

State of the University Address
Delivered by Dr. Karen A. Holbrook
President, The Ohio State University
Thursday, October 14, 2004

Good afternoon. Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you today about Ohio State's impact and to highlight some of the extraordinary successes of the past year and the progress we have made together toward our goals.

Tomorrow I will be traveling to Mount Graham, Arizona, with a delegation of Ohio State students, faculty, administrators, and trustees. There, more than 10,000 feet above the Sonoran Desert, we will be dedicating the world's largest optical telescope, the Large Binocular Telescope or LBT, which will allow researchers to see planets in distant solar systems with 10-fold greater resolution than with the Hubble. Ohio State's Department of Astronomy is a partner with national and international colleagues in its design and construction.

This is an exciting event for Ohio State, and worth celebrating in its own right. But I mention it today because it symbolizes my message about the impact of Ohio State. Think of the LBT as a window on the worlds of opportunity we offer at Ohio State, and the impact our work has on society.

The LBT project is just one example of Ohio State's impact and our progress toward the long-term goals outlined in the Academic Plan and the short-term priorities set forth in the Leadership Agenda.

Our overarching goal, as you know, is to be one of the world's leading public research universities. And we are on track. Let me share with you some data about our position and our people.

Ohio State was again ranked 22nd among public universities by the 2005 *U.S. News & World Report* based on the undergraduate experience. *U.S. News* also ranked seven professional programs (audiology, business, education, engineering, health sciences administration, nursing, and speech pathology) in the top 25 graduate programs and six of our Ph.D. programs (chemistry, history, physics, political science, psychology, and sociology) among the top Ph.D. programs. The Fisher College of Business is one of only 10 business schools with both undergraduate and M.B.A. programs ranked in the top 20.

Although the rankings by *U.S. News* are perhaps best known, we pay attention to a variety of other rankings of our programs. For example:

- The National Science Foundation ranks universities by the total amount of research funding. Ohio State ranked 12th last year among public universities in all funding and sixth in corporate support.
- The London School of Economics published a study of faculty scholarly productivity in political science and ranked our department as fourth in the world.

- The Association of Research Libraries ranks our library as 12th among public universities in the country.
- Ohio State ranks 10th in the nation among public universities in total private support.
- Our annual giving this year was a record \$203 million donated or pledged by a record number of 104,446 donors, and your generosity brought our cumulative Campus Campaign sum over the top of \$100 million.

Time allows me to mention only a few of the vast number of accolades and recognition of our faculty.

- Three faculty members were elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences: Drs. Marilyn Brewer, Malcolm Chisholm, and Brian Joseph.
- Three faculty members earned Guggenheim fellowships: Drs. Fritz Graf, Andrew Hudgins, and J. Marshall Unger.
- Twelve faculty members were named Fulbright Scholars, 15 were recognized as fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences (the most of any university in the country), and 145 of our physicians from the College of Medicine and Public Health were identified among the best doctors in America.

Dr. David Denlinger, chair of the Department of Entomology, was elected to the National Academy of Sciences, and Dr. Bill Mitsch, professor of natural resources and environmental science and director of Ohio State's Olentangy River Wetland Research Park, received the Stockholm Water Prize, presented by the King and Queen of Sweden. Dr. Clara Bloomfield, cancer researcher in the College of Medicine and Public Health and James Cancer Hospital and first Ohio State Cancer Scholar, received awards from the American Cancer Society and the American Association for Cancer Research.

As you can see, it is critical that we work hard to retain our current faculty and that we recruit new faculty who are our top choices when retirements occur. Retention and recruitment both depend upon top students to work with, a good research environment and quality facilities, competitive salaries and favorable benefits, and opportunities for advancement.

Salaries for faculty and staff must be competitive, and we will retain our emphasis on improving compensation levels. This past summer our trustees affirmed the administration's decision to include sponsored dependents in our benefits package and in response to the results of the Faculty Work/Life survey, the Faculty Career Enhancement Committee, chaired by Dr. Chris Zacher, was created to recommend positive and practical ways to support the professional development of women and minority faculty members, and associate professors, especially. A new parental leave program provides new parents with paid time off after the birth or adoption of a child.

Two hundred and thirteen new faculty members were successfully recruited across all colleges, mostly at the assistant professor level. A few senior-level faculty joined us who bring world acclaimed research programs in specific areas of institutional growth and investment.

