

Remarks by UAlbany President George M. Philip  
Fall Faculty Meeting  
Campus Center Ballroom  
Thursday, Oct. 15, 2009  
2:30 p.m.

- Thank you, Michael.
- Good afternoon and welcome, everyone.
- *Reflect on success of the past weekend. Homecoming Weekend and Community Day*

*More than 15,000 visitors (parents, alumni, community members)*

*One Nobel prize-winner – Paul Krugman*

*One former U.S. Secretary of State – Colin Powell*

*Posthumously, one Presidential Medal of Freedom award-winner (Harvey Milk)*

- *Thank faculty, staff and students for contributing to success of weekend.*
- *Display of great pride by all constituents.*
- *This is a year of many UAlbany anniversaries.*
  - *40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Africana Studies program,*
  - *25<sup>th</sup> anniversaries of:*
    - New York State Writers Institute and School of Public Health,*
  - *10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Division I athletics*
  - *40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the dedication of our Uptown Campus – as well as my graduation from UAlbany.*
- These anniversaries are milestones in our development. Over the years, we have experienced growing pains and challenges. Today we see how we have matured into a major research university.
- I first arrived at UAlbany as a freshman in the fall of 1965. Today, I have a keen awareness and appreciation of our transformation from a state teachers college to a thriving research university... Both our physical and academic landscapes are dramatically transformed.
- In 1988, Freedom Quad marked the first construction project on the uptown campus since its completion in the 1960's.
- In 1999, we celebrated the opening of the first new academic building – our Science Library.
- We also added the RAAC, now referred to as SEFCU Arena, the new sculpture studio, the Life Sciences Research building, our East Campus, our nanotechnology complex and most recently, University Hall.

- We expanded to both the east and the west as we launched academic programs to meet new needs and demands.
- In 1985, we began the unique partnership between UAlbany and the New York State Department of Health. This year, that partnership celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> year as our School of Public Health..
- Our fast-growing, #1 ranked College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering began in 2001 and is now housed in the only research complex of its kind at any university in the world.
- 35 years ago, we launched a pioneering student exchange program with Moscow State University.
- Thanks to the work of faculty like Business School Professor, Sanjay Goel, this link remains strong and vibrant. Today it is one of the countless international connections enhancing and extending UAlbany's reach.
- In fact, later this month Professor Goel will travel to Russia to participate in a cyber-security conference and further strengthen our partnership with Moscow State University.
- As your president, I feel a tremendous sense of responsibility to build on this record of accomplishment. My goal is to work with all of you to advance our great university to the next level.
- This semester, Provost Susan Phillips and I began a series of informal conversations with faculty and staff.
- Many of you have attended these sessions and there will be several more throughout the semester. If you have not been to one, I encourage you to attend.
- This is a wonderful opportunity for me to learn what is on your minds, share information and answer any questions you might have.
- In listening to your questions, several themes have emerged.

## **1.) THE BUDGET**

- *Paterson's latest announcement*
- *Comptroller's announcement yesterday that the State deficit could be as large as \$4.1 billion – more than \$1.1 billion than the Governor is estimating*

### *The challenge of the IFR's – defining cash reserve*

- *How will we absorb the cuts?*
  - *Soft hiring freeze*
  - *Withheld MC raises*

- *Energy savings*
- *Limited travel*
- *Delayed purchases*
- *And more*
- *Seeking new revenue opportunities*
- *Also growing new revenues by building general studies/ summer session and wintermester - continuing ed - professional development - / distance learning*
- *Redoubling efforts to attract research dollars*
- *Fundraising – up 12 percent in past year, nearly \$8 million in new philanthropic commitments during 2008-2009*

*I'm one of five SUNY Presidents asked to serve on Chancellor's Budge Task Force.*

*1.) Budget reductions*

*2.) Framing budget process for FY2011*

*3.) Linking strategic plan to budget recommendations for next 5-years*

*2.) In our conversations, you have asked about Chancellor Zimpher, what she means for UAlbany and SUNY system.*

- *Strong advocate -- Discuss her plans for strategic plan*
- *Advocating for flexibility legislation to strengthen SUNY and its campuses*

**This summarizes what Provost Phillips and I have been discussing in these talks around campus. I appreciate the opportunity to hear your concerns. In particular we'll need your best thinking as we enter into our Strategic Planning Process.**

- **Soon, we will be announcing more information about this process – a process informed and defined by our campus community.**
- **The goal is to develop a new mission statement, strategic goals, and a multi-year blueprint for achieving our shared objectives.**
- **Many of you have already performed critical work to inform the process.**
- **A few examples:**
- **The Middle States Self-Study Report.**
- **A comprehensive self-study of our University is required for re-accreditation by the Middle State Commission on Higher Education.**

