

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 20, 2011

Trustees Present: Chair Scott Thiss, Brett Anderson, Duane Benson, Cheryl Dickson, Jacob Englund, Clarence Hightower, Philip Krinkie, Alfredo Oliveira, Dan McElroy, David Paskach, Thomas Renier, Christine Rice, Louise Sundin and James Van Houten

Trustees Absent: Michael Vekich

1. Call to Order

Chair Scott Thiss called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. and reported that a quorum was present. He called upon Chancellor James H. McCormick to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Chair's Report

a. Dr. Sylvia Manning, President, Higher Learning Commission

Chancellor McCormick introduced Dr. Sylvia Manning, President of the Higher Learning Commission. Dr. Manning recognized Chancellor McCormick for his service with the Higher Learning Commission. She thanked Chair Thiss, the Trustees and Chancellor McCormick for welcoming her to the meeting.

Dr. Manning stated that funding and financial resources are the crisis of higher education today. Other big issues at the national level are accountability and access. She noted the excellent relationship between the Higher Learning Commission and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. She added that she looks forward to continuing that relationship with Chancellor-designate Steven Rosenstone.

a. Minutes of Board of Trustees Meeting of June 22, 2011

The corrected minutes of the Board of Trustees meeting of June 22, 2011, were approved as written.

b. Follow-up on the Chancellor Evaluation

Trustee Clarence Hightower moved that the Board authorizes the Board Chair, following consultation with the vice chair, to determine the amount and timing of any performance incentive award to Chancellor James McCormick for fiscal year 2011 in accordance with the Chancellor's employment agreement. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

c. Transition Update

Interim Vice Chancellor Scott Olson gave a brief update on the Chancellor-designate transition. He remarked that Dr. Rosenstone was pleased with the work of the transition team. He offered special recognition and thanks to Janice Fitzgerald, Deputy Chancellor, for her outstanding support.

d. Other

Chair Thiss noted that the Board's committees' roster would be revised to reduce the number of members on two committees which had too many.

Chair Thiss reported that an early August board meeting would be held for a bonding project. He called upon Vice Chancellor Laura King for a brief legislative and finance update.

Vice Chancellor King updated the Board on the contents of the bills adopted at the legislature. The Operating Budget is about 9.5 million dollars higher than the conference committee report on a base of 1.1 billion dollars. Some of the language added was a provision in the bill on performance, a transfer study, legislature interest in the Board's focus on economic development, and encouragement of an undergraduate tuition guarantee.

On the Capital budget side, a bonding bill was adopted for the system for \$132 million of which \$30 million is for the HEAPR. Trustee McElroy commented that there will be a discussion at the committee level on whether to add a project.

3. Consent Agenda

There were no Consent Agenda Items.

4. Board Policy Decisions

**(1) Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 3.4 – Undergraduate Admission
(Second Reading)**

Committee Chair Christine Rice moved that the Board of Trustees approves the amendment to Policy 3.4 Undergraduate Admissions. Chair Thiss called the question and the motion carried.

**(2) Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 3.8 – Student Complaints and Grievances
(Second Reading)**

Committee Chair Rice moved that the Board of Trustees approves the amendment to Policy 3.8 Student Complaints and Grievances. Chair Thiss called the question and the motion carried.

**(3) Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 1B.4 Access for Individuals with
Disabilities (Second Reading)**

Committee Chair Louise Sundin moved that the Board of Trustees approves the proposed amendment to Policy 1B.4 Access for Individuals with Disabilities. Chair Thiss called the question and the motion carried.

5. Board Standing Committee Reports

a. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Christine Rice, Chair

- (1) Academic and Student Affairs Update - MGT Study of Southwest Minnesota
Committee Chair Rice reported that the committee heard an update from Interim Vice Chancellor Scott Olson on the activities of the Academic and Student Affairs division.

Committee Chair Rice reported that there was an update on the MGT Study of Southwest Minnesota and that future discussions would be had with Chancellor-designate Rosenstone.