Dr. Carlo Croce, a member of the National Academy of Science, will play an integral role in the creation of a new Institute of Genetics at the James Cancer Hospital and chair the Department of

Molecular Virology, Immunology, and Medical Genetics. We welcomed four new eminent scholars: Dr. Harvey Graff, the Ohio Eminent Scholar in Literacy Studies and professor in English and History; Dr. Imrich Chlamtac, an expert in network and communications in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering/Electrical and Computer Engineering; Dr. Michael Paulaitis, an eminent scholar in nanotechnology who joins Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering; and Dr. Richard P. Dick in Crop and Soil Science who is an eminent scholar in the microbiology and biochemistry of soil.

Top-notch faculty attract increasingly stronger students to Ohio State and for the 10th consecutive year, our incoming freshman class is the best prepared in our history. Thirty-five percent of them placed in the top 10% of their high school classes, and 72% ranked in the top 25. About half of our 5,900 new students received awards or recognition for leadership or other special academic or athletic talent. The retention rate of the freshman class is 88%, up from 78% just 10 years ago. The average ACT score is now 25.6 and the diversity of our student body continues to hold steady. A goal of the 2008 Enrollment Management Plan is to recruit an entering class with a median ACT score of 26 by 2006 and 27 by 2008. We are on track.

As important as it is to recruit well-qualified undergraduate students, it is their success during their years here and after graduation that tells the story of their educational experiences. This spring about one-third more students received national scholarships, fellowships, and awards over the previous year. Lindsey Long, in German, was designated a Fulbright Scholar. We also recognized five Fulbright Grant recipients and three Fulbright alternates, three Goldwater Scholars and a Goldwater Honorable Mention, a Mellon Fellow, nine National Science Foundation Fellows, and 11 NSF Honorable Mentions. Tracking our graduates shows they go on to top graduate and professional schools—including Ohio State—and to career positions of their choice. Many remain in Ohio but others leave for all parts of the nation and the world. For example, Andrea Shemberg, a 1997 graduate of the Moritz College of Law who founded the Pro Bono Research Group as a student, has since founded a legal clinic for the homeless in Bologna, Italy, where she lives.

When I was introduced as president in 2002, I indicated that during my tenure at Ohio State I would be committed to:

- 1) enhancing the undergraduate experience that capitalizes on the richness of the research environment;
- 2) fostering multi-disciplinary programs, including and extending beyond science;
- 3) assuring the faculty award structure is aligned with institutional goals and values;
- 4) broadening the pipeline to capture both the best and the underserved students;
- 5) emphasizing the continuity of education over the lifetime; and
- 6) encouraging more of our resources to be self-earned.

These goals are now embodied in the Leadership Agenda that was crafted over a year ago to “provide specific priorities under the Academic Plan for action and resource allocation guided by administrative and faculty, staff, and student leadership.”

The three specific goals are to:

- Provide distinctive educational experiences and opportunities for our students.
- Invest in cutting-edge interdisciplinary research for short- and long-term societal benefits.
- Develop a program of 21st-century outreach and engagement that connects areas of academic excellence with societal needs.

Meeting these goals will be facilitated by a positive campus environment that supports creativity, inclusion, communication, integrity, and respect—an environment in which excellence and innovation can flourish.

I will address our successes within the framework of these goals.

DISTINCTIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS

Let's look first at what has been accomplished to promote distinctive educational experiences for undergraduate students—and let me add that the undergraduate students themselves have been articulate about their own objectives to seek a quality education and educational environment at Ohio State and have offered direction. Aftab Pureval, our current USG president, continues to advocate USG's agenda, which emphasizes greater student-faculty interaction, improvements to the honors program, and reforms of the General Education Curriculum. Aftab has also expressed students' concerns about rising tuition and is committed to and has asked us to continue to increase financial aid for minority and low-income students.

Research opportunities bring students and faculty together. The 2003 Leadership Agenda recommended that research opportunities for undergraduates be available in every discipline. Last year, every college that teaches undergraduate students offered research experiences ranging from funded, summer- or quarter-long experiences, assistantships, or internships to workshops on proposal-writing, research elective courses, honors projects, and college-wide research forums. More than 500 psychology majors and 200 biological sciences majors work with faculty and graduate students to learn how to do research and gain laboratory and other investigative skills and methods of analysis—to experience a dimension of their discipline that extends well beyond the classroom.

