

USF PRESIDENT JUDY GENSHAFT
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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FUTURE

Welcome to all of you to my 2008 president's update.

And welcome to all of you to the NEW Marshall Student Center. This is such a beautiful building! I love seeing people walk through the atrium and stare in awe.

But the beauty of this building isn't just the atrium. It's the small group rooms, the serenity room, the shops and restaurants, the theatre, the conference rooms. And most importantly, the beauty of this building is in its Student Life Tower, which shows off the vibrancy of our student organizations, and serves the students who paid for this center.

What you're seeing isn't just a building. It's an environment. The new Marshall Student Center is a symbol of our learning environment, the living room AND learning room of USF Tampa.

As a result, the new Marshall Student Center demonstrates how USF is building environments for the future. That's why I want to talk about the environments of the university of the future.

Join me for a moment in thinking about the year 2020. I invite all of you to share a mental image with me. Imagine it's 2020 and USF has received the most spectacular award of the era ... just for fun let's call it "The Galaxy Award for Global Innovation." So of course we'll have a press conference.

The president in 2020 walks into her press conference studio, where digital connections link her to every student, every faculty member, every employee, and thousands of journalists around the world.

The first question in this news conference of 2020 is quite simple: "Madame President, in the year 2008, USF was a fast growing school with big ambitions. What happened that made USF a leader in global innovation?"

And the president says: "I'm glad you asked. The turning point came when we decided we were going to be great."

For all of you here in the Marshall Student Center and watching by webcast, I invite you to join me in imagining how we create that excitement of 2020. How would you answer the question? What would make USF the pinnacle of global innovation?

The reason I pose this question is because I believe USF is the university of the future, and that we can see evidence for that momentum here today.

Most importantly, as a university we have decided to be great. We've decided to create the environments of the future. In our strategic plan, these are environments that are global, interdisciplinary and engaged. They support our missions of learning and discovery.

As a result of our strategic decisions, we stand at a tipping point for this university. We have developed so much momentum, so much speed, that the US News and World Report last month called us one of 20 "Up and Coming Universities" in the nation. The universities on this list are selected by university presidents, provosts and admission deans, and they select universities that are champions of change.

A second national perspective on USF comes from my role in the American Council on Education. In February I'll become the chair of A.C.E. It's a privileged position and it allows me to be part of the debate about the future of higher education. A.C.E. is the umbrella all American and Canadian universities. It has 1,800 public and private universities as members, and it seeks to be the unifying voice for all of higher education.

No, this is not a NEW job ... it's a volunteer national position, much like my local roles with the Greater Tampa

Chamber of Commerce and the Tampa Bay Partnership.

From the vantage point of the American Council on Education (A.C.E.), the University of South Florida looks great. Like all universities we face issues of access, cost and declining state funding. But we've also exceeded national standards, improving our rankings in research awards, admissions standards, and quality scores.

I'm not sugarcoating the economy, especially for Florida. The next couple of years will be painful. We are fundamentally reshaping USF in the face of state budget cuts of 10.6-percent last year, with 4-percent already imposed this year, and more to come. Quite simply, USF will be a different university. Our state support has already dropped from 23-percent of our budget to 17-percent of our budget.

In the face of these cuts our challenge is to continue a rational, humane plan of reductions while at the same time investing in the future.

What I hope to show you today is that the University of South Florida is rapidly becoming the University of the Future. As our strategic plan consultant said, we have an incredibly bold ambition and we have the momentum to get there.

The incredibly bold goal in our strategic plan is to become eligible for membership in the elite Association of American Universities. And let me tell you why this goal is important. AAU eligibility requires a comprehensive series of measures, not just one. There are many measures by which USF is already quite eligible for the AAU. But we're not ready in every measure.

Yes, we must have the discoveries that transform science on a global scale. But that's not enough.

Yes, we must attract, retain and build a community of scholars. But that's not enough.

Yes, we must offer superlative undergraduate experiences and powerful graduate experiences to our students. But that's not enough.

Yes, we must transform how we understand ourselves through the humanities. But that's not enough.

Quite simply, we have the incredibly bold goal to do ALL of that. That's what the strategic plan is measuring. And that's why we will be the university of the future.

If you don't believe we can do this, we will surprise you. I'm going to mention a few ways in which our accomplishments will surprise you.

The most spectacular part of our university is our people. This year, each of you showed your love for USF in unprecedented numbers. The Faculty and Staff Campaign set records in total gifts as well as participation. A record number of employees, 2,100, contributed a record total of 3.75-million-dollars.

That's phenomenal. And I thank you.

Make no mistake: People outside the university give us money because they know people inside the university care. It's your connection with potential donors that makes our fundraising possible. This year, overall fund raising for USF exceeded its 80-million-dollar goal. In every case, the work of our faculty and staff made it possible.