- A draft document will be presented to our community in the near future for review and comment. A Middle States representative will make a “pre-site visit” to campus on November 20.
- Our “Action Plan to Advance Community Engagement” is now complete.
- The plan presents five strategies and several action steps, as well as a mission and vision statement, for community-engaged teaching, research and service. You can review the plan on our website.
- The report of the First-Year Experience Task Force is complete.
- We know the success of our undergraduates is significantly influenced by their experiences in their first year in college. This report will help us design a high-quality experience that puts our first-year students on the path to success.
- Guided by the Going Forward Plan, we are putting in place faculty development initiatives, such as the program for Career, Leadership and University Excellence (CLUE). We are focusing on ways to enhance the undergraduate academic and career-preparing experience.
- Also feeding into our strategic planning process will be the work we did to further develop the University brand, which highlights signature characteristics of UAlbany.
- Our diversity agenda is also a significant element. Through visioning exercises, we have developed a draft of a shared vision and definition of diversity at UAlbany. In the near future, this will be distributed to the University community for your feedback.
- Our strategic planning process will also be informed by the strategic plans for international education, diversity and information technology services.
- In all these efforts – with participation by many across the campus, we are taking a careful look at what we are doing, what we can do better and how we can make ourselves stronger.
- I want to thank all of you who participated in these past planning efforts. Your invaluable service and commitment to the university is greatly appreciated.
- As we conduct thoughtful planning and analysis critical to advancing UAlbany, we are not standing still. We are moving forward, achieving results and aiming to accomplish even more ambitious goals in the future.

#### **Strengthening our student profile**

- This fall, we welcomed one of our most academically accomplished and ethnically diverse freshman classes in recent history. The class featured an average high school GPA of 91, with nearly one-third students of color.

- From a record 22,189 applications, the University enrolled 2,340 freshmen at a 47 percent admit rate.
- The lower admit rate, when compared with the 50.4 percent rate of 2008, is indicative of our increased selectivity for high-achieving students.
- 22 percent of the Class of 2013 graduated in the top 10 percent of their high school class, compared to 16 percent of 2008's freshmen.
- The mid-range of the class's SAT scores was 1090-1220, a full ten points higher than last year's range of 1080-1210.
- The University enrolled 253 Presidential Scholars, a 56 percent increase over last year, and the Honors College enrolled 137 high-achieving students, 88 percent more than last year.
- The strength of our entering class is recognition of the quality of our academic programs and the breadth of opportunity students find at UAlbany.
- In the future, we will build on this momentum and continue to strengthen our student profile.

#### **Strengthening our research enterprise**

- Last year, you attracted a total of \$342 million in research funding. This accomplishment positions UAlbany in the top tier of the nation's research universities. I'm pleased to announce that in the last three years, our university has attracted nearly \$1 billion in research funding.
- I'd like to site just a few examples of our research prowess...
- UAlbany's Center for Legislative Development was awarded \$9.3 million by the U.S. Agency for International Development to bolster government reform in Lebanon.
- The Center for the Elimination of Minority Health Disparities Director and Anthropology Professor Larry Schell led an effort to secure a \$6.8 million National Institutes of Health Award for the Exploratory Center on Minority Health and Disparities in Smaller Cities.
- Biology Professor Melinda Larsen received two National Institutes of Health grants totaling \$1.9 million for her work modeling salivary glands.
- Computer Science Professor George Berg led a collaborative campus-wide effort to secure \$800,000 in NSF funding to support our pioneering Center for Financial Market Regulation.
- School of Education Professor Deborah May was awarded an \$800,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education to investigate the preparation of leadership personnel.
- School of Social Welfare Professor Carolyn Smith was awarded a \$435,000 subcontract from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to investigate partner violence and child maltreatment.

School of Public Health researchers Janine M. Jurkowski and Kirsten K. Davison have received a \$1.1 million stimulus grant to address the national childhood obesity epidemic...

- I commend you – our faculty – for your hard work to attract additional federal stimulus dollars.
- 18 principal investigators have already won more than \$5 million and many other applicants await final word.
- Today I'd like to extend a warm welcome to James Dias our interim VP for research.
- Jim brings to the position valuable experience as both chair of the Department of Biomedical Sciences at our School of Public Health and a research scientist at the New York State Department of Health's Wadsworth Center.
- We look forward to his leadership in building grant-growing opportunities to further expand our research enterprise.