- (2) Shakespeare with Power Tools and Beyond
Committee Chair Rice reported that the committee heard a report from retired Presidents Donovan Schwichtenberg and Larry Litecky on how colleges currently balance the range of programs to ensure that the students are prepared for their work and further education.
- (3) Statement on Board Committee Goals
Committee Chair Rice reported that the committee heard a report on the division's study of best practices in developmental education and the three-year baccalaureate and 12 month calendar.
- (4) 2010-2011 Honorary Degrees Report
Committee Chair Rice reported that the committee heard a report on 2010-2011 Honorary Degrees from the close of spring semester in fiscal year 2011. One institution awarded an honorary degree. The recipient, Richard L. Knowlton, received an award at Riverland Community College's commencement in May.
- (5) Other
Committee Chair Rice acknowledged the excellent work of Interim Vice Chancellor Scott Olson as he concludes his work in the Office of the Chancellor and returns to his position at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

b. Technology Committee

David Paskach, Chair

- (1) Information Technology Update
Committee Chair David Paskach reported that the committee heard an update from Vice Chancellor Darrel Huish on the Information Technology division.
- (2) Students First Report
Committee Chair Paskach reported that the committee heard a report on the Students First accomplishments of the past year.

c. Human Resources Committee

Clarence Hightower, Chair

(1) Human Resources Update

Committee Chair Clarence Hightower reported that the committee heard an update from Vice Chancellor Lori Lamb on the Human Resources division.

(2) Appointment of Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

Upon Interim Vice Chancellor Scott Olson's return to Minnesota State University, Mankato, Chancellor McCormick recommended, at the request of Chancellor-designate Steven Rosenstone, Dr. Larry Litecky be named the next Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs.

Nominations and expressions of interest were sought from the board, presidents, system office staff and other individuals within and outside the system. Candidates were reviewed for qualifications and a selection was made.

Dr. Litecky became president of Century College in 2000 and retired from his presidency in 2011. Prior to serving as president, he was the interim president at the college; special assistant to the senior vice president for student and academic affairs at Metropolitan State University; and special assistant to the chancellor in the System Office. He served as president of the Minnesota Community College Faculty Association from 1992-1998.

Dr. Litecky received his Ph.D. and master's degrees from the University of Minnesota in American Studies and his baccalaureate degree from the College of St. Thomas with a major in English.

Committee Chair Hightower moved that the Board of Trustees, upon the recommendation of Chancellor McCormick, appoints Larry Litecky as interim vice chancellor for academic and student affairs in the Office of the Chancellor effective August 1, 2011, subject to the completion of an employment agreement.

The Board authorizes the Chancellor, in consultation with the Chair of the Board and Chair of the Human Resources Committee, to negotiate and execute an employment agreement in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Personnel Plan for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Administrators. Chair Thiss called the question and the motion carried.

(3) Emeriti Recognition

Chair Thiss called upon Chancellor McCormick to present the Emeriti Recognitions for Presidents Larry Litecky and Donovan Schwichtenberg.

Chancellor McCormick recommended that president emeritus status be given to Larry Litecky, who served as president at Century College from 2000-2011, and Donovan Schwichtenberg, who served as president at Saint Paul College from 1990-2011. Chancellor McCormick thanked them for their outstanding service to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

Committee Chair Hightower moved that upon the recommendation of Chancellor James H. McCormick, the Board of Trustees hereby confers emeritus status upon Presidents Donovan Schwichtenberg and Larry Litecky, effective upon their retirements. Chair Thiss called the question and the motion carried.

- (4) Recognition of Presidential Years of Service
Committee Chair Hightower reported that the committee recognized retired President David Danahar, Southwest Minnesota State University, for ten years of service. President Pat Johns, Lake Superior College, was recognized for twenty years of service.
- (5) Closed Session on Bargaining Pursuant to Minnesota Statute § 13D.03 (2010)
Committee Chair Hightower reported that the closed session for bargaining was canceled.

d. Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee

Louise Sundin, Chair

- (1) Diversity and Multiculturalism Division Update
Committee Chair Louise Sundin reported that the committee heard an update from Executive Director Whitney Stewart Harris on the activities of the Diversity and Multiculturalism division.
- (2) Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 1B.3 Sexual Violence Policy (First Reading)
Committee Chair Sundin reported that the committee heard a first reading of the Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 1B.3 Sexual Violence Policy. This will be presented for a second reading and action at the next meeting.

e. Audit Committee

James Van Houten, Chair

(1) Approve FY2012 Audit Plan

The Audit Committee was canceled due to lack of a quorum.

6. Joint Council of Student Associations

- a. Minnesota State College Student Association (MSCSA)
Mr. Geoff Dittberner, President, addressed the Board of Trustees.

7. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities' Bargaining Units

- a. American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
Ms. June Clark and Mr. Chaz Martin, State Representatives, Local 638, addressed the Board of Trustees.
- b. Minnesota Association of Professional Employees
Mr. Greg Mellas addressed the Board of Trustees.