Now I want to turn to the science of the future. The research university of the future will be marked by spectrums of thought, not schools of thought. It's going to take scientists from all of our traditional disciplines and challenge them to see the full spectrum of an issue. In the strategic plan, we've used the term "signature research programs" to capture this idea.

When you look at the signature research programs, it's no surprise that USF's areas of excellence are built around areas of need for the Tampa Bay region. That's why the Carnegie Foundation named us an "engaged university."

So you will find USF's areas of excellence match the areas of need for our communities and our state. These aren't a surprise: Water. The environment. Aging. The arts. Transportation. Urban engineering. Behavior and mental health. Health for all communities and all ages.

One more example: Some of our most scholarly faculty are in the arts, which are critical for a dynamic urban environment. Last month Denis Calandra's play based on the Carl Hiassen novel, "Lucky You," was performed in the Edinburgh Festival and is now playing at the Oxford Playhouse in London. We've long known that Denis is a star. Now the world is discovering that he's hot property.

Turning to sponsored research, three signature programs have shown spectacular success this year:

First, integrated neuroscience. We've launched a multi-college initiative in integrated neurosciences that will range across medicine, nursing, public health, psychology, behavioral sciences, and yes -- transportation and urban engineering, which are critical for older adults with brain function loss.

I'm very pleased that we were able to bring the Johnnie B. Byrd Sr. Alzheimer's Center under USF's wing, but Byrd is only one piece of this major initiative. We will provide diagnostics, treatments, new collaborations with the Veterans Hospital, an array of master's and doctoral programs, and research collaborations across the colleges of USF.

Second, we have launched a university wide initiative to end ... absolutely end ... juvenile diabetes. You've heard of the large grants awarded to our pediatric epidemiology team under Distinguished Professor Jeff Krischer. Most recently he was awarded 127.7-million-dollars to track studies to treat Type 1 diabetes. His team is the epicenter of diabetes research in the world. But there's more to that initiative. Dr Krischer is leading the new science of taking powerful tools and applying them to new problems. Our goal is to build an integrated bioinformatics team to focus on autoimmune disorders, including many colleges at USF. This will include bioinformatics, engineering, computer sciences, biochemistry, epidemiology ... and health care so that families in Tampa Bay and around the world can have their children treated by the best.

Immediately, we will begin to raise funds for a diabetes center and hospital on campus, where we can raise the bar for health care in the Tampa Bay region. We intend to show the power of science-based health care and how it can help this region. Moffitt Cancer Center has started it with its Total Cancer Care initiative. We've just begun in integrated neurosciences and now in diabetes and bioinformatics.

Third, perhaps our newest research initiative is sustainable communities, again integrated and interdisciplinary. This includes clean water, sustainable oceans, and sustainable energy. USF engineers are leading the state's Florida Energy Consortium. Our students and engineers created Rehab Ideas, one of the most spectacular examples in the nation of undergraduate research being turned into real products. And yes, we're in the middle of buying a new research vessel for our ocean research. USF is at the forefront of understanding how the oceans are really part of earth systems that affect us deeply, and our environment.

You may find it interesting that 12,500 tons of crushed concrete from the old Special Events Center were re-used in this building. In addition, more than 90% of the concrete in the old Marshall Center will be re-cycled. We're committed to being a Green University because the university of the future will be good for the environment.

Those are three of the signature programs. But I want to acknowledge all of the faculty involved in research, and the spectacular new total number of awards you've earned.

USF Faculty earned 360-million-dollars in sponsored awards in the last fiscal year ... which is an additional 52-million-dollars compared to the year before. That means USF's total of sponsored grants and contracts rose from 308-million to 360-million-dollars. That's a seventeen-percent increase. USF's total funding from the National Institutes of Health increased 72-percent, even though awards from the NIH were flat nationwide.

Congratulations to all you.

This research success is a symphony of effort. Here are just a few of the new grants to add to the powerful array of

continuing research by faculty at USF:

We've created a new center on how the body and mind keep you healthy.

We're helping soldiers respond to technology.

We're helping teachers improve math and science education.

Predicting how wetlands respond to pesticides.

Developing best practices for child welfare.

Finding ways to help at risk juveniles.

We're using remote sensors to study the West Florida Shelf in the Gulf.

And even our Police Chief, Tom Longo, earned a grant to increase the safety of students who live in nearby apartments.

An incredible joint effort, including USF, the Tampa Bay Partnership, state government, and local cities and counties, helped recruit Draper Laboratory to St. Petersburg and Tampa. Draper is an MIT spin-off company that will create two initiatives, a high tech manufacturing facility in St. Petersburg and a research collaboration in our Research Park in Tampa. This is the future of biomedicine – combining new discoveries with new technology to deliver new therapies.

