



President Genshaft's 2004 Fall Address -

October 6, 2004

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- :: [Key Indicators for Strategic Progress](#) (PDF)

With four hurricanes sweeping across Florida, this has been a most unusual year for all of our campuses.

We've had to prepare and respond to ensure safety, to avoid damage and to minimize disruption of campus activities. It affects all of us—both personally and professionally.

I'd like to begin today by recognizing a few groups of people who truly went above and beyond the call of duty during these hurricanes. Most of us don't realize the amount of work that goes into securing our campus during dangerous weather. I visited some of these units, and I saw the work our staff was doing. Our entire Emergency Operations Team stayed in close contact with local and state officials throughout each hurricane. We even provided assistance to the University of West Florida, which was devastated by the storm. Physical Plant secured the grounds and buildings and made sure our water and electricity kept running. The Residence Halls staff cared for our students, as well as many family members who found that USF was safer than their homes across the state. Dining Services made sure everyone had wonderful food and enough to eat. University Relations and WUSF helped communicate with faculty, staff and students. University Police worked around the clock to ensure the safety of the campus, especially with a number of people flocking to shelters at Pizzo Elementary School and the Sun Dome. The Sun Dome was a shelter for people with special needs, including the assisted living facility that flooded in a nearby neighborhood. And the people on our regional campuses—especially USF Lakeland—have endured terrible challenges. Throughout the university, people worked day and night to ensure our campuses were secure and our community was safe.

What most impresses me is the commitment, dedication and perseverance of our staff. Our emergency operations went off smoothly because of them. Without teams of staff to protect our offices, our laboratories and our community amid a natural disaster, USF cannot operate. We cannot make progress. Yet, amid these storms, our campus remained safe, and we were able to re-open and return to normal operations faster because of these individuals. I'd like to ask all those who worked on emergency preparedness and cleanup before, during and after the hurricanes to stand up. You deserve our thanks and our appreciation. Thank you for your service to the University of South Florida.

Today, I will talk about the future of the University of South Florida and how I believe we can make real, measurable progress in achieving national prominence over the next five and ten years. Every single one of us has a role to play. The staff who served us so well during the hurricanes and allowed us to re-open so quickly afterward show this much better than I could ever say it.

Top 50 in Five Years -

Every day, I am reminded that people are this institution's most precious asset. Collectively, faculty, staff and students have turned the University of South Florida into a national research university. And we've done it in less than 50 years. In January, we'll begin to plan for USF's 50th anniversary, which will begin in January 2006 and end in December 2006.

I believe we are at a pivotal moment in USF's history and our development as a premier national research university. It's time we take pride in what USF has become and what we can become. We have to ask ourselves whether we are role models for others. And, if not, what will it take for us to get there?

When the Florida Board of Governors developed its strategic plan last year, it set a goal to have one more Florida university in the top 50 of public research universities within five years. There is currently only one Florida university in the top 50. I believe the next can be—and should be—the University of South Florida. If we remain focused, I believe we can do it within five years. The key is our focus.

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Measuring Progress -

We live in an era of accountability. We see it at all levels. We have our own goals and benchmarks with our strategic plan, with oversight from our local Board of Trustees. We also are accountable to the statewide Florida Board of Governors. We also have accrediting agencies. We have just submitted our application for reaffirmation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the literally hundreds of people who have spent thousands of hours during this process. I want to especially thank Kathleen Moore and Dan Gardner for their leadership of this important undertaking. A number of other national organizations also hold us accountable—from the Carnegie Foundation, to Moody's, to the NCAA. Plus, there are rankings for the Top American Research Universities and the criteria to be eligible for the elite Association of American Universities.

All told, there are literally hundreds of accountability measures. We have to look at them strategically, and we have to focus on the measures that matter the most. We have already begun to do this through our Strategic Plan, which includes 92 performance measures. And we have done very well. Clearly, some measures are more important than others.

We have to determine which measures have the most impact for moving USF forward as a national research university. Through Academic Affairs, we have identified 18 performance measures that are most important for USF to become a top-50 university within five years. The measures come from the Florida Board of Governors, the Top American Research University rankings and the Association of American Universities. All 18 are consistent with the direction we are heading with our current Strategic Plan. The 18 measures illustrate that our future depends on quality in four categories: faculty and programs, research quality and productivity, student selectivity and achievement and private support.

Faculty Quality -

Faculty quality is actually inseparable from all 18-performance measures. Yet, three measures specifically pertain to faculty: National Academy members; faculty awards in the arts, humanities, sciences, engineering and health; and the National Research Council faculty quality rating.

It's clear faculty are absolutely critical to our success. As the provost and I have continued to visit departments this year, we have heard firsthand about many stellar accomplishments. To all of our faculty, I want to say that we are proud of you, and we are committed to supporting you in an environment of shared governance that enables you to thrive in your academic disciplines.

