



President Judy Genshaft
Fall Address, September 7, 2011

Thank you for coming.

Thank you for watching on the web.

What about the Bulls victory over Notre Dame? That was a legendary game. It took six hours. It took Skip Holtz and his coaches. It took our unstoppable team. That was a game between one of the youngest football teams in the NCAA playing one of the oldest teams. I want you to know we dominated national network television in the afternoon, we dominated it in the early evening, and we were there late at night! Now, we're ready to build the legend of USF!

We were missing a member of our team last weekend. Lee Roy Selmon was excited about the trip, and excited to show us the College Football Hall of Fame, where there are plaques celebrating him as a Scholar Athlete, and as a Hall of Famer. Lee Roy was not able to give us that tour, and we are the worse for it. Lee Roy Selmon was the father of football at USF. After his Hall of Fame professional career, he led us to division one football and was Athletic Director from 2001 to 2004. At that time, he and I made the case that got us into the Big East. After stepping down as Athletic Director, he remained as president of the USF Foundation Partnership for Athletics.

We all loved him, and we're all deeply saddened. We're a better university because of Lee Roy Selmon. He was an incredible role model, who cared about all of our student-athletes, no matter what sport. He built an incredible legacy and he will never be forgotten.

You will see the number 63 many times this weekend as our players and the Buccaneers honor his memory. Please join me in a moment of silence for Lee Roy Selmon.

Thank you. Our flags will fly at half mast on Friday and Saturday to honor him during the memorial services on those days. And of course the flags will be at half mast on Sunday to remember the victims of 9-11.

I hope you have been watching the images of our campuses being projected on the screen before I started speaking. Those images were created by our students, staff and faculty members, and we assembled them on a new blog called USF Life.

Those fun images remind us that we create treasured memories for our students. As we begin the academic year, we should remember how we transform the lives of people. It's wonderful to ask students about the most memorable parts of campus, and to have them talk about the sacred places on our campuses, places where they studied, or talked, or found their spouses. These memories remind us of the great relationships that are the core of higher education. It's all about lifelong relationships between mentors and learners, the friendships between peers, and the synergy between the values of a university and the aspirations of society.

Today I want to start a conversation about our partnerships. Relationships empower great universities. And they have empowered the USF System. All of our institutions are deeply meaningful to hundreds of thousands of people.

But I want to talk about new relationships that we need to create, new partnerships that will shape our future. We need this conversation as we implement the recently finished new strategic plan for the USF System. We also need to talk about partnerships as we begin the 2013-2018 strategic plan for the University of South Florida in Tampa.

As we look over the next five years, it's clear the economy will be slow to recover. USF will have to be focused. We'll have to be efficient. We will have to be a global university. And I believe we will find there is enormous power in unexpected alliances.

The pressure on public higher education is clear in every national meeting I attend. Where ten years ago, public universities saw 70 percent of their budgets coming from state funds, now they see 30 percent. We are no different.

But when I look at the key partnerships of the USF System, I see great opportunities for excellence. I see great opportunities to create a global model of effectiveness. And I see repeated opportunities to fulfill the aspirations, hopes and dreams of our students, alumni, friends, faculty, staff, community and the world at large.

Let's start with the core relationship between learners and mentors.

At its core, education itself is a partnership. It starts with the partnership of teacher and student. And it grows to a lifetime commitment by a university to help each student achieve his and her aspirations. Our commitment starts with selecting students to the right university, to providing superb curriculum, to attracting a rich and diverse learning community, to building a foundation of new technologies for instruction, and then to nurturing a lifelong relationship with alumni.

Over the past two years, USF has launched a campaign to reframe our relationship with our students. We are here to build lifelong success for our learners. We are fighting to

recruit and retain the best faculty. We are campaigning to have students “take 15” credits each semester and graduate on time.