Nearly 300 freshmen participated in the Denman Undergraduate Research Forum last spring and several of the award winners also displayed their posters at the Statehouse and discussed their work with legislators from their districts. The Denman Forum provides students like Tiffany Reinemann with an opportunity to show off the sophisticated research undergraduate students produce at Ohio State. Tiffany won first place in the Health Professions category for her honors research on the effect of blackberries on esophageal cancer. The Forum prepared her to present her research at the 95th annual meeting of the American Association for Cancer Research in March in Orlando, an honor generally reserved for graduate students and faculty.

The Ohio State University's electric land speed vehicle, the Buckeye Bullet, was designed, built, and maintained by students at Ohio State using world-class engineering. Just yesterday at the Bonneville Salt Flats the Buckeye Bullet officially set the new international land speed record for electric cars, with an average speed of almost 272 miles per hour.*

Two years ago, I suggested Freshman Seminars as a way to connect faculty with small groups of students in informal settings where free-flowing discussion could occur to broaden and intensify the student's academic experience. Instituted last year through the Arts and Sciences, students explored topics such as "A Literary Approach to Understanding Creativity in Mathematics" and "Learning and the Architecture of the Mind." Ultimately, the goal is for one-third of the freshmen to engage in these exchanges.

The Honors Program has undergone internal and external review and an implementation plan is being developed. The Honors and Scholars Collegium is preparing our top undergraduate students to compete for the most prestigious post-baccalaureate fellowships and graduate and professional programs.

Ohio State, like the world's other leading universities, is internationally oriented in all of its activities. Sixteen percent of our undergraduates participate in an international experience through more semester- or quarter-long programs, or through a course that includes a few weeks abroad at the end of the quarter. The Southern Africa Study Program, for example, is an extension of an interdisciplinary course offered by the Department of African American and African Studies. During the classroom experience, students are introduced to the cultural, social, and historical themes of the region. They then travel to Southern Africa to visit sites they have studied. Experiences like these are life-changing.

Students cite their co-curricular activities as some of the most important experiences at Ohio State to prepare them for life beyond their disciplines. Internships and co-op experiences are elected by 83% of our business students, 87% of the undergraduate engineers, and 2,300 Arts and Sciences students. The new activity fee enhanced support of the more than 750 student activities that provide opportunities to engage in scholarship, leadership, service, and citizenship.

Our students embrace Ohio State's motto "Education for Citizenship." More than 200 student volunteers built a Habitat for Humanity house on the lawn of the Ohio Union. The completed house was moved to the Weinland Park neighborhood near campus. Last spring, 1,700 students participated in the "Rock the Block" community service event, and each fall Ohio State students participate in the national "Make a Difference Day." During Welcome Week, more than 25% of our incoming students took part in "Community Commitment"—starting their college experience with a service project. Students are clearly interested in the world around them, especially this election year. Campus organizations prepared "Get Out the Vote" information, set up kiosks and voter registration booths across campus, and developed a voter registration web site.

Our students read and tutor in elementary and middle schools, lead high school students in building and competing robots, conduct blood drives, and work at food banks, soup kitchens, animal shelters, and elsewhere, taking seriously the service goals of their organizations.

Student safety on and off campus is a serious concern for all of us—and one of Aftab Pureval's highest priorities. Student-led activities promoted neighborhood clean-up and better lighting and enhanced awareness of self-protection. Mayor Coleman and I announced earlier this month an increase in police presence in the University District and construction of a much-needed

neighborhood Policing Center. Next fall, the South Campus Gateway Project will restore the “front door” to the university with new retail, entertainment, office, and living space, revitalizing a distressed neighborhood.

Our student athletes make us proud with their successes in the classroom and in competition. For the second year in a row we ranked #1 in Academic All Big Ten honorees, and 48% of our student athletes were recognized last spring with a 3.0 or better. Our athletes are engaged in campus leadership, outreach to youngsters in the community, tutoring, and fund-raising events for charities. Twelve current or former Ohio State student-athletes and coaches took part in the 2004 Olympic Summer Games. Over time, a total of 107 Buckeyes have competed in the Olympics, winning a collective 64 medals.

Taking some bold and much needed action, Provost Snyder is assembling a faculty committee to evaluate and improve the undergraduate curriculum to better reflect contemporary programs and university priorities and to revisit the General Education Curriculum as well as the total number of hours required for graduation.

I am pleased to tell you that the Leadership Agenda was expanded this year to include goals related to graduate and professional students, who were not adequately considered in the Academic Plan and are absolutely critical to the successes of a quality research university.

We are providing new and innovative programs for graduate and professional students, including a new Ph.D. program in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences and a doctorate in Audiology. We have established a new interdisciplinary master’s program in Business Logistics and Engineering. A first-ever joint Ph.D. program among three universities in plant molecular biotechnology is under consideration by Ohio State, Rutgers University, and the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil.