We have faculty members who are worthy of winning the kinds of national awards that improve our performance on these measures. But you can't win if you're not nominated. We need to nominate our colleagues. It can take years to win the most prestigious of awards, and we need to start nominating people now. And we must do all we can to recruit, retain and reward outstanding faculty. We have begun the faculty recruitment process, with more than 200 faculty searches either ongoing or about to start. It's critical that we recruit the best, the brightest and the most diverse faculty ever.

The importance of faculty quality is also why we have focused so much on raising faculty salaries during the past year. As we've stated previously, we want to give the faculty raises of five percent, three percent and three percent over the next three years. These raises won't be easy. This is especially true in the aftermath of four hurricanes. It's clear the hurricane damage will have economic ramifications. The University of West Florida alone suffered about \$30 million in damage; they will need a lot of financial assistance to get back on their feet. The Governor and Legislature have already signaled that universities will face a very tight budget year. And the Governor is calling a meeting of the university presidents to discuss this. Yet, even during tough budget times, as president, I am prepared to make the hard decisions to raise faculty salaries. I sincerely hope we can reach agreement in the near future. Otherwise, these decisions will go to the Board of Trustees for resolution.

I know the progress of the university is directly correlated with the quality of our faculty.

Research Quality and Productivity -

Faculty also drive our research quality and productivity, and there are five performance measures in this category: total research expenditures, federal research expenditures, patents issued, citations and post-doctoral appointees

While these measures focus on research expenditures, an important indicator for future expenditures is amount of contracts and grants awarded. This year, our faculty set a record for the eighth consecutive year. Our faculty brought in \$290.1 million in grants, including \$106.1 million in federal grants. Our research growth isn't just impressive. It's astonishing. A decade ago our awards were

\$104.2 million—less than what we received in federal awards alone this year. For example, we are one of the five fastest growing universities in terms of funding from the National Institutes of Health. These research numbers are a testament to our outstanding faculty, dedicated staff, and deans and vice presidents who ensure we have the research infrastructure to support \$290.1 million in research. We need to continue to improve our research infrastructure, but I am proud of what we have accomplished.

About half of these research contracts are in our Health Sciences Center and our affiliates such as Moffitt and All Children's Hospital. We are fortunate to welcome two new leaders in this area. Dr. Steve Klasko joins us from Drexel University as vice president for health sciences and dean of medicine. And Dr. Donna Peterson will join us November 1 as the new dean of public health. She was previously with the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Early next year, we will complete construction on the two new buildings in our Research Park. These buildings will provide laboratories and office space for our faculty, as well as the infrastructure for additional interdisciplinary research.

In addition, USF is truly unique in our commitment to undergraduate research opportunities. In conjunction with our SACS reaffirmation process, we have formally kicked-off the Undergraduate Research Program. It will be directed by Humanities and American Studies Professor Naomi Yavneh and operated out of the Honors College.

Our regional campuses are important to our research mission as well. USF St. Petersburg has hired its first research leader in the campus' 39-year history. The associate regional vice chancellor for research and community partnerships, Dr. Christopher D'Elia, will identify new research priorities for the campus.

Ultimately, outstanding research is the result of outstanding faculty, and we have the faculty to reach our research goals. Last week, we recognized 10 researchers with Outstanding Research Achievement Awards. These faculty members—including Senate President Susan Greenbaum—had exceptional research and scholarly achievements during the past year. They are wonderful examples of the caliber of our faculty researchers.

Student Selectivity and Achievement -

In addition to research, eight performance measures focus on student selectivity and achievement: median SAT score; National Merit and Achievement Scholars; degrees awarded (all levels); degrees awarded in targeted disciplines, including education, engineering, nursing and information technology; enrollment and graduation of minority students; FTIC and AA transfers graduation rates; licensure/certification exam pass rate; and Academic Learning Compacts.

You can see an emphasis on degree productivity. This comes from the Florida Board of Governors. The message is very clear: It is not enough for us to enroll quality students; we have to retain them and graduate them from USF. We have a number of initiatives under way to support these goals.

On the graduate level, a great example is our National Science Foundation-funded program called Bridge to the Doctorate, which is directed by Dr. Ashanti Pyrtle and Dr. Shekhar Bhansali. Through this program, we are recruiting and mentoring minority graduate students and providing them with rich interdisciplinary research and educational opportunities.

On the undergraduate level, one way we expect to improve student achievement is by ensuring our enrollment planning and management is closely aligned with the direction of our academic programs. This summer, we hired a national consulting firm to examine our enrollment planning operations, and they recommended moving those responsibilities from Student Affairs to Academic Affairs. We learned that 80 percent of universities—for a variety of very important reasons—house enrollment planning in Academic Affairs. We accepted the consultant's recommendations, which we believe will allow us to better serve our students from recruitment to graduation. We must build a student academic support system to rival any university in the nation.