The pace has not slowed down. Since July, the Department of Chemistry has earned 3-million-dollars in grants and the College of Nursing is part of a 3.5-million-dollar project with the VA.

You'll notice momentum. You'll also notice the wide range of ideas. This is truly about creating an environment for "spectrums of thought." That's what it means to be the university of the future.

Now I want to return to the learning environment that makes USF the university of the future.

The university of 2020 will not be virtual. Yes, it will be part of the new worldwide digital cloud; it will have nanotechnology in new roles. It will have many exciting things we haven't imagined. BUT at its core, the university of the future will create an environment that transforms learning. And it will create an environment that fosters transformational discovery.

USF welcomed an incredible class of new students – the most prepared class USF has ever accepted and attracted. As we planned, our undergraduate enrollment has increased at the regional campuses, but remained steady in Tampa for a total of 46,174 students. The GPA of the freshman class is 3.73, up from about 3.5 three years ago. The average SAT score is 1159 up from 1108 three years ago. This increase came despite a national downturn in SAT scores. That is a tremendous marker of success.

Another strong result: The USF Honors College enrolled 472 members of the class of 2012 with an average SAT score of 1353, a 25 point gain from last year.

And our freshman retention rate continues to increase, which helps drive big gains in our graduation rate.

The university of the future will be diverse. We've done a great job in attracting Hispanic students in both undergraduate and graduate programs. Our graduate programs saw a 14-percent increase in new African American graduate students. For all our graduate students, we've increased graduation rates, which means we're doing a better job of preparing a path toward their master's and doctoral degrees.

These numbers point to a dynamic learning environment. Because of the success of our faculty and staff, we're attracting a powerful group of students.

I want to thank the many staff and faculty who set up tents and helped welcome our students. From orientation to food service, you showed a first class university. Thank you.

In many ways, the University of South Florida has been transformed in recent years. Consider only this: There are new buildings and plans for buildings on every campus. And on the Tampa campus, we're now exceeding one-billion-dollars in construction projects since the year 2000.

If you only look at buildings, this is what's coming:

- The Interdisciplinary Science building.
- The Magnolia living and learning community will add 1000 beds to the Tampa campus.
- The Patel Center for Global Solutions.
- The new center for performing arts
- One of our most exciting new projects is the entirely new campus for USF in Lakeland, now known as USF Polytechnic. This will be on I-4, and is the heart of USF Polytechnic's mission to develop applied technology.
- The St. Petersburg campus saw a rush to fill its new dormitories and is 100-percent full. It's new science center is the first truly "green" building at USF. Clearly USF St. Petersburg is creating a learning environment especially targeted at the smaller school experience.
- Every time I visit the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus, I'm impressed by the love its employees have for their new building.

That brings me to one of USF's biggest new initiatives: To completely re-imagine health and healthcare. Last month, USF Health opened the Carol and Frank Morsani Center for Advanced Healthcare.

And yes, you can go there to see a doctor. The USF doctors are moving in. But their pencils are not. Because of the technology in the building, the teams of doctors and surgeons, and other health professionals, won't have pens and pencils. Or light boards. The doctor will get your imaging results while you're still in the MRI.

All of this means USF is in many ways a new university since the year 2000, and likely to look different again in 2020.

You have heard me say that great cities have great universities. And great universities have great athletics, both intramural and NCAA. Clearly, the general public understands USF's success in athletics. And the public knows that our athletes will surprise anyone who didn't see how fast we're moving. No one thought we'd be at the top of the nation's football rankings and one of the best teams in the State of Florida. In fact, the USF – West Virginia game last year was the most watched and highest rated game in the history of ESPN 2.

But it doesn't end with football. USF had 141 student-athletes named to the Big East Honor Roll, 24 of them with perfect 4.0 averages. USF baseball player Ryan Lockwood was named the National Freshman of the Year. We have 18 intercollegiate teams that report to the Big East and the NCAA. I'm on the Big East executive committee and I know that other schools are watching USF. We have more than 500 student athletes in these teams. And thousands more compete in intramural sports because we know that academics and activity must be a balance in student life.

One fun fact. The new USF track has the same surface that you saw in Beijing at the Olympics, which was one of the reason so many records were broken. It will be one of a handful of tracks with that surface in the United States.

There is another side to the university of the future that we must face. That is the transformation that is occurring with the public contract for state funding.

We know the state's revenues will continue to fall.

I would remind you of the principles I elaborated in the spring of this year. We focused on people, and we ensured that layoffs were very few. We did not cut tenured or tenure earning faculty. We cared about students during tough times by launching the "Don't Stop, Don't Drop" program to help students stay in school. And as the provost announced two weeks ago, we've agreed to reduce our reserves by 53-million-dollars to protect the instruction of students.