The master’s degree in the Study of Law is being offered for the first time this fall to students in non-law disciplines who wish to acquire a background in legal principles and an understanding of our legal system, and the Graduate School, as part of the Leadership Agenda, is facilitating the development of 20 new graduate minors and interdisciplinary specializations for graduate and professional students.

We are improving the benefits we provide our graduate associates to ensure that we attract the best graduate students. The minimum stipend was increased by \$100 per month and the university subsidy to GA health care coverage, at 42% last year, increased to 64% this year. It will climb to 75% next year. And, for the first time, we are subsidizing health care coverage for GA dependents.

CUTTING-EDGE INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH FOR SHORT- AND LONG-TERM SOCIETAL BENEFITS

Nothing distinguishes Ohio State nor has a greater impact on education more than the scope and quality of our research programs. The presence of world-class scholars and facilities offers our students unique experiences and opportunities, connects the university broadly throughout the world, and supports economic development in Ohio and the quality of life for all. As I said in my

investiture speech, research makes teaching and learning richer and broader, more practical, and more profound. Research is a dynamic part of a complete academic program, linking students and faculty with other research universities, industry and government, the public schools and social service organizations, and with special partners like Battelle Memorial Institute.

One measure of our success in research is the level of externally sponsored research awards, which reached an all-time high this past fiscal year of more than \$528 million. Third Frontier awards from the state contributed \$40 million. And since the end of the fiscal year, new major grants are continuing to be funded. A Nanoscience and Engineering Center was awarded to Dr. Jim Lee. Ohio State is the lead institution with our partners at UC Berkeley, Johns Hopkins, Purdue, Boston University, Florida A&M, and the University of Akron. Dr. David Culver in Biological Sciences will use an NSF award to investigate the human effects on the health of Lake Erie, and Dr. John Francis Holtzhauser will use new CDC funding to train public health professionals to prepare for and respond to disasters and terrorism.

Faculty are working in their disciplines or engaging in often large-scale projects across disciplines, contributing to every possible environment—local and in the state, national and international, and even in outer space—to solve key problems in society and contribute to the quality of life.

Research under way at our Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center makes Ohio a leader in many of the most important challenges facing the agriculture industry today: agrosecurity, food safety, biotechnology, and environmental protection and restoration. OARDC is “a consistent source of new products, processes, and techniques that help make Ohio’s agricultural producers among the most productive in the world.”

Project Cancer, a 10-year initiative to expand the Medical Center’s cancer program and facilities, brings together researchers and clinicians from the James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute and our Comprehensive Cancer Center and 13 of our 18 colleges.

The impact of our research is also international. Music Professor David Frego, an expert on a music-movement therapy technique called Dalcroze Eurythmics, has worked in Bosnia with children suffering from the physical and psychological effects of war and has trained Bosnian teachers to use the technique with other children.

Professors Lonnie Thompson and Ellen Mosley-Thompson and colleagues from our Byrd Polar Research Center are analyzing ice core samples from the world’s largest tropical glacier in Peru in order to understand thousands of years of climate history and predict future global climate trends.

And the impact of our research extends beyond our planet. The Large Binocular Telescope is not our only venture in outer space. Dr. Ron Li, professor of civil and environmental engineering, and his colleagues helped develop the navigation software used on NASA’s Mars rovers during their current Mars missions and they will adapt that software to guide a new rover that NASA will deploy in 2009. And when a NASA spacecraft passes Saturn’s largest moon, Titan, in January, an atmospheric probe using an instrument improved by chemistry professor Dr. Susan Olesik will be launched to collect and analyze samples.

To add investigators who can support the research agenda, the University Senate voted to allow departments to implement guidelines for a research faculty track. A few have done so and the first research faculty were hired this summer.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

Our goal is to establish Ohio State as a 21st-century model for outreach and engagement and to use our 865 outreach activities to connect our academic and research programs with the public. This is our role as a land-grant institution and one we fully embrace.

All academic units and all of our campuses have programs and initiatives that drive the economy, help prepare pre-collegiate students—especially minority students—for college, train teachers, provide health care services to low-income Ohioans, and enhance learning and re-learning for older adults. More than 50 service-learning courses across the colleges fully integrate a community assignment with in-class learning, exposing students to a broader world and the need to address social problems.

Extension, of course, provides enormous value to the citizens of Ohio by linking them to educational opportunities, new technology, and know-how and by offering support services for youth and family, health and safety, and community assistance.