Student Affairs will continue to play a central role in supporting our students and enhancing our campus life. We are launching a national search for a vice president for student affairs. I am pleased that Dr. Ted Williams has agreed to chair the search advisory committee. Dr. Williams is also serving as interim associate vice president for Diversity and Equal Opportunity, so we particularly appreciate his leadership and willingness to serve our university. Additionally, Dr. Kofi Glover is serving as interim vice president for student affairs, and I want to thank him for stepping in and providing leadership during this interim period.

As you look at these eight student-centered measures, it's important to remember that each of us has a major role in whether top-quality students choose USF and graduate from USF. Top students want great faculty. They want stimulating lectures and real-world research experience. They want a great campus life. They want a campus that's safe and looks good, where they can walk around, park

or take a bus where they need to go. Countless staff members—from University Services to Student Affairs to University Police—make these things possible.

Many of these students also want to live on campus. This fall, nearly half of the first-time-in-college students chose to live on campus. Fortunately, we opened Cypress Residence Halls with 600 new beds, and we completed renovation of Beta Hall. In the past four and half years, we've gone from 3,300 beds to about 5,000 beds. At the same time, our Residences Services staff has done a wonderful job ensuring that we don't just have beds on campus, but that we have residents' life on campus.

The need for a vibrant campus life is just as strong on our regional campuses. A couple of weeks ago, we broke ground on our new campus building at USF Sarasota/Manatee, which is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. The new campus is a major step toward giving USF Sarasota/Manatee its own identity separate from New College—not to mention the space it needs to continue developing its programs. In St. Petersburg, our campus master plan will enhance student life with new residence halls, a student activities center and more parking. And we're preparing to build our new campus at USF Lakeland. To ensure adequate space in the interim, USF Lakeland and Polk Community College broke ground in May on a new joint-use building on the present campus.

Top students also want great athletics. This summer, in our new athletics training facility, we welcomed Doug Woolard as our new athletic director. In addition to recruiting quality students in his own right, Doug is poising us to have a top-notch Big East student athletics program.

Private Support -

The last two performance measures are related to private support: endowment assets and annual giving.

Our fundraising staff has done an outstanding job during tough economic times. This year, we raised \$42.6 million in annual giving. That's 21 percent higher than our goal for the year. More important than sheer dollars is what this money will be used for: \$21.6 million will be used for endowment funding of chairs, professorships, scholarships, research and other needs; \$16.7 million will support current operations such as professorships, scholarships and research; and \$4.3 million will go toward facilities and equipment. And, overall, our endowment finished this past year at \$270 million.

Our endowment is crucial for our success, because it provides permanent funding for our priorities and for our star faculty. We now have 89 endowed faculty positions, including the Ann and Andrew Hines Chair in Pediatric Research, which is held by Dr. Gary Litman. Many of you know Gary. He is considered a world leader in immunology and heads the only USF research group that has received the 10-year Merit Award from the National Institutes of Health. This summer, we were proud to name Dr. Litman a USF Distinguished Professor, along with Philosophy Professor Kwasi Wiredu. Dr. Wiredu is regarded as one of the most prominent figures in African philosophy and inter-cultural communication. Dr. Wiredu has served as the joint secretary of the organizing committee for the 20th World Congress of Philosophy.

Private support and the quality of our faculty, research and students are all longstanding benchmarks for the university. They take on even more importance when we set our sights on becoming a top 50 public research university.

Path to the Top 50 -

We can look at the performance of the top 50 universities and extrapolate the kind of progress we need to make in the next five years. Just among the nine indicators from Top American Research Universities, we can see where we need to be by 2008: Total research expenditures need to reach \$377 million. Federal research expenditures must top \$121 million. Our endowment needs to be \$406 million. Annual giving needs to be \$91 million. We need seven National Academy members. We need eight Faculty Awards. We need 200 post-doctorates. And our average SAT score needs to be 1188.

These are well-defined goals. In each division, each college and each department, we will need to sharpen our focus and determine what it will take for us reach them.

We also have to re-assess the group of universities we deem to be our peers. In the mid-range of the top 50 are public universities such as University of Alabama at Birmingham, North Carolina State, Stony Brook, UC Irvine, Rutgers, Cincinnati, Buffalo and the University of Illinois-Chicago. I know the University of South Florida can succeed in being ranked among these universities. And I know this because we have strong faculty, great students and some of the best staff members at any university.

I have said many times that great universities succeed through the tough times, as well as the good times. Whether we face hurricanes

or tough state budgets, we need to be strong and resilient, to have a unity of purpose. I'm proud of the progress USF has made in such a short period of time. As we begin to plan our 50th anniversary, we can look back at our amazing achievements, draw inspiration from them, and look forward with great expectations of what the University of South Florida can be within five years.

By working together, we can make USF a stronger university, a top-50 university and a university that we can be even prouder to call our own.

Judy Genshaft, President

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