Pre-flight reminder of how we serve

March 25, 2011

Dear Friends,

I have been spending a lot of time “admiring” the interior of airports over the last few weeks – as university business has kept pulling me north and even over to Asia. I often use Ontario Airport, which sports dynamic displays of the work of UC Riverside faculty and thus provides a constant reminder of the many wonderful ways in which we fulfill our land-grant mission.

Another reminder came last week when we officially opened the first medical school building – the UCR School of Medicine Research Building. It serves as recognition of how seriously we take our trust as a land-grant university . . . to serve the people of California and beyond, who have invested in this great institution.

The term “land grant” is about as well understood as the term “provost.” (Friday Letter, January 29, 2010. http://fridayletters.ucr.edu/?p=146). So here is the “Cliff Notes” definition: In 1862 the first Morrill Land-Grant Act handed over federally controlled land to the states to establish land-grant institutions of higher education to teach agriculture and the mechanic arts. This marked the beginning of the era of public higher education in the United States. As the concept developed, land-grant universities were designed to share the fruits of their knowledge with the people of their state. At UC Riverside, this mission is embodied on our campus as, “Living the Promise.”

But back to Ontario Airport and the medical school…

Late Friday afternoon of last week, the greater Riverside community joined Dean Richard Olds M.D. and me to formally open the new medical research building.

The UC Office of the President was represented with its Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and Services John D. Stobo, M.D. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services was represented by Region IX Director Herb K. Schultz, and the Riverside County Board of Supervisors was represented by supervisors John Benoit and Bob Buster. Speaking on behalf of regional physicians was Steven E. Larson, M.D., the CEO of the Riverside Medical Clinic.

This next major chapter in the life history of UCR certainly would not be launching without compelling community interest, support, and advocacy. As I mentioned in my comments last Friday, the only thing amiss was that all members of the community, who have worked steadfastly for many, many years, did not have their turn to say a few words from the dais.

The caliber of attention being given to this event was in recognition of the importance of
establishing the first new public medical school in California in more than 40 years, and also its specialized mission: to educate a diverse workforce of physicians, steeped in a deep understanding and appreciation of preventive medicine, who are destined to live and practice in the communities where they are educated, and to improve health-care for our underserved communities. The first medical class is scheduled to walk through the doors in fall 2012. See video and photos from the event.

http://newsroom.ucr.edu/news_item.html?action=page&id=2582

A few days later, I was back at Ontario Airport . . . still tied to the campus by my cell phone and steady diet of email . . . when one of our UC Riverside displays caught my eye.

It reminded me how consistently and comprehensively we help the people of California live their promise – and in fact, repay their investment in the University of California many times over – through all the economic upheavals, disease and malnutrition, climate change, and dizzying technological revolution. And we do it with the vision and dedication of the researchers and scholars at UC Riverside who are seeking, and finding, solutions to these many challenges.

In just the last few months, we have seen UCR researchers publish significant findings in the development of flood-tolerant and drought-resistant crops. Many of them have forged partnerships with industry to develop biofuels and new materials, advance renewable energy and alternative transportation systems.

Appearing on the airport display was entomologist Tim Paine, who is one of a coterie of specialists at UCR working on new ways to reduce the $3 billion in annual losses that pests inflict on crops and agricultural products in California. Other terminals feature biomedical scientist Iryna Ethell, who is searching for effective therapies for autism spectrum disorders; chemist and environmental engineer Nosang Myung, whose accomplishments include a portable biomedical device that it is hoped will be able to detect and diagnose contagious diseases such as TB and HIV from a single drop of blood; and educator Michael Orosco, who is partnering with local schools to develop new techniques to improve early literacy, address learning disabilities and better support at-risk students before they fall through the cracks. See for yourself at http://promise.ucr.edu and http://issuu.com/ucriverside/docs/livingthepromisereport

My plane finally takes off and I look down at the communities below me… the open space, businesses and residential communities, the schools, parks and governmental entities. For every aspect of Inland Southern California society, I can name dedicated, distinguished, dynamic minds on the UCR campus working on issues of vital importance. I can name scores of talented faculty teaching young minds how to think, how to dream and how to reach beyond what they thought possible.

And when I am participating in those meetings around the state and the globe, and advocating for the University of California, Riverside, I have a very strong sense of the living promise our campus embodies and that I must represent and fight for. A faculty, a student body, a staff, alumni and a group of stalwart friends – all working to live their promise so that the state of California can flourish in the months, years and decades ahead.
Proudly,

Tim

Tim White, Chancellor

Share your thoughts: [http://fridayletters.ucr.edu/leavefeedback](http://fridayletters.ucr.edu/leavefeedback)

**Students reach out to Japan**
Banner signings, homemade bookmarks, performance pieces and creative ways to raise money for Japan are taking shape on the UCR campus and will increase next week as students return from spring break. I am so proud of our students, staff and faculty as they work together on relief efforts.

**Putting his money where his feet are**
Jim Sandoval, vice chancellor of student affairs, is challenging everyone to join him early Saturday, April 2 for the 10th Annual César E. Chávez 5K Run/Walk. The race begins at the UCR bell tower and lasts from 7:30 to 11 a.m. He will donate $10 for the first 100 students who cross the finish line before him. He will also sponsor a breakfast for the department that enters a team and solicits the most money.

**Students cut loose**
If you want to see what student life is like on R'Side for the big celebrations on campus, here is a media gallery with video of the Block Party, the HEAT concert and other student events. These are the kinds of events that help recruit students to the university. Added bonus: It's just fun watching students enjoy themselves at UC Riverside.
[http://rside.ucr.edu/mediagallery/](http://rside.ucr.edu/mediagallery/)

Find out what else is going on at UC Riverside: [http://www.ucr.edu/happenings/](http://www.ucr.edu/happenings/)