The student success campaign has been led by our Provost and Senior Vice President, Ralph Wilcox, along with Vice President for Student Affairs, Jennifer Meningall and Associate Provost Paul Dosal, with their teams. This campaign has built a new council on student success, hired more academic advisors, expanded living-learning communities, and created technologies to track each student’s progress. We are building a globally relevant model to create personalized learning for a lifetime.

The results have been immediate. Several hundred members of our faculty and staff joined the campaign, making it the guiding priority both in the classroom and outside the classroom. In terms of selection, we saw the incoming freshman class exceed 1200 in SAT scores, and 3.91 in high school GPA. And most importantly, we saw our graduation rate jump 3 percentage points, a tremendous testament to the culture of success.

In my inaugural speech eleven years ago, I called for USF to build its graduate student numbers to 25 percent of the student body. We got there this year. That remains a critical emphasis for USF, to use the depth of our academic programs to prepare global leaders.

We have launched University College for lifelong and distance learning to maximize opportunities for anyone, regardless of age or geography.

And we’ve successfully brought new undergraduate and graduate students from around the globe to enrich our learning community on campus. INTO-USF, our private-public partnership, was a greater success than we anticipated, helping us increase international enrollment by 20-percent.

At the same time, USF World created new and powerful relationships with other countries, led by Senior Vice President Karen Holbrook. Dr. Holbrook believes in meaningful, research-based experiences for our students who want to learn around the globe. And it’s working. We hear from students, we hear from faculty, and we hear from employers, that understanding the world is the key to their success. In fact, my husband Steve and I believe so much in global experiences for USF students that we donated the Passport Scholars endowment this year. We want to ensure that all students have the opportunity to travel internationally, and to bring their exciting ideas to life.

In addition to students, the USF System has a deep and abiding relationship with our community. During the 2007 recession, I heard a great deal about how this region sees us a beacon. The USF System must help create the new knowledge economy that Florida desperately needs.

That relationship is even more important today. I recently reviewed the July analysis of the Tampa Bay economy by Moody’s Analytics. Moody’s rates the financial health of institutions and cities, and what it says guides investments. Moody’s thinks Tampa Bay is ready to rebound, and at the top of their list for optimism is USF, USF Health and the

USF System. This is why: Creating a “New Florida” economy requires people skilled in creating new businesses and new jobs. It requires professionals and inventors. It requires people who thrive in a new world with new rules. That is what USF is all about. We educate and attract those people. And when you talk to our students, that is what they say: USF is the university of the future. We’re here to help them thrive in a new world. We’re ready to create new relationships, with our students, our faculty and staff, and with our partners.

This is also why we rank as a “high impact” university, with 391-million dollars this year in grants, contracts and research.

The Chronicle of Higher Education just published a list of organizations with the highest number of United States patents. USF was 9th among universities. Only 8 universities in the world had more patents accepted last year. This is an astonishing ranking, because all of the other American universities in that top group are members of the AAU. We got there because we’re a high impact university. We got there because of our business partners, who worked with our faculty. And we got there with 83 patents and a lot of hard work.

One great example of our success in partnerships can be seen in the announcement last week that the College of Marine Sciences will receive 11-million dollars to track the effects of the dispersants oil spill in the Gulf, as one of 8 centers of excellence funded by BP. From the beginning, USF has been the model partner in this initiative, hosting the Florida Institute of Oceanography and collaborating with numerous universities throughout the world. It paid off for the state, because we now have strong teams helping our citizens and protecting our oceans.

This commitment to high impact and to partnerships led us to create the Tampa Innovation Alliance. I talked about an “innovation zone” last year, it has begun. This new Alliance will boost economic development and improve the safety of the roads around the Tampa campus. The first initial partners are USF, Busch Gardens, Moffitt Cancer Center, and University Community Hospital, now owned by Florida Hospital. The connectivity will grow. We will harness the power of an unexpected alliance. And we stand shoulder to shoulder to say we will make change the future for our neighborhood and for our region.

Focusing on the future defines USF Health. Under Senior Vice President Steve Klasko, USF Health is creating deeper and more intense outreach in Tampa Bay, the state, the nation and the world. In each case, USF Health is following its visionary mission to redefine health for the future, and to find new partners to do that.