- c. Minnesota State College Faculty
Mr. Greg Mulcahy, President, addressed the Board of Trustees.
- d. Administrative and Service Faculty
Ms. Barbara Oertel, President, addressed the Board of Trustees.
- e. Inter Faculty Organization
Dr. Donald Larsson, President, addressed the Board of Trustees.

8. Trustees' Reports

Chair Thiss welcomed Trustee Brett Anderson. Trustee Anderson is a student at Minnesota State University, Mankato where he is working towards a master's degree in business administration.

Chair Thiss announced that President Terrance Leas sent notice that the two-year college presidents will no longer receive hard copy board materials as the materials are available on the Board's Website. He thanked the presidents for helping to reduce costs.

9. Chancellor's Comments

Chancellor McCormick reflected on his ten years of service to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. His comments are attached to these minutes.

10. Special Recognition

Chair Thiss stated that Chancellor McCormick's achievements are distinguished. He called upon Trustee Cheryl Dickson for her comments. Trustee Dickson and Trustee Paskach highlighted key points of Chancellor McCormick's work through his term.

Trustee Paskach read the following statement:

Based upon the forgoing, Dr. James H. McCormick should be judged deserving of the honor of Chancellor Emeritus. Dr. McCormick has never ceased to make what is judged as good, even better. In this continuous improvement environment he encourages others toward their goals. He is a master planner and relationship builder. He endeavors to give all parties a voice in shaping an initiative, a project, or the very future of the organization. He is a person of great integrity and an individual who respects the delicate balance of being wisely political but never partisan. Dr. McCormick understands the value of creating an environment that permits the best of everyone to come forward. Finally, he is a leader who works long demanding hours but never departs the office without asking, "what have I done for students today?"

(1) Emeriti Status

Pursuant to Board Policy 4.8, Emeritus Status, and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, Chair Thiss will present the recommendation to confer emeritus status upon James H. McCormick, who has served as chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system since July 1, 2001, and will retire on July 31, 2011.

Chair Thiss moved that in appreciation and recognition of his service with great distinction on behalf of the people of the State of Minnesota, the Board of Trustees hereby confers upon James H. McCormick the honorary title of Chancellor Emeritus of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, effective August 1, 2011.

Trustees Brett Anderson, Duane Benson, Cheryl Dickson, Jacob Englund, Clarence Hightower, Philip Krinkie, Dan McElroy, Alfredo Oliveira, David Paskach, Thomas Renier, Christine Rice, Louise Sundin and James Van Houten seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Absent: Trustee Michael Vekich.

(2) Board Room Naming

Chair Thiss moved that the Board of Trustees approves changing the name of the Board Room to the McCormick Room. Trustees Brett Anderson, Duane Benson, Cheryl Dickson, Jacob Englund, Clarence Hightower, Philip Krinkie, Dan McElroy, Alfredo Oliveira, David Paskach, Thomas Renier, Christine Rice, Louise Sundin and James Van Houten seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Absent: Trustee Michael Vekich.

Chancellor McCormick said that he was honored and thanked the Board one last time for their thoughtfulness and consideration. He also thanked all present at the meeting and bid his farewell.

11. Adjournment

Chair Thiss adjourned the meeting at 3:28 p.m.

Ingeborg K. Chapin
Secretary to the Board



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Reflections: 2001 – 2011
James H. McCormick
Board of Trustees Meeting

July 20, 2011

Thank you, Chair Thiss, members of the Board of Trustees, colleagues at our colleges and universities, Office of the Chancellor staff and guests.

I have been asked to offer a few reflections at this last meeting as chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. I have treasured my service here. I want to give you an overview of –

- how we got started,
- what we promised to do,
- what we accomplished, and
- challenges for the system.

I accepted this position because I believed I could make a contribution, and because of Minnesota's reputation as a state where its leaders and its people strive to raise the quality of life for everyone.

As I look back, I can see that the creation of this system in 1991 was the kind of disruptive change that management experts talk about today. When I arrived, the ripple effects of that disruptive change were still being felt. The system was still a little wobbly.

To begin, I knew I had to learn as much as I could about the people of Minnesota and what they expected from their public higher education system. Though I officially started in July 2001, I began in the months before that by having one-hour telephone conversations with each trustee, each president, system office staff and statewide leaders.

