

It is another great day to be at UW-Parkside!

Happy anniversary!

Today we celebrate our 45th year of providing quality higher education. In four-and-a-half decades, we have educated more than 21,000 graduates, developed exceptional scholars, provided strong talent for community needs, hosted hundreds of thousands of visitors, launched new discoveries, built relationships, shared stories of success, and created many, many memories.

Upon opening this campus, our first Chancellor, Dr. Irvin Wyllie stated, “The society that builds a new university assesses the future optimistically. It bets that the future will be better than the past and that the *university* will help make it better.”

Chancellor Wyllie and our founders dreamed of a university where tens of thousands of people would come to *enrich their minds, brighten their futures and change their lives.*

When we think of those that made UW-Parkside a reality, we often think of the amazing first faculty and inspired community leaders. But let us not forget those first excited students, many of whom were able to attend college simply because UW-Parkside was established. Also, it took many people and talents to carve this institution out of the Wisconsin countryside -- the craftspeople, the laborers and the artisans. And in at least one instance, a first student was also on the construction crew that helped build the very university he would attend. Now, that is dedication to the cause of higher education in southeastern Wisconsin.

Allow me to introduce George Becker. George is a rather special alumnus of UW-Parkside, and brother of our colleague Roxanne Kriederman. After his service in the Air Force, George was working construction around our region and was part of the crew for the new university in Kenosha. George was already married and a father. He decided to enroll in classes, was one of our first “nontraditional” students, and played on the first basketball team.

George is also our first alumnus.

At the very first commencement ceremony in 1970, George was the third person on the list of graduates that day. For whatever reason, the first two people were unable to attend. When it came time to walk across the stage in the Greenquist corridor, George Becker became the first person to receive a degree from the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

Now, let me introduce Charley Becker. Charley will begin her studies at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside this fall as one of the first students in the new Educator Development Program. You will be interested to know that Charley is the granddaughter of George Becker and grandniece of Roxanne.

Yes, the legacy of our student-success is rich. We truly are transforming generations of lives. Welcome back George and thanks for supporting UW-Parkside. Welcome to campus Charley! You have the support of everyone in this room to help you make the most of your time with us!

This is an example of how we are reaching the level of impact the founders’ envisioned as thousands of people across our region are *enriching their minds, creating bright futures and changing their lives at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.*

Ladies and gentlemen, we are the stewards of a great vision. I do believe that the University of Wisconsin-Parkside makes our future and the future of many others better. We have so much to be proud of, especially our more than 21,000 alumni and what they mean to our communities.

Now it's time to set our sights on new futures as the 2013-14 academic year begins and we welcome Charley and hundreds of new and returning UW-Parkside students to campus. With our help, these students will be the next generation of leaders in our communities.

I have been thinking a great deal about our role as stewards of this great legacy in higher education and I am excited about where we are today but more importantly, where we are going, together. It is clear to many; we are at a critical moment in the history of higher education, the history of this community and the history of the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. This still-new century is teeming with great potential. Beginning today, it is up to us to define the next 45 years for our university. How will we ensure the vision of enriching minds, brightening futures, and changing lives? How will we make the future better than the past? How will we build upon what works and improve the rest?

Today, I offer five pillars of excellence that we -- as a campus community -- can share in advancing our generation's contributions to higher education in southeastern Wisconsin.

**Academic Excellence and Quality** is the central pillar, it defines our main reason for being a University and demonstrates our focus on delivering our educational mission. We support this pillar through the implementation of our academic plan, the success of our educational collaborations across campus and with partner institutions, alignment of academic programs with regional needs, accreditation of academic programs, and the quality of our graduates.

**Student-Success** -- this pillar embodies our most important stakeholder, our students and soon to be graduates. Student Success is supported through enrollment growth, the implementation of our Strategic Enrollment Management plan; increased participation in high impact learning practices; and successful outcomes from Graduate Parkside, the PACE program, the Provost's Retention Task Force and Faculty Learning Community for Student Retention.

