



North Dakota State University

October 20, 2005

President Joseph A. Chapman

State of the University Address

Good morning and thank you for spending this time during a busy Homecoming week. As I look past the stage lights and into the audience, I see students, faculty, and staff. I see prospective students and parents, and I see members of the State Board of Higher Education, and the North Dakota legislature. I see alumni and friends who have put aside their normal activities to donate their time and talents in the service of the NDSU Alumni Association and the NDSU Development Foundation. To all -- welcome, being here with you is an honor.

We are here because we care about a very special university. At some point in time, and for a variety of reasons, we each made a decision to join this academic community to meet our individual goals. Collectively, we have become a powerful group and we routinely accomplish remarkable things. We are very good at doing what our mission statement calls for us to do; which is to address the needs and aspirations of people in a changing world. Increasingly the story of our growth is being reported to worldwide audiences. USA Today wrote:

"Fargo has blossomed into a hip, college town enjoying the fruits of prosperity. North Dakota State University is the economic engine in the middle of it all."¹

Proponents of higher education have long said that higher education is an investment in the future and, indeed, it is a powerful investment in many ways. But higher education can be an investment that is difficult to measure. For example, what is the value of giving young people the preparation they need to lead productive, satisfying lives? Still, there are aspects of what we do at NDSU that can be measured. Enrollment growth can be measured; our growth is attracting and retaining young people to our state. Research growth can be measured; it is creating jobs and economic opportunity. Program growth can be measured; we have taken our place among our national land-grant peers.

Land-grant universities were created to have a positive impact on the economic well being of citizens, and North Dakota State University is exactly the university North Dakota needs now. As we have transformed, we have created an economic impact of immense proportions. Since 1999, we have leveraged \$45.2 million in new state funding to generate more than a \$1 billion impact on our state's economy. What other public entity has offered such economic expansion?

So, this morning, let's focus on the great things we're doing -- on our main campus and across the state at research and extension centers, in the offices of county agents, at the North Dakota Forest Service, in collaborations with other campuses, and via the Web and other means directly into the homes, offices, businesses, and farms of North Dakota.

Perhaps this reflection can best be conducted within the context of our Campus Themes. These themes serve as daily reminders of our common purpose as members of the North Dakota State University community. As such, they serve both as indicators of our progress and as criteria for new initiatives.

North Dakota State University exists as a human endeavor; a means to accomplish a greater good. Our first campus theme, It's About People, acknowledges the service we do for our fellow citizens, but also emphasizes the institutional commitment to the people of North Dakota State University and our desire to reward those whose efforts are serving the public's interests. I am pleased to note that every year since 1999, we have increased the salary pool above legislatively appropriated levels. For the 2005-06 school year, NDSU is leading all North Dakota University System campuses with the largest average salary increase. It is only right that the people who are making our success possible share the rewards of our institutional progress.

We will continue the \$1,000 Faculty and Staff Development Grant Program. Last year, 858 people participated in this opportunity. Through this program, we have greatly increased NDSU's visibility in national organizations, while offering individuals an opportunity to refresh skills and recharge through interaction with national peers. We are also pleased that the North Dakota legislature has continued to fully fund family health insurance -- an increasingly valuable benefit for employees and their families.

I am gratified that in the 2005 Higher Education Research Institute Faculty Survey, 76 percent of NDSU faculty reported overall satisfaction with their jobs, a ranking higher than faculty at our peer institutions.

The pool of applicants for openings at NDSU has grown. The salaries and benefits we offer are certainly a factor but, to a growing extent, our success and growth makes us an employer of choice for people looking for an exciting place to build a career.

As our campus community grows, we continue to add new faculty and staff. For example, in June we recruited for 47 positions. Most of these positions were new employment opportunities. Through our growth, we are taking a major role in helping to grow North Dakota. This is the growth our state's leadership hoped to achieve when they instituted the Roundtable on Higher Education with its greater flexibility for universities and colleges.

I want to recognize the efforts of everyone associated with the implementation of the new Connect ND software. This has been a major undertaking. As offices continued the daily activities of a university in transformation, we also changed the way we performed our business routines. We are very proud of the way we have risen to the occasion as the transition continues, and we appreciate the personal sacrifices of lost evenings and weekends that have been made.

