

Strategic Initiatives and Accomplishments: People, Programs and Places

2001 – 2007 Southern Illinois University Chancellor Walter V. Wendler

Drawing on training and experience as an architect and leader, a collaborative vision of the desired future for Southern Illinois University Carbondale was captured in *Southern at 150: Building Excellence through Commitment*. 250 people participated in this process, one modeled after a similar process I helped lead at Texas A&M University and further developed for the Texas A&M University System.

"The goal of *Southern at 150: Building Excellence Through Commitment* is to articulate a series of commitments and actions that will place us among the top 75 public research universities in the United States by the year 2019, our 150th anniversary, while we continue to provide the foundation for academic, economic and social progress in Southern Illinois."

PEOPLE – Students, Faculty and Staff

Our mission is to help others, and ourselves, to purposely change how we think.

The leadership team committed \$160,726,651 in support for people through initiatives such as: The Strategic Faculty Hiring Initiative, Minority Revolving Fund, Reflective Responsive University Initiative, Retaining Critical Faculty & Staff, Graduate Student Excellence, Digital Communication, Soybean Research, Physician's Assistant Program, Teaching and Scholarly Excellence Fund, Academic Support, Library Material Increases and Marketing.

- Created the position Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Dean.
- Recognized by *Black Issues in Higher Education, October 23, 2003* for diversity programs.
- Research expenditures increased by nearly 65% and federal research grants increased by 80%.
- Strategic Faculty Hiring initiative of \$40 million dollars.

Student-Focused Commitments

New and enhanced scholarships, for undergraduate and graduate students, increased minimum student wages, funding for fellowships, investment in retention and recruitment initiatives and new programs designed to facilitate the transition from community colleges to the University received significant support.

- Created undergraduate assistantship program. \$.75 million/year supporting undergraduate research and employment. See *Reinventing the Mid-Level Research University Journal for Higher Education Strategists, Volume1, No.1, pp.11-31*
- Scholarships for undergraduates increased 300%.
- Spending for student employment increased 35% to exceed state averages for universities by 300%.
- Graduate assistantship spending increased by 25%.

PROGRAMS – New Initiatives

Opportunity through Excellence: Campaign for Southern

Established a \$ 100,000,000 goal for the first capital campaign in the history of Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

- Record setting contributions each year 2001-2006. Average contributions by donors up 80%.

- Annual contributions increased by over 50%.
- Number of donors up by 30%.
- 80% of campaign goal realized in 50% of the timeframe.
- Largest gifts in the history of university received twice in last five years.

Excellence and Recognition

In an effort to recognize excellence, the recurring theme of *Southern at 150: Building Excellence through Commitment*, and in concert with the Southern Illinois University Carbondale Alumni Association, funding for recognizing outstanding service was identified. The awards program, The Excellence through Commitment Annual Awards includes recognitions at the University and College levels for faculty and staff in teaching, research and service.

In addition, the celebration of excellence is pursued and orchestrated through the activities and initiatives of three "excellence concept teams" for faculty, civil service and administrative staff. Topics for the teams included:

- merit compensation
- across-the-board compensation
- performance evaluations
- opportunities and limitations
- within classification salary adjustments and
- other suggestions for recognizing excellence.

Reflective -Responsive University Task Force

The entire University community was empowered to promote diversity in all aspects of University life. Funds of \$1.5 Million were committed to support innovation. We held ourselves accountable for making progress towards meeting the goals necessary to foster, support, and nurture a campus community that ultimately reflects and responds to the rich diversity of the state, nation, and world. SIUC ranked second nationally in the number of bachelor's degrees awarded to African-American education majors, and 6th in the number of bachelor's degrees in education awarded to all minority groups. (2005)

Setting the Example

My leadership style has evolved from setting an example for others, honesty and transparency in decision making, even when it is difficult. Rather than rely on traditional patterns and styles of feedback concerning performance, a 360-degree leadership enhancement protocol – a system that solicits input from organizational superiors, peers, subordinates, students, donors, and alumni – a system that cultivates maximum accountability was implemented. Recognizing that one of the best methods of discovery is to be present a commitment was made to the citizens of our region – dozens of town hall meetings were conducted across Southern Illinois to obtain input that was routinely shared with members of the campus community in order to facilitate and improve our responsiveness to those we serve.

PLACES – Academic, Support and Athletics

(Each of these projects is linked to the University web site and can be accessed by control clicking on the title if reading this document electronically, other wise go to <http://www.siu.edu/future/index.html>.)

Identified funding sources and committed over \$275,000,000 in new and renovated buildings, the largest coordinated facilities plan in University history.

Saluki Way Phase One \$95,000,000 design

“Re-centered” Southern Illinois University Carbondale's campus around new academic buildings, a new football stadium and a revamped indoor- sports arena. The "Saluki Way" project will create a new "core" of student services, academic and athletics facilities.

Classroom Modernization \$1,500,000 annual commitment

High-resolution projectors, allowing faculty members to display images from any computer program, DVD or video, display information from the Internet, or use a document camera. New seating, lighting sound and Smart Board technology is being installed across campus.

Simmons Cooper Cancer Institute \$22,000,000 design

Our mission is to serve the people of central and southern Illinois by addressing their present and future cancer care needs through a comprehensive approach of education, research and patient services. The Cancer Institute's charge includes working to upgrade the standard of cancer care in downstate Illinois communities. It is a community-based patient care, research, education and outreach program established to improve cancer care.

Morris Library \$48,000,000 under construction

Modernization of the existing 275,000 square-foot facility, originally built in stages, with the basement through the third floor completed in 1956 and the fourth through seventh floors built in the late 1960s. The heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems will receive upgrades, and the building will receive a new exterior and additional space for communal study and gathering. Currently the library ranks 75th in the ARL rankings.

Troutt-Wittmann Academic & Training Center \$4,500,000 completed

A fitness center dedicated to physical training, conditioning, treatment of injuries and physical rehabilitation as well as academic support and enhancement opportunities.

Student Health Center \$9,600,000 completed

Provides our students a continuum of care under one roof, replacing the buildings that have housed Student Health Programs for the past 38 years in disparate parts of the campus. .

Transportation Education Center \$45,000,000 design

New structures encompassing 260,000 square feet will replace outdated facilities and laboratories as well as crowded learning environments.

Altgeld Hall \$13,400,000 completed

A new opera/music theater , sound booth and recording studio, class and seminar rooms as well as three musical instrument digital interface (MIDI) laboratories for computer music composition.

Wall and Grand Apartments \$26,400,000 completed

100 units are completed, first new campus housing in over forty years.

Southern Illinois Research Park \$2,800,000 completed

New 19,920 square-foot facility, encompassing office and testing space sufficient to house 10 start-ups.

Steps Towards Excellence

Appropriate investments in people, places, and programs are the foundation for progress in academic excellence as students are served.