#### **UAlbany is Expanding its footprint.**

- The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government is coming home to UAlbany. This public policy think tank – currently a SUNY system entity -- researches and publishes on a wide range of public policy topics.
- Upon transitioning back to the University, it will complement our public policy programs.
- We have selected the internationally recognized architecture firm Perkins+Will to design the new School of Business building. This will be a world-class facility for UAlbany students and faculty.
- We are working on plans to expand our Campus Center and develop a new 500-bed student housing apartment complex, which will be self-supporting.
- We are “renewing” and “improving” our aged physical plant on the Uptown and Downtown campuses with critical maintenance funding of approximately \$34 million a year – nearly \$170 million over five years.
- We are exploring new opportunities for UAlbany as New York State continues its planning process for the future redevelopment of the 330-acre Harriman Campus right next door to us.
- Our expanding footprint will create an even better environment for teaching, scholarship and living at UAlbany.

#### **We are advancing environmental sustainability at UAlbany.**

- This fall we opened two sustainability-themed residence halls and a renovated Indian Quad Dining Hall featuring locally grown food and other healthy options.

- These are designed to educate and promote an atmosphere of environmental consciousness and healthy living practices as part of our "UAlbany Green Scene" efforts.
- The University remains steadfast in its commitment to reduce harmful carbon emissions both on the nation's roadways and across campus.
- We have made a good start and we are committed to doing much more on this critical issue of our times.

**Our academic profile is growing and staying ahead of the curve.**

- We have an outstanding set of academic programs that are ranked among the top in the nation.
- Our College of Nanoscale Science and Engineering is launching the world's first comprehensive undergraduate degree programs in nanoscale science and nanoscale engineering.
- With the School of Business, it is also expanding UAlbany's pioneering Nano+MBA program with a new nanotechnology elective track for the evening MBA program.
- We have launched a new master's program in forensic accounting to meet the emerging demand for forensic accountants and CPAs with forensic expertise.
- We have a new criminal justice honors program and new minors in medical anthropology and neuroscience.
- As we have throughout our history, we will continue building the excellence of our academic programs. Our faculty is the key to our excellence. Our top priority, once we weather this economic downturn, is to build our faculty ranks.

**We are strengthening our connections with our community.**

- There are so many ways we are engaged with our community. Here are a few of many examples.
- Corianne Scally [*rhymes with Alley*] of Geography and Planning is working with her students to create a feasibility assessment and grant proposal for the development of a University/Community Center in the Arbor Hill Community.

Loretta Pyles and students in the School of Social Welfare's Community and Public Service Program are conducting an evaluation of Equinox domestic violence services that will have an impact on how domestic violence services are delivered in Albany.

- Phil McCallion and Lisa Ferretti in the School of Social Welfare teamed up with students and community residents to address and improve health outcomes for West Hill /Arbor Hill residents.

- Our new Action Plan to Advance Community Engagement will provide a blueprint to further strengthen our connections with our community.
- I'm confident that together we can and will make UAlbany even stronger in all these ways.

#### **Upcoming....**

- Next semester, we'll be re-opening Husted Hall after its \$20 million renovation. We are looking forward to hosting a tour of this new space. Husted first opened in September 1909 as the Science Building. Soon it will begin its next century of service.
- Next Thursday, October 22, at our annual Citizen Laureate dinner, The University at Albany Foundation will honor former New York State Governor Hugh L. Carey. I hope you will join us for this.
- November 16 is the date for the New York State Writers Institute's 25th Anniversary Celebration.
- In 1984, Governor Mario Cuomo signed into law the legislation creating the Writers Institute. Mario Cuomo, along with historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer Doris Kearns Goodwin, will be on hand for an evening of reminiscence and celebration.
- As this and our other celebrations remind us, UAlbany is making great progress. This is a tribute to the talents and strengths of UAlbany faculty and staff. Together, we can *and are* shaping an even stronger future for UAlbany.
- As a closing note, I'd like to share with you a brief video. It is a sample of the kind of programming being developed by UAlbany students and our Office of Communications and Marketing for UAlbany TV, the TV channel which airs in our residence halls and Campus Center.

#### ***[video airs]***

- Thank you once again for your service to the University. I greatly appreciate all you do each and every day to advance the mission of our great University.
- I'm happy to take any questions you have.

#### ***[After questions.]***

I'd like to now introduce UUP UAlbany Chapter President Candace Merbler who has asked to say a few words. But before giving her the stage, I want to thank Candy for her leadership and dedication in making our Chapter at Albany so successful. She has been an invaluable partner in moving the University forward.