As our campus grows, it is important to be mindful of how we go about being the university of our aspirations. The NDSU Strategic Plan for Diversity is the result of three years of work by the campus Diversity Council and it serves as a guide for how we can celebrate human differences as we go about our daily activities. I consider the plan to be essential reading within NDSU because nearly every unit has specific action steps identified and every individual has a role to play in these efforts.

There are many reasons this effort is important. First, as educators, we fail our students if we do not prepare them to live and work in a more diverse world. Next, we limit ourselves if we limit our contact with people whose differences can enrich our lives and work. And finally, it's the right thing to do. Despite differences, the common factor for all is our shared humanity.

I ask everyone to read the Strategic Plan for Diversity and talk about what it means for you individually and as a member of your department or group.

Our second campus theme, Students are Paramount, pulls our focus to the core educational mission of North Dakota State University. As a community of scholars, we are here to learn, discover, and share what we know.

In recent years, NDSU has seen tremendous growth in the size of our student body, expanding from some 97-hundred students just six years ago to our goal of more than 12,000 students. This is the sixth year we've set a record enrollment. Our class of 2,023 new freshmen students is the largest in the state. Later, I will talk about some of the positive impacts our enrollment growth is having on the state's economy, but for now, let's make some qualitative observations about this institutional transformation.

NDSU's growth is grounded in the strength of our existing programs and fueled by the strategic addition of new programs. Undergraduate education remains the foundation of our educational offerings and we celebrate these outstanding students. And now, we offer students more opportunity to stay in state after earning a bachelor's degree. Our graduate student ranks are at a record level of more than 1,600 students. Both undergraduate and graduate enrollment will climb through the addition of new and innovative programs such as our twinning agreement with India's Ansal Institute of Technology. Next year, it will bring 123 additional students to our campus. As the Plains states struggle with out-migration, our new programs are bringing new people to North Dakota. Initially, this is for an education. But for many graduates, it means starting careers in a state with so much to offer.

NDSU students are active partners in our institutional transformation. Walk around our campus and you will see the benefits of this partnership. Students have taken the lead in campus beautification projects. Students have taken the lead in building new and better facilities for our growing student body, including technology infrastructure and expansions of the Wellness Center and the Memorial Union. And student representatives are active in all major campus committees. When Hurricane Katrina devastated thousands of square miles of our nation and sent countless of our fellow citizens into uncertain circumstances, our students responded within days with the first of many successful fundraising efforts.

Students are critical to our university success and our challenge is to maintain NDSU's educational value today and into the future. One indicator of this value can be found in job placements following graduation. Preliminary data from our annual employment survey of graduates offers good news. Starting salaries are up 18 percent for December 2004 and May 2005 graduates from the previous year, and enrollment in post baccalaureate and professional schools at NDSU is up more than 20 percent from the previous year. The success of North Dakota State University is rightfully measured in the success of our students and graduates.

I spoke earlier of how our programs are retaining students and recruiting new students from around the nation and world. Programs is our third campus theme and it prompts us to reflect on what it is we offer students and citizens across the state. In these past few years, we have successfully launched many new undergraduate and graduate programs. All of these new programs are meeting an educational need, as demonstrated by the number of enrolled students. Psychology and Communication were among our first new doctoral programs and together they have now awarded eight doctoral degrees. Total doctoral enrollment has risen from about 150 to about 500 students.

In addition to adding programs, we have reinforced the integrity of NDSU's academic offerings by emphasizing our faculty's expertise in research and creative activities while maintaining our emphasis on teaching and learning. We do this through many means, ranging from valuing the basic interaction between faculty member and student, to high tech means to prompt learning in new ways, such as the Blackboard learning management system. We have more than 1,200 courses using Blackboard this semester and in September, Blackboard web pages were accessed six million times. In addition, seminars organized by the Provost's office share information on new teaching methods and are well-attended.

The NDSU Extension Service's 4-H youth development program continues to meet our young people's needs by adding programs such as outdoor skills, technology and character education to our offerings. With 40 percent of North Dakota's youth involved in 4-H activities, North Dakota's program is one of the largest in the nation. Add together all face-to-face contacts in all Extension programs for the year, and more than 600,000 interactions with North Dakota citizens are totaled. This is an outstanding level of statewide service.

NDSU's fourth campus theme, Leveraging Support, is a mark of our commitment to being a good investment for the citizens of North Dakota.