**The Partnerships and Pathways pillar** illuminates the strength of our commitment to the communities we serve. We are a stronger university as a result of our partnerships. Our goal is to continually build high-quality and sustainable partnerships that contribute to the excellent educational experiences of our students.

The **Stewardship and Operational Excellence** pillar reminds us that universities are not buildings or books or classrooms alone. At their essence, universities are people pursuing a common vision and mission. Our shared focus on stewardship and operational excellence is a way to rally around this sense of connection and includes our campus working within strategic and measurable goals and holding each other accountable to meet those goals. It demonstrates our ability to create and own our various roles in well-designed plans, policies and practices. This pillar exemplifies our focus on continuous improvement and our shared commitment to use our human, financial, physical, and capital resources to full capacity in alignment with our mission.

Our fifth pillar may be the most interesting of the group ... **Telling our Story**. It represents not only the great stories we have to tell, but the importance of sharing those stories with a broader community and with one another. In the age of rapid and expansive communication we must engage in rich and compelling storytelling with our stakeholders.

These pillars of excellence will guide our work and will support us as we live the UW-Parkside experience in all that we do.

Earlier this summer I asked the members of the Chancellor's Cabinet and Provost Leadership Group to provide highlights of initiatives in their respective areas -- and they delivered! I compiled over a dozen pages of examples of excellence but, in the interest of time, I will share just a few. My goal is to illustrate how your work aligns with our pillars of excellence and why I continue to be proud of what you do.

First, I am especially proud of the outcomes achieved from the higher learning commission self-study and peer review process. Please recognize the tremendous success of our collective efforts to:

- Demonstrate and advance campus engagement around shared goals and priorities
- Complete an in-depth review and analysis of what we do well and what we need to improve
- Adopt a campus-wide focus on student learning through shared-learning goals
- Create and advance a culture of integrated planning and continuous improvement

And, we now share future directions that will guide the integration of strategic planning, academic planning, and master planning

Last week, we submitted the final paperwork to the HLC Institutional Actions Committee for review early in the fall. You will be the first to know once we receive final approval for accreditation and move into HLC's open pathway. Congratulations to all for your engagement with our reaffirmation of accreditation.

The successful implementation of our Academic Plan, *Aiming High and Making Excellence Inclusive*, is evident from the creation of a new academic structure, new advisory boards, new programs and articulations, and through innovative pedagogy. Within each of our four colleges -- doesn't that sound nice -- "four colleges" -- and across our campus we are creating opportunities to better serve students and meet the talent needs of the region as our faculty develops new curricula. Congratulations to our colleagues in the College of Social Sciences and Professional Studies and the Institute for Professional Educator Development for receiving approval from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to enroll students into our new Educator Development Program.

In the College of Business, Economics and Computing, we have an accounting major, and new certificates in APP development and cyber security. In the College of Natural and Health Sciences, the new program in environmental studies launched and Dean Otu signed a new articulation agreement with Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science for the Doctor of Pharmacy program.

In embracing the concepts outlined in our academic plan, we understand there are new opportunities to be explored in addressing the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century student. Members of our faculty understand their knowledge and expertise is needed in ensuring new delivery methods are properly aligned with strong pedagogy. The university thanks the 17 faculty members who invested time, energy and deep thought in our rigorous Online Summer Workshop. To date, more than 39 faculty have participated in the workshop and we now offer over 200 courses on-line.

A special thank you is in order to our colleagues Megan Mullen, Jim Robinson, and Dennis Rome for their expertise and leadership with the workshop. Suresh Chalasani and Megan Mullen, along with a group of interdisciplinary faculty have been meeting regularly to explore how the UW Flex Option or competency-based learning will work for UW-Parkside. We agreed to start small and focus on delivering existing certificate programs using competencies. Provost Ebeid is finalizing an MOU with UW Extension Provost Aaron Brower for UW-Parkside to design the competencies and assessments for existing certificate programs in sales, project management, professional writing, and global skills. Suresh and Megan will be working with the deans, faculty, and governance throughout the fall to monitor progress and determine next steps.