Take for example its new Center for Advanced Medical Learning, CAMLS, which will open in March in Tampa. CAMLS is already being called a stimulus package for economic growth, and there’s no question it will be the anchor institution for downtown Tampa.

USF Health has a new relationship with the extraordinary retirement community, The Villages. There are 85,000 people over the age of 55 living in The Villages, which is just south of Ocala. This project will build a national model for healthy retirement, and we will learn how to prevent illness for older people.

And USF Health has reached into communities throughout the state, including its new relationship with Sarasota Memorial Hospital, and also the new trauma research project with HCA hospitals. The dramatic turn around of the Alzheimer's Center, since it became part of USF Health, has meant a new statewide resource for families fighting that terrible disease.

This semester we saw more students than ever in our doctor of medicine class, including the first students in the SELECT program, chosen in part for measures of emotional intelligence.

And we saw the first students for USF's new, accredited College of Pharmacy, built on a new model of pharmacists at the center of personalized healthcare.

These are innovative and entrepreneurial programs, and they create precedent setting relationships throughout USF Health, including nursing, public health and the health care providers. As USF aspires to build the university of the future, so USF Health aspires to build the health of the future.

And don't forget my advice to everyone who works here: Exercise is medicine!

And now another key relationship. We have great friends. And our friends know what we're doing. The leaders of this community notice how much we're transforming this region and they know we're the university of the future. And when these friends notice, they call the team led by Joel Momberg, our senior vice president for development and external affairs. This year, despite the recession, our great friends donated more than 111-million dollars to the University of South Florida System.

This exceeds our previous annual record by 30-million dollars. It includes 45,000 donors. And it includes 72-million dollars of that amount that went directly into program enhancements.

Our friends get it. They see what we're doing. They are standing with us. And they are proud of us. I want to thank each and every one, including many of the people in this room, because our faculty-staff campaign also achieved record totals. We ARE unstoppable!

In addition to programs, fund raising supports scholarships. Last year, we're proud to say that we awarded 65-million dollars in scholarships to our students. That's remarkable. Every one of those dollars helped someone achieve his or her dreams.

Fund raising also helped create five spectacular new facilities for our students to learn and compete in sports. We're proud that many of these have already been named after donors, including our soccer stadium, our baseball field, and our basketball practice facility. With Doug Woolard as our Athletic Director, we continue to have academic champions among our student athletes. As the first woman to chair the board of directors of the NCAA, I'm especially proud of our Athletics program with its success, its integrity and its focus on academics.

Another example of power from an alliance is the USF System itself.

We've seen USF-St. Petersburg thrive under the USF System, led by Regional Chancellor Margaret Sullivan and her team. Its enrollment is larger than ever, and we're building new residence halls and a student center. Plus it hosts our nationally ranked sailing team.

We've seen USF Sarasota-Manatee, led by Regional Chancellor Arthur Guilford and his team, successfully gain separate academic accreditation. And they're hosting a rowing team!

We have launched USF Polytechnic, and this year it has been able to hire faculty to create the polytechnic vision championed by Regional Chancellor Marshall Goodman and his team.

What I absolutely believe is this: Universities must create alliances like the USF System. To succeed, universities need to link up for cost efficiency and to share strengths. That's what we did. Our USF System is an innovative, linked, system of partners. It saves the state money. It provides greater access to students. And it creates the value proposition of the unique strengths and reputations of each of its partners.

We have worked with such intensity to build our great institutions and a strong system because we want Florida's students to have the best possible opportunities, with a national name brand, and we want taxpayers to benefit from their investment in higher education. We will continue to strengthen these alliances with our partner universities, and with other educational institutions.

This year, there will be a discussion at the Board of Governors of whether to make USF Polytechnic an independent university. That is a decision for the Board of Governors and Legislature to make. We will either continue to develop that campus under the USF umbrella, or we will be great neighbors and friends. Simply put: We want what's best for the students.