Among our colleges, the provost has led a re-organization to create synergies among key departments and institutes. We're very close to a name for our newest college, which will include the Florida Mental Health Institute. FMHI itself will remain a research institute within the new college, in addition to key departments that have re-located there.

In addition, USF is developing its governance as a system. We have a main research campus as well as regional campuses that will gain their own accreditation. In each case, we have developed "mission differentiation" to guide and the roles for each campus. What this means is that the USF system provides different environments for learning and supports students. Several universities in the AAU have a research center as well as accredited regional campuses, including Michigan and Minnesota.

I believe the USF System will result in greater access for students as well as a research and doctoral mission.

No one gets all this done without a team, and I want to acknowledge my team, just as they will all give credit to their teams.

To lead a regional campus you have to be dedicated to a powerful vision. Each of our CEO's does that. Vice President and Regional Chancellor Karen White of USF St. Petersburg. Vice President Marshall Goodman of USF Polytechnic. And our most recent appointee, Vice President Arthur Guilford of USF Sarasota-Manatee.

We have one graduate school, and we've named Dr. Karen Liller as the interim dean of the graduate school. We have one global initiative, under associate vice president Linda Whiteford, who will work with College of Public Health Dean Donna Petersen to create "USF World."

I want to recognize the vice president for student affairs, Jennifer Meningall, for her commitment to enhancing the environment for learning.

Based on our strategic plan and need for integrated IT and Communications, I named Mike Pearce as Vice President of Information Technology. And I named Michael Hoad as Vice President of Communications and Marketing.

We were lucky to have Trudie Frecker able to step in and take over as interim executive vice president. Not only has she weathered financial storms, but she's helped us plan for hurricanes as well.

The state budget cuts mean that USF will depend even more on its ability to raise private funds. I'd like to recognize Jeff Robison as Vice President for Advancement.

Last year, Dr. Karen Holbrook, the former president of The Ohio State University, joined us as a wise and masterful Vice President of Research and Innovation. She has done an incredible job as special assistant to the president, and I'm very grateful.

Then there's the man who has always believed in the future. Dr. Stephen Klasko, who came to USF convinced we could build models of health and education that would change the world, and sure enough, he's brought us USF Health and spectacular new places for modern healthcare.

And earlier this year, we asked Dr. Ralph Wilcox to take on one of the toughest jobs at USF and become provost and senior vice president for academic affairs. In his short tenure, he's taken charge of aligning the university to its strategic plan. He aims to create the integrated and interdisciplinary university of the future.

A system needs infrastructure. A search committee headed by Karen Holbrook has been interviewing candidates for the position of Senior Vice President for Business and Fiscal Affairs. The search committee has identified top candidates who understand that state funding is necessary but not sufficient; that tuition increases aren't enough; and that openness and transparency is the ONLY way to create the financial infrastructure for the university of the future.

And last, I want to give enormous credit to Rhea Law for her work as chair of the Board of Trustees, and for being re-elected to the board. This Board is determined to ensure USF is great in 2020 and beyond.

It's clear to me that the people of USF are great. I want to hear your ideas for 2020. And I know you have fantastic ideas that you are willing to own and implement. But I acknowledge that not all our systems are transparent, user-friendly, or sufficient.

I hope many of you saw the Olympics. Maybe you saw the Jamaican runner, Usain Bolt, win the 100 meter dash. Did you also see that just after he started to run, Usain Bolt's shoelaces became un-tied? He won the gold medal, he set a world record, and his shoelaces were loose in the air. This is an interesting image of USF. We're running very very fast. We are determined and passionate to win. My hope is that we can give each of you the shoes to run quickly ... even if sometimes our shoelaces become un-tied.

And that leads me to our single greatest challenge: Sustaining a culture where we each own the success of the university. We need to celebrate our successes and take pride in what we've done. Our staff, faculty and students are all part of the extraordinary transformations that occur in the classroom and the extraordinary discoveries we create.

I've asked two people to assess our culture and help bring faculty and staff together as a creative force. Sandy Lovins, the associate vice president for human resources, and Michael Hoad, the vice president for communications, will take on the challenge of culture change for 2020, which is no small task.

And so I challenge each of you to discover USF. Talk to each other. Walk around. Learn about the other people here. Most important, share your ideas for how USF can be the university of the future.

Thank you for your time and your ideas. Thank you for the determination to be the best, the greatest, whether or not our shoelaces are loose.

For those of you who are here at the Marshall Center, we have refreshments and the chance to talk about your ideas for greatness in 2020. For those of you watching by webcast, I invite you to email me or catch me at any event with your ideas.

Our strategic plan is our journey to the future. The journey is the best part of our success, and this is the right journey. Thank you.