True to our land-grant mission, NDSU programs are offered across the state. Fusarium head blight -- or scab -- cost North Dakota and Minnesota wheat producers more than \$1.2 billion from 1995 through 2004. Alsen, a 2000 NDSU hard red spring wheat release occupied about 30 percent of the state's spring wheat acreage. The administrator of the North Dakota Wheat Commission recently said, "Alsen saved the North Dakota wheat industry."

Since 2004, NDSU has released two more varieties with Type II scab resistance, Steele-ND and Glenn. A conservative estimate is that these two newest varieties will add an additional \$30 million a year to the \$100 million annual economic impact of Alsen.

Higher education is a major component of North Dakota's budget. Each legislative session, our state's elected leaders work hard to strike a balance between financial demand and the financial reality of the state budget. What is becoming increasingly apparent now, is that investment in North Dakota State University offers a sizeable and measurable return.

Again this year, Larry Leistritz and his team have sought to measure the economic impact of our university growth and, again, NDSU's growth is shown to be a major contributor to the state's economy.² The direct economic impacts of NDSU growth in Fiscal Year 2000 was about \$14 million but by Fiscal Year 2005 grew to more than \$105 million.

It is important to acknowledge the role of our state's elected leadership in our institutional growth. The congressional delegation has opened doors so that our faculty and researchers have been able to enter into new levels of partnership with federal granting agencies. The Centers of Excellence program is an exciting means for this university to expand our contributions in jobs creation and economic growth. The legislature has given us needed flexibility and resources. I also recognize the people of NDSU who obtained the money for the construction of major projects, including the research buildings in the NDSU Research and Technology Park, NDSU Downtown, the Libraries, the Equine Center, the Graduate Center, Bison Courts, the Horticulture Gardens, The Living Learning Center, Wellness Center, Memorial Union expansion, and the Criminal Justice building. In each of these projects, we added substantially to the state's physical plant inventory without dependence on additional general fund appropriations.

In acknowledging the contributors to our success, I want to say that none of our progress, none of our partnerships would be possible were it not for the members of the State Board of Higher Education. In every way, they have extended us their full support and encouragement.

Over the past five years, the State of North Dakota has increased state appropriated support of NDSU by \$45.2 million. The University has leveraged those state resources by securing \$433 million from other sources. Thus, for every additional dollar of state support, we have obtained roughly \$9.60 of additional funds. In total, the impact of NDSU's growth over the last six years exceeds one billion dollars -- truly we are making a measurable difference.

The people of North Dakota State University have an entrepreneurial energy unleashed by the flexibility we have been granted, and the results can be seen and measured. In the most recent ranking from the National Science Foundation, NDSU has risen to 122nd in the nation in overall research expenditures. This makes us the largest research endeavor in North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, and Idaho. In several NSF sub-categories, we are already among the top 100 research universities in this country.

As further evidence of our service, look to the new business incubator at the Langdon Research and Extension Center. Look to our Research and Technology Park where Phoenix International is our anchor tenant, and new business, new jobs, and new economic opportunity are nurtured. We have added research infrastructure that completes today's research projects and also generates new partnerships, which will translate into new educational and career opportunities for students. We are having a positive economic impact on our state. We are a model of the contemporary land-grant university.

One of our most exciting means of leveraging support is the desire of our alumni and friends to be a part of NDSU's momentum. For some time now, the NDSU Development Foundation has been in the silent phase of the biggest capital campaign in our history. Yesterday, we officially kicked off Momentum: The \$75 Million Dollar Campaign for North Dakota State University. The campaign will provide essential resources for our sustained momentum. The campaign will fuel a wide range of campus advancements, including more than \$30 million for student scholarships. It provides for a \$13 million building for the College of Business. It has a goal of more than \$10 million for new teaching endowments. Momentum seeks \$10 million in contributions to the Annual Fund, which gives the university financial flexibility to put technology in the classroom, purchase laboratory equipment, bring respected lecturers to campus, and assist graduate students in their research. The campaign also seeks to raise \$1.5 million for the NDSU Libraries, \$1.5 million for projects at the Equine Center, and \$8 million for the renovation of Bison Sports Arena.

This campaign will help redefine this university and I want to thank the Development Foundation board members for their vision, energy, confidence, and willingness to make a difference. No president ever had a more supportive university community to work with than I enjoy.

Our final campus theme is Stature. Institutional stature is significant because our understated nature has made it more difficult for the national and international partnerships we need to develop. Institutional stature is significant because potential students and collaborators across the nation and around the world need a clear idea of who we are and all that we have to offer.