The last great partnership I want to mention is our employees, our faculty and staff. You are the heart of our relationships, and our alliances of the future. USF's incredible list of national and international rankings depends on your work. It's our faculty publications that have us ranked as 110 for impact among all world universities. It's our inventors that have us ranked number 9 in the world for United States patents. It's our faculty and

researchers that have made us 34th among public institutions for federal expenditures in research. It's our rock star teachers who transform the lives of our students and attract ever stronger classes.

It's our staff who have transformed our universities. It's our staff who made us a global model for transparency and effectiveness. And it's our staff who drive the campaign for student success, the campaign for USF World, and the Unstoppable campaign.

As you know, this summer we worked quickly and hard to provide bonuses for staff and increases for faculty at a time when the state was unable to maintain compensation levels. We wanted to send a message – that you are critical to our mission.

Today, I want to give you an early holiday present. The USF System will be closed for three extra days to provide you with an extended holiday break from December 23rd to January 2nd. We may not be able to do this every year, but I want you to know that I appreciate how hard everyone is working.

Many of these initiatives were launched by members of my team. I want to thank Nick Trivunovich for running the administrative backbone of the USF System. I want to thank Mike Pearce, as vice president for Information Technology. He's brought our infrastructure up to date, created an enormously busy help desk, and is launching new initiatives in managing content, databases and relationships.

This semester everyone is talking about the new energy on the Tampa campus thanks to the physical and landscaping improvements. The construction fence is down for the opening of the spectacular Interdisciplinary Science building. The campus looks great! Thank you, Sandy Lovins.

A thank you for wise counsel to Steve Prevaux for the excellence of his office, despite an expanded workload, including a series of new state regulations.

Our Facebook page now has 60,000 fans, and our news coverage makes USF's website the place to go when you need to know. Thank you to Michael Hoad and his news team.

And let me introduce the newest member of our team: John Long, the new Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President. John was one of our star alumni. After USF, he spent 26 years in the Air Force, achieving the rank of Colonel. He comes to us from running Andrews Air Force base. Over the coming year, John will be working with all of you to streamline our operations and maximize our effectiveness. Welcome John.

Every year, I begin this conversation with another major ranking that the University of South Florida and the USF System have achieved. And every year, there's a new spectacular measure of your accomplishments.

I have a fun surprise this year: USF is one of the 50 "coolest" universities on the planet, as ranked by the Sierra Club magazine. Essentially, the ranking is a comprehensive

review of everything a university does to support the environment, from green buildings on its campuses, to course offerings, to research by its faculty. USF achieved this ranking for the first time, even though universities on the West Coast dominate the scores, and no other Florida university scored in the top 50.

The faculty, staff and especially students know why we scored so high. Our students are among the busiest in the nation, and they are busy doing things for their communities; they are busy doing things for the environment. They are busy becoming leaders and they are committed to sustainability as a mission.

In the Sierra Club ranking, I was fascinated by one of the measures. Stanford University did score ahead of us on the overall rank, but on the academic column, Stanford scored below us. That means USF ranked higher in majors and classes in the environment, sustainability, and clean technologies. We scored high on centers and research devoted to sustainability. And perhaps equally important, we scored well on professors who devote their scholarship to sustaining the world we live in. One example is the new Patel School of Global Sustainability, where the first 12 master's students graduated this summer.

We take great pride in the faculty, students, and staff who have taken on the most critical challenge of the 21st century, to ensure a healthy and sustainable world.

In conclusion, I hope you will all join me in thinking about the power of unexpected alliances as we plan and build an optimistic future for USF and the USF System.

At its core, the USF System is ready to use our partnerships to move ahead. We are dynamic, interactive and engaged. We believe in personalized learning, as deeply as we believe in personalized health. And we believe that the explosive growth in our research portfolio means a deep expansion in meaningful opportunities for new relationships.

And most importantly, please celebrate being one of the coolest universities on the planet. Thank you for your attention, and most importantly, thank you for all that do.