Few areas of contribution match the importance of what we do in our Health Sciences colleges. They provide bilingual neighborhood clinics, non-reimbursed care of patients with financial need, and dental care to the underserved in community-based sites. Free eye exams and glasses are offered to 1,500 Central Ohioans, and nursing students perform physical exams and vision and hearing screenings for Headstart children. More than 1,500 Ohioans with speech, language, voice, and hearing disorders are treated by Ohio State's Speech-Language-Hearing Clinic.

Our professional colleges also offer summer M.D. camps, science camps, and innovative language-oriented preschool for children with language delays and impairments.

Through an interactive environmental education program offered by Ohio State Lima's Education Outreach, students at Lima North Middle School wrestled with the hypothetical question: saving the wolves, hawks, and other wildlife or building a new school. This program offered hands-on interactive learning and introduced students to more than 20 different careers related to environmental sciences.

Through the Wexner Center for the Arts, high school students in Central Ohio benefit from an interdisciplinary Art and Environment course, and a Global Film Links program provides them with the opportunity to study and discuss identity, culture, and perspective as expressed in films from developing nations.

Our outreach and engagement efforts are also integral to assuring Ohio State is an engaged neighbor and partner and a stakeholder in the future of Columbus.

We recently announced a joint project with Battelle and the City of Columbus to access space in the vacated Lazarus department store to create the Columbus Center for the Arts and Sciences focusing in the area of applied environmental sciences and to develop a Center for the Urban Arts in partnership with CCAD and local community arts organizations. Through Scitech, Ohio State's technology park, we are also participating in the formation of TechColumbus, an umbrella organization intended to serve as an entry point for entrepreneurs and businesses interested in starting and locating technology-based organizations in Columbus. These partnerships reflect Ohio State's commitment to the economic revitalization of the downtown area.

And in line with the report of the Governor's Commission on Higher Education and the Economy, recommending broader collaboration among institutions of higher education, we are beginning to develop joint initiatives with our colleagues at the University of Cincinnati and Case in the areas of the urban environment, advanced manufacturing, and in the health sciences.

SUCCESS AT OHIO STATE DEPENDS UPON A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT—PHYSICAL AND CULTURAL

The Academic Plan directs Ohio State to focus on the quality of the physical facilities that support a 21st-century learning environment. More than 250 building projects on our campuses are in various stages. Only 52 of Ohio State's 309 academic buildings are less than 20 years old. More than 85 are older than 50, and 153 buildings are between 30 and 49 years of age. This suggests that many of our buildings do not meet current standards for living, learning, teaching, conducting research, or providing clinical care. To support student learning:

- We will dedicate Knowlton Hall for the School of Architecture this month.
- Historic Page Hall is nearing completion of a total renovation to accommodate the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy and the School of Public Policy and Management.
- Hagerty Hall is undergoing a major transformation to house several language departments, Comparative Studies, and Humanities Information Systems.
- The Peter and Clara Scott Mechanical Engineering educational complex is under construction, and the new Psychology Building will open in 2006.
- \$7.6 million provided from the tuition increase and earmarked by the legislature enriches the technology learning environment through smart classrooms and enhanced cybersecurity, helps faculty use instructional technology, and provides web-based services to students. The Digital Union opened this summer to provide a special environment for students to gain experience with multimedia technology. And WOSU went digital; the TV station is the first in Central Ohio to broadcast multiple digital channels.

To improve student life:

- The Adventure Recreation Center is now open and the new Recreation and Physical Activity Center—the new Larkins—will open spring quarter.
- Last June, the Board of Trustees voted to begin the design and planning phase for a new student union.

To enhance the research environment:

- Physics faculty will move into a new Physics Research Building in November.
- The Biomedical Research Tower will nearly double the amount of biomedical research space when it opens in 2008.

Clinical facilities, including the Richard M. Ross Heart Hospital enhance teaching of professional, graduate, and undergraduate students and offer innovative patient-centric care, and plans are being made to support expansion space for cancer patient care and research.

By next year, the largest academic renovation project ever undertaken on campus will restore and improve the William Oxley Thompson Library. And as you know, even the Oval has undergone a makeover to assure its symbolic and functional beauty will forever be part of what students treasure and remember about Ohio State.

On our regional campuses, the new John Gilbert Reese Center at Newark is an unparalleled state-of-the-art learning and conference center with global teleconferencing capabilities, and plans for the new Warner Library are underway. A Student Service building will be completed on the Marion campus in spring, and a mixed-used administrative and academic Gateway Building will begin construction on the Mansfield campus early spring.