Innovative teaching and methods, when in the hands of our expert faculty, do, and will continue to, make an impact. Rich Karwatka and colleagues in Learning Assistance introduced competency-based learning in our developmental math courses in the fall and spring. Using this new learning approach and supplemental instruction the success rate of students grew from 53% to 67.8%. Rich notes, “Our new approach markedly increased both the rigor of the course material and the achievement level required of students to be certified proficient.” These students are now ready to enroll in MATH 102 or MATH 111.

Each pillar stands as an important area of focus and measurement. However, if we needed to rest our efforts on a single area ... student success is certainly key. In this way, we have committed ourselves to increased opportunities and participation in High Impact Learning Practices. Based on your reports of student engagement in the spring and summer we are striving for excellence and more great things are on the horizon.

UW-Parkside was well-represented at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research at UW-La Crosse in the spring with 12 students and 6 faculty members. For the second year in a row, two of our students completed summer research assistantships with alumnus, Dr. Jeffrey Medin, at the University of Toronto; and computer science students participated in a WiscAMP grant project related to mobile devices and crowd sourcing.

You may have noticed a fair amount of media attention regarding five pre-health students who participated in the UW School of Medicine and Public Health RUSCH program for students ultimately interested in serving underrepresented urban and rural areas of Wisconsin as physicians.

Fourteen students comprise the first graduating class in the 3+1+1 agreement with our partner universities in China - BTBU and BISTU.

Please join me in recognizing our colleagues in Enrollment Services, Graduate Parkside, and Residence Life for their work to enroll, advise, register, and guide our fall class. Early indicators show positive trends in many enrollment metrics compared to this same time last year. Your perseverance to focus on enrollment growth and student success is evident.

The nature of our comprehensive university is our deep connection to our community. It is our responsibility to engage in robust relationships and lend our unique talents and resources to make our communities strong. The pillar of partnerships and pathways reflects this unique role as well as that of making access to high quality public education a priority.

It is always a pleasure to showcase all that we do and have at UW-Parkside, including wonderful students, faculty, and staff as well as tremendous educational assets and facilities. Throughout the summer, I hosted a number of business partners and community leaders for campus tours and conversations about partnerships. They said, “The visit was delightful, the campus beautiful, you and your team most engaging.” And twice I heard, “I am blown away with the campus and the dedication your team has for your students.” Wow, it does not get any better than that!

In the fall, the CBEC, CNHS, and CAH plan to sign new articulation agreements with Gateway Technical College for high demand programs. All of the deans continue conversations with our regional technical colleges, the College of Lake County, UW-Waukesha, and UW-Milwaukee to develop curricular pathways.

We not only have educational partners in our region, we have partners around the world who host our students and faculty. We will continue to cultivate international relationships and strive to expose our students to all the world has to offer.

In June, I had the honor of traveling to Italy with Italian Senator Ron Turano, UW Board of Regents President and UW-Parkside alumnus Mike Falbo, and Professors Carmel Ruffolo and Abey Kuruvilla. We visited Rome, the Italian Senate, Cozenza, and celebrated our 10 year partnership with the University of Calabria. One of the highlights of this trip was spending the day learning and exploring with 14 students who participated in the course, *Doing Business in Italy*, led by Abey Kuruvilla. I look forward to sharing my stories, experiences, and photos with you this year.