My management team, (many of them are present today) then developed a work plan, and we presented it to the board on July 18, 2001. If you look at the July minutes, the work plan is there. I cannot emphasize enough the value of having a solid team. One person can't lead without a team that's on board. And I want to acknowledge my predecessor, Morrie Anderson, for assembling such a group of talented leaders.

The work plan's first goal was to provide excellent, affordable higher education opportunities to students from Minnesota and nearby states. The others were to –

- 2) listen to the voices of Minnesota and craft a strategic plan;
- 3) improve efficiency and effectiveness, including accountability standards;

- 4) encourage local, regional and state partnerships to build economic vitality; and
- 5) enhance the system's public image, both statewide and nationally.

Later that month, we launched a tour of all of our colleges and universities to listen to the voices of Minnesota. In each place, we asked people how we could meet the needs of students, communities, faculty and campus staff even better. I visited each legislator in his or her home district. We listened, and we took notes.

We created a Citizens Advisory Commission. I was honored that Vance Opperman and Glen Taylor, two respected business leaders, agreed to co-chair it. This group of 33 members and three ex-officio members, which included Cheryl Dickson, came from all walks of life and also held meetings around the state. They were asked to do three things:

- Determine the most critical strategic choices facing public higher education;
- Examine the issues facing the state and their impact on higher education opportunities for Minnesotans; and
- Recommend what role the system should play in enhancing the state's economic vitality, quality of life and workforce.

They met for six months and came up with 11 recommendations. To name just a few –

- Increase the enrollment, retention and graduation rates of all students, especially students of color.
- Make sure transfer works the way it should.
- Make sure programs and services meet the learning needs of workers and employers.
- Develop and implement an accountability system that provides information about student success and measures efficiency, effectiveness and improvement.

The Citizens Advisory Commission work led to "Designing the Future," the board's strategic plan, which has guided the system's leaders ever since. The plan has been revised several times, and appropriately so, as new conditions and concerns arise. But essentially, the basic framework of the plan remains relevant, vibrant and alive.

Another fundamental shift occurred immediately with the creation of the Leadership Council, which is made up of the presidents and the top leaders in this office. The council meets almost monthly and has a voice in shaping system policies and initiatives. The Leadership Council is aligned with the organization of this office and the board's committees. The council then can help set goals, systematically carry out initiatives to all 54 campuses, and measure results.

The council also cultivates invaluable connections among the college and university presidents. A good example is the four Centers of Excellence. With participation by 18 system institutions, these centers play a vital role in three of the state's most important sectors – health care, engineering and manufacturing, and information technology.

Building the sense of “system” was vital. The more pride that presidents, faculty and staff take in the system, the easier it is to marshal the system’s collective power. As presidents took on being the senior management team for this organization of 15,000+ employees, the system began to function better.

I am thinking specifically of the 2009 Workforce of the Future report when the presidents and system office leaders visited 352 Minnesota companies to learn how the system can enhance the prosperity and quality of life of the state’s residents. This was the first time we acted collectively to find out what the state’s employers wanted in our graduates.

What have we accomplished? To begin, we can point to steadily increasing enrollments, reaching record highs for the last four years. We now serve more than 434,000 students a year. Full-year equivalent enrollment of for-credit students has increased by 33 percent since 2001.

Other accomplishments:

- More students transferred successfully within the system. Transfer credits among colleges and universities went up 66 percent to 504,000 credits between 1999 and 2008. The state universities accepted 91 percent of transfer credits from two-year colleges.
- Enrollment in college-level science, technology, engineering and math courses reached nearly 130,000 students – another record high.
- We now graduate more than 36,000 students a year, up 45 percent from a decade ago. All told, we have produced 330,000 graduates since 2001.
- The student body continues to grow more diverse, reflecting the Minnesota of the 21st century.
 - Underrepresented students now make up 71 percent of our students.
 - Students of color have more doubled to 57,459 in 2011.
 - Students eligible for a federal Pell grant, a proxy for low-income, went up 53 percent.

I do not believe these increases resulted simply from the economic downturn. We worked hard to recruit and retain more underrepresented students with our award-winning “Make college a part of your future” campaign, among other initiatives.

We took time to develop and evaluate programs so we knew which strategies truly help underrepresented students succeed. The Power of You, the joint program at Saint Paul College and Minneapolis Community and Technical College, is an outstanding success. Seeing more success among our underrepresented students is among my most satisfying accomplishments.