Environment is also about culture and a welcoming climate, and one of Ohio State's goals in the Academic Plan is to promote diversity.

Seventeen women and 14 minority faculty members, five of them female, were recruited into senior-level faculty positions during the 2003-04 academic year. The university also welcomed more than 80 new junior minority faculty this fall, including 48 women.

Black Enterprise Magazine has once again ranked Ohio State among the top 50 best colleges nationally for African American students – and the Fisher College is ranked #1 in black M.B.A. student enrollment by *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*.

Black Issues in Higher Education ranked Ohio State fourth in the total number of Ph.D's awarded to African Americans, and *Hispanic Outlook* ranked Ohio State 17th nationally in the number of doctorates awarded to Hispanics.

One-year retention rates for undergraduate African American students have increased by 15% (to 81%) in the last 10 years—and six-year graduation rates for undergraduate African American students have increased by 5% (to 42%) over the same period.

Ohio State has also been a leader in promoting a culture of good sportsmanship, with the strong support from Athletic Director Andy Geiger, Vice President Bill Hall, Dean David Andrews, and several of our student and alumni groups. We cannot yet declare victory, but the environment on game days has dramatically improved. Ohio State has been recognized for its leadership through awards from the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services and the Harding-Evans

Foundation, and on Monday I will accept an award from the Center for College Health and Safety at the U.S. Department of Education's National Meeting. Dean David Andrews has received a grant to study the impact of a coalition-based approach to reduce high-risk drinking.

CHALLENGES

It is wonderful to talk about Ohio State's many successes, but there are also many challenges ahead. As the Ohio General Assembly begins to prepare for the next biennial budget, the state faces a potentially significant short fall. This will affect all public universities in our state. Therefore, we must continue to be as efficient as possible. Ohio State has an excellent record in controlling costs. We operate with an average of \$828 less per student in resident undergraduate tuition than other public universities in Ohio with competitive admissions. Our non-instructional costs are 29% less than the average of our benchmark institutions. We have refinanced our debt, reduced bank fees through competitive bidding, developed a proactive strategy to reduce energy costs, and contained our health benefit costs. A new procurement policy adopted this fall by the Board of Trustees will result in significant savings. \$1.5 million has already been saved through a new preferred provider contract for computers and a projected \$26-\$32 million will be saved over the next two fiscal years.

We must also continue to rely on other revenue sources beyond the state. In fact, already more than 84% of Ohio State's total operating revenues come from sources other than the state.

Affordability continues to present a major challenge. The recent national trend in tuition increases cannot and must not continue. The perception and the reality of the cost of a public college education mean that we must keep increasing financial aid so that no qualified student is unable to attend Ohio State for financial reasons. We increased student financial aid by over \$20 million over the last two years. In fact, university-funded financial aid is one of the fastest-growing parts of our budget. Need-based financial aid will continue to be one of our highest priorities.

We must continue to recruit and retain the very best faculty, staff, and students if Ohio State is to retain the momentum of the past few years.

And we must always demonstrate that Ohio State is worthy of the generous support from our alumni and friends.

We remain committed to the Academic Plan and our Leadership Agenda, but to reach our goals, we need to look further out, being mindful of the rapidity of change, the competitive environment, and other variables that could impede our success. To ensure that our Academic Plan remains relevant, we are working on a five-year forecast of trends relating to students, resources, programs, and partnerships.

SUMMARY/CLOSE

Our three-part mission at Ohio State is to educate young men and women for successful careers and rewarding lives, to benefit society through research, and to have a positive impact on our community.

As we gather here at the beginning of this academic year, we can be proud that Ohio State is having a greater impact than ever before. Our academic quality, our student retention, our research funding, our donations, and our outreach activities are all up.

Projects like the Large Binocular Telescope speak to our impact, to our commitment to world-class research that benefits society, and to our capacity to provide an inspiring academic experience for our students. We continue, literally and figuratively, to reach for the stars.

Thank you for the work you do to help make Ohio State a university of distinction and impact. I look forward to working with all of you as we pursue our agenda of excellence. Ohio State continues to meet the challenge of the Kellogg Commission: We are “good enough to lead, strong enough to change, and competent enough to be trusted with the nation’s future.”

Thank you.

*Since the president's speech, the Buckeye Bullet also broke the national land speed record, with a speed of 315 mph. The international and national speed records have different criteria for racing and must be established separately.