So, is our progress being noticed? To be sure, it is, and the visibility is good for all of North Dakota because it offers the world an accurate picture of a successful, vibrant region. The American Enterprise wrote, "...more and more, the country's competitive edge in practical economics this century will come from previously unlikely places like...Fargo." 3

NDSU's institutional stature is also being increased through a very successful transition in intercollegiate athletics to Division I. If it is true that you are known by the company you keep, then we are in very good company, indeed. This year, we are competing against teams from power conferences such as the Big 12, Big 10, PAC 10, ACC and the Southeast Conference. Those teams include Iowa State, Kansas State, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Washington, the University of Alabama, and North Carolina State, to name a few. Most of our teams are now competing regularly with the University of Minnesota and soon we will announce playing the Minnesota Gophers in football for the first time since 1937. We are increasing awareness of our state and representing North Dakota with pride and

competitive excellence. Because of our move to D-I, many North Dakota students enjoy the thrill of competing with the best in Division I across all our athletic programs.

Looking back over the last six years, it is clear that North Dakota State University is experiencing a period of remarkable success. Few universities have experienced our growth in enrollment, research expenditures, program expansion, or growth in campus infrastructure in such a short time. Our faculty, staff and students have seized upon an opportunity to be more and have catapulted this university forward. In addition, few universities have the level of active partnerships that we enjoy.

Some have asked, "how long can this growth be sustained?" I believe our growth will continue. One of the first tasks we undertook when we began our institutional transformation was the addition of new academic programs. In doing so, we hoped to provide more opportunity for our students and offer businesses considering location to the state the inducement of a more highly educated workforce. All of these outcomes have occurred. As we continue to add new programs, we will do so with great care to serve our students with the highest level of quality and to be a valuable asset to our business partners.

In looking back at the goals we set, we may have underestimated our own abilities. We declare what we think are ambitious goals, and then we achieve more. We hit our enrollment goal of 12,000 students ahead of schedule. We hit our research expenditures goal of \$100 million faster than anyone thought possible. When our capital campaign was in the planning stages, we expected to be at about the halfway mark when we made our first public pronouncement. Today, we are at more than 80 percent of our \$75 million goal and there is no doubt that this goal, too, will be exceeded. Last year, I was delighted to report that for every additional dollar of state support NDSU received, we raised seven dollars and 50 cents. This year, that return has risen to nine dollars and 60 cents.

We have succeeded in every one of our campus themes. We have rewarded the people who are moving this campus forward with the largest salary increases in the North Dakota University System. Our students are very much active partners in our growth. We serve our state as our land-grant peers do -- with a full array of programs responsive to societal needs. The programs we have added are meeting student needs and there are more exciting programs to come.

We have the support of our alumni and friends. Gifts and bequests to the NDSU Development Foundation totaled almost \$15 million for the year ending June 30. That's up 50 percent from a year ago. Scholarship support to the university totaled almost \$3 million, up 25 percent from the previous year. And for the first time in its history, the total assets of the NDSU Foundation have exceeded \$100 million.

In addition, we are partners in exciting programs that are expanding our state's economy. Two Fortune 500 companies, John Deere and Ingersoll-Rand, have facilities in our Research and Technology Park. More development is occurring via the Red River Valley Research Corridor and the Centers of Excellence program. Our state's elected leadership look to NDSU as a place of optimism and achievement in the task of building North Dakota's future. A dollar invested here makes a measurable difference.

North Dakota State University and its people are making a measurable difference in the social and economic well being of North Dakotans. We are doing what Justin Morrill envisioned. We continue to be what William Hunter termed a Beacon Across the Prairie. This morning, at the risk of understating our abilities, I say we are the great land-grant university North Dakota needs. And we will continue to serve in ways that would make those who came before us proud.

Thank you for being a part of this academic community, and thank you for being here this morning.

1 Cauchon, D., (2004, Feb. 24). Big cities lure away North Dakota youth. USA Today, pp. 1A & 2A.

2 Leistritz, F. L., Hodur, N.M., and Bangsund, D. A. (2005, Sept. 6). Economic Impact of NDSU Growth, FY 2000 & 2005. North Dakota State University.

3 Kotkin, J., (2005, July/August). The U.S. Brain Belt. The American Enterprise, pp. 22 & 25.