Veterans are another important group. We stepped up to improve services. Forty-five of 54 campuses have veterans' centers. With the Minnesota National Guard and the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs, we became a national leader in setting up the Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program. The latest tool is an automated analysis of credit that veterans can earn for training they received in the military. We may be the first in the country to do this.

We also have grown more transparent and more focused on measurement. The Accountability Dashboard publicly displays the board's performance measures. Every president knows the measures and can focus on continuous improvement. We did this by improving data integrity and developing standards for calculating and reporting performance data. This, in turn, gave campuses the ability to drill down into that data and better understand their performance. I am proud to report that the Accountability Dashboard will have data for all 10 measures by early August. But I want to emphasize – this is still a work in progress. Continuous improvement demands a periodic review and update of these measures.

Developing relationships with system constituencies has been a key for me. I met frequently with student leaders and attended their conferences – all to better understand their needs, to address their latest concerns, to find new ways to enrich the student experience.

We have worked to create and sustain excellent relations with union leadership. We don't always agree but we are honest with each other. And we respect each other's point of view. I want to say a word about our outstanding faculty. Every time I visit a campus, I am impressed by the faculty's commitment to provide high-quality programs and help students achieve their goals. I know they want our students to have productive careers and contribute to the greater good.

We strengthened ties with our K-12 partners by forming what was first the P-16 Partnership and is now known as the P-20 Partnership. This group has been working behind the scenes to create a seamless educational system. Our system also supported many initiatives with K-12 partners, namely three centers for access and opportunity, including the Center for College Readiness at Minnesota State Community and Technical College, which offers college preparatory support services and resources to junior high and high school teachers and students.

We enhanced partnerships with business and industry. Our colleges and universities routinely receive about 90 percent of the Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants given by the Department of Employment and Economic Development. That is the way it should be. By providing low-cost training, our colleges lead the way in keeping workforce skills up to date. I see tremendous potential here to expand the training and retraining we do for individuals and employers.

Though I started my higher education career when manual typewriters were the technology of the day, I have been excited, impressed and sometimes amazed at how rapidly technology is changing higher education. We must continue to use technology creatively to improve efficiency, increase access and enrich the student experience. The Citizens Advisory

Commission was rather prescient when it recommended that we lead a systemwide information technology initiative to coordinate development of online courses, programs and services.

During the past 10 years, we have had a major overhaul of our technology systems, thanks to an investment by the Minnesota Legislature and the executive branch. The revamped information technology network is fast, secure and reliable, serving more than 400,000 users. Another point of pride here – we topped 100,000 students taking online courses this year – the most ever. I look for that number to keep growing, especially since this month's launch of Students First, a set of six IT projects to make our programs and services even more accessible.

We grew more accountable and efficient. As hard as we pushed for additional resources, we also pulled for more efficiency. Costs have been managed aggressively, staying under the cost of inflation. I am proud that we have been able to continue delivering programs and services in sparsely populated areas of the state. This is a real challenge and will continue to be in the future.

That brings me to the physical plant. We have spent about \$1 billion since 2000 renovating and constructing new classrooms, libraries and teaching labs. I am particularly proud that that 528 of 636 science and allied health labs were updated. The process we developed for coming up with one bonding list has given us enormous credibility with legislators and the executive branch. Improvements of classrooms, libraries, technical labs, science and allied health facilities have been made at all 54 campuses.

Just think about it. Full-year equivalent enrollment has grown 42 percent since 1998, but new square footage has grown by only 10 percent. Capital improvement dollars have emphasized renovation, reuse and energy-efficiency measures.

I want to thank the governors and the Legislature. By supporting our bonding requests, we have made substantial progress in improving facilities. At least one-third of our bonding money in the last 10 years has gone to improving science and technology labs. This has been a crucial investment because a large portion of the new jobs will require science, technology, engineering or math skills.

Succession planning – that is finding talented leaders – is very important for the future of the system. We have a new program to advance the leadership skills of up-and-coming system leaders. Recently, we have identified a strong group of potential leaders who will attend this newly developed executive leadership development program.

At the national level, we have raised the visibility of the system considerably. The system leaders and I have served in leadership roles for groups, such as the State Higher Education Executive Officers, the American Association of Community Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and the Higher Learning Commission, among others. The system often is viewed as having programs that are well worth emulating.

Now, what of the future? I am leaving when higher education leaders in this state and the nation face unprecedented challenges. I am also confident that the system will be in good hands under the able leadership of Steven Rosenstone. But there will be challenges.

