully emerging Catholic confidence, shown through the Catholic Heritage Lecture Series and the Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture, to own and apply to contemporary circumstances our Catholic Jesuit character. If not us, then who?
6. Pull out all the stops to create a great, transforming, and memorable undergraduate student college experience. We have much to do to enable and shape “The Seattle U. Experience” of our students in community, campus traditions, identity by year in school, and a sequenced formation of our students in leadership according to their commitments

and passions. As academic excellence so strongly advances, the center must hold of the comprehensive life of the students.

7. Achieve championship success in intercollegiate athletics at the highest level of competition for the sake of our students, our alumni, our city, and our wider reputation. Athletics must become a marker of our overall excellence in academics and service and a window into the house of our university's quality and character. "Play to win," yes; but also "win to play a bigger role" in the minds of those we want to know us.

These personally articulated goals for the next seven years – academically first-choice, distinguished in science education, unique global opportunities, the Seattle U. Youth Initiative, a dynamic Catholic Jesuit center, a great undergraduate college experience, and better known through championship athletics—all grow out of and build on our strategic priorities, and – at least in my opinion – put some flesh and spirit on the bones of those priorities.

In my view four things above all need to happen if we are to realize these goals:

- We must get the financial fundamentals of the university right in order to have the resources to achieve the goals.
- We must build new connections with the bio-medical, global health, scientific, technological, and environmental institutions and foundations of our region.
- We must tell our story much more clearly, more fully, more positively, and much more widely.
- We must be successful in a major new comprehensive fundraising campaign built around these goals. (We already know that the "Science Galaxy" will be at the center of it, the campaign's "Big Bang" if you will!)

Because of our need to make these new connections and to tell our story more effectively, at the suggestion of our trustees and with their permission we have begun a search for a Vice President for External Affairs and Communication. The envisioned future I have spelled out requires new leadership at that level.

That's my "State of the University 2011." Let me conclude by telling you more personally what is most of all on my mind in these months. I wake, pray, work, and fall into bed at night thinking of those 22% of American children living in a cruel and deep poverty beyond my experience and imagination. Somehow I have to believe that all we do here in our university on this beautiful campus with these great undergraduate, graduate, and law students only is worth it both for our integrity and before our God if it helps those kids, their lives, and their futures. Maybe our own United Way Campaign starting this week can be a personal sign of our commitment to them. Far more importantly let's make sure that our whole educational mission—in our own lives, in our students, and in our alumni—stands with and stands up for and serves those kids. That would make the state of our university indeed a most happy one for me.