We will be struggling to recover from the recession for the next several years. The competition for public dollars will continue to grow. We must be able to articulate and prove our value to the public and to our most important constituency – the students.

I urge you to continue to be advocates for renewed investment in higher education. Our academic programs must remain strong, attractive and affordable. Just because state funding has been shrinking, do not give up calling for increased investment in higher education. We must reinforce the idea that public higher education is a public good that benefits all.

The state of Minnesota needs to remain competitive and to have the best, most capable and intelligent workforce in the country; our students want to be well-grounded and quickly successful in the mainstream. As the recent Georgetown University study noted, 70 percent of the jobs in Minnesota will require some postsecondary education by 2020. There's no way to reach this number without our colleges and universities. These colleges and universities must be the ones to attract and graduate more students.

To raise the educational attainment level, you will have to close the achievement gap. We no longer can afford to leave Minnesota's students of color, low-income, English language learners and first-generation college students behind. But increasing the success rate will not be free or low cost. It will require investment – just as any business leader knows – to produce results.

There is much more ground to be taken in this area. Eliminating the achievement gap may be the single most important step you can take to enable Minnesota businesses to remain globally competitive.

The most painful thing has been rising student indebtedness. Even though tuition increases have been modest for the last few years, I fully recognize that many students struggle to work, stay in school and raise families. At the same time, students and their parents need to pay their fair share of the cost. The question is: What is their fair share? As state appropriations drop, tuition covers more of the cost and students are saddled with more debt. I can't help but wonder: Aren't we putting a drag on future economic growth? How long will it take students to pay off their loans when wages and benefits seem to be held down or shrinking?

You face an increasingly competitive higher education landscape. The for-profits, for example, use aggressive marketing tactics to recruit students, particularly from underrepresented groups. They're also significantly more costly for students. Don't underestimate them. More global competition also may be in the future. Remember what happened to the domestic car manufacturers when foreign competition came in and captured a good share of the market. Focus on efficiency and excellence.

Encouraging innovation may be one of the most important strategies, but remember, as Roger Martin, dean of the University of Toronto's School of Management said in a recent *Harvard Business Review* article, "The best creative thinking happens on a company's front lines. You just need to encourage it." Higher education is no different. The best ideas are most likely to come from the campuses.

Now, at the end of this long list, it is important to tell you that I have been privileged to work with 40 trustees over the years, some of Minnesota's finest and most engaged civic leaders. They take their responsibilities on behalf of the people of Minnesota seriously and they work hard at making the best decisions. Without your direction, your guidance, your thoughtful decisions, we would not have made this kind of remarkable progress.

I want to go on record as a champion for this system. From the beginning, I thought the unusual structure – two-year and four-year colleges and universities under one governing board – was a good idea. Now, after working with it for more than a decade, we have made great progress making it work. I will even say that Minnesota is poised – more so than many other states – to make the best use of its higher education resources because of the system's structure. And I hope the Legislature and governor continue to recognize the value that this system brings to the state.

I also want to recognize and acknowledge Minnesota. As much as I love Pennsylvania, my home state, I must say Minnesota is a special place. I have met and worked with many fine and extraordinary people. First off, I am impressed with the quality of our students, particularly the student leaders. They are smart, articulate and tireless advocates for their constituents. They know how to ask tough questions, and they don't settle for pat answers. They represent the best of Minnesota's next generation. And, I am counting on them to be among Minnesota's future leaders.

I have found extraordinarily dedicated and creative faculty and staff, committed and civic-minded business leaders and many hard-working thoughtful people in the Legislative and executive branches of government. None of this could have been accomplished without an excellent staff.

Together, we have achieved these results because all of these groups are focused on a vision, represented through the strategic plan, and the idea that the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will enable the people of Minnesota to succeed by providing the most accessible, highest value education in the nation.

As Harry Truman said, "It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit."

During my career in higher education, I have experienced many moments when I have been moved and inspired by the importance of education and its ability to create new futures for individuals and families. These moments often occur at commencements when a first-

generation college student receives a degree, or when I walk through a library and see dozens of students working at their laptops. Or, when I see students lead their peers and their communities.

Serving students – this is what this higher education system is all about. This is why I have considered it a great privilege to serve as chancellor of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and why I appreciate the opportunity to improve the lives of students and the people of Minnesota.

Finally, another Pennsylvanian, author James Michener, said it first, but I believe it to my core: "The master in the art of living makes little distinction between his work and his play. . . .He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence at whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing. To him he's always doing both."

Thank you.