One of our key measures of success for the pillar of partnerships and pathways will be the completion of the process to be reclassified as an engaged campus by the Carnegie Foundation. We have had this prestigious designation since 2006 and continued success will be dependent on demonstrating how campus engagement has deepened and become more pervasive. Carnegie defines “community engagement as the partnership of college and university knowledge and resources with those of the public and private sectors to enrich scholarship, research, and creative activity; ... enhance curriculum, teaching and learning; ... prepare educated, engaged citizens; ... strengthen democratic values and civic responsibility; ... address critical societal issues; ... and contribute to the public good.” Thank you in advance for your contributions to our Carnegie application and thank you to Jane Schaefer and colleagues in the CCP for their leadership in preparing our application.

In 45 years, many forces, internal and external, have acted upon the on-going ability for the stewards to advance the mission and vision of the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. It is obvious that those who went before us in service to the university persevered. To quote a fellow chancellor, “We are the people we have been waiting for.” I’ll take it one step further: We are the people that have accepted this moment and relish our role as stewards of a great university in service to an important community of learners. Yes, expectations are high, and budgets are tight but we will persevere and address the forces.

As stewards we are called to take individual responsibility to create linkages and relationships with others to support seamless service to one another, our students and the community. Working in service to higher education is a great privilege and it is absolutely dependent on sharing. Let’s begin our academic year by engaging in collegial conversations to reflect, to learn, and to seek first to understand as we strive to recognize each member of our campus community’s connection to our mission.

As a campus we have persevered and set priorities to improve our learning environment within the context of maximizing limited resources to have the greatest impact. Did you know that in the last decade UW-Parkside has added 254,000 square feet to our learning environment? Our physical campus demonstrates our commitment to quality learning and provides the environment for engaged learning.

For example, this summer CTS upgraded 11 classrooms with learning technologies; nine classrooms have had podium computers installed; and a 40-station computer lab has been set up in the Learning Technology Center and a number of other labs upgraded. Thank you to Ilya and colleagues in CTS for allocating their limited resources to improve our classrooms and labs. Jo and the staff in the Library have been focused on creating the Library of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They created a one-stop service desk, and added Art in the Library exhibition space which includes student works, and, currently under way, a redesigned first floor “living room” with soft seating. In partnership with Facilities Services they removed the tall, dark shelving hiding the north facing windows and replaced them with short shelves, and have ordered additional soft seating so you can now enjoy the beautiful view while appreciating the art. Stop by the library and enjoy the new look!

Across campus, the kitchens and bathrooms in the University apartments were upgraded last summer and in the fall the roof will be replaced and the exterior façade improved. And, last, work on the Greenquist elevator is almost complete. Thank you to all of our colleagues across campus who design, monitor, and implement improvements to our campus community. The campus looks great!

We will be engaged in defining our campus of the future through the Master Planning process this year.

The final pillar is telling our story. Last spring, the campus embarked on a branding study as part of the Digital Communications Initiative and identified three very important distinguishing characteristics of our university:

Attention;  
Access and Affordability; and  
New at UW-Parkside

These characteristics help frame our work in words and images. It is up to us to recognize, crystalize and communicate the very human story of UW-Parkside; the lives we impact every day through our inspired faculty, staff and student interactions and accomplishments. These characteristics represent a posture of confidence and pride in the uniqueness of our university.

In January we will launch a new website to support telling the UW-Parkside story. The Digital Communications Initiative team has made tremendous progress. The website will be a wonderful expression of the lived experience at UW-Parkside. Keep up the great work team! It is important to note, the entire campus will have a role in implementation as well as providing compelling, well-crafted content. I thank all faculty and staff in advance for your support of this important communication initiative.

These few examples demonstrate your commitment to UW-Parkside and illustrate the breadth and depth of our five pillars of excellence. I ask that you join me as we advance our contributions to our campus, region, and beyond.

I recognize that our work is hard and that we live in challenging times. But as we have seen in a few images today, this university has been in a cycle of change since its founding. Today, we find challenges might come a bit more rapidly. However, this is our generation's calling. And educators in future generations will have a wholly unique set of circumstances. What is certain is that UW-Parkside will be better tomorrow because of our being here today. I would want it no other way.

Yes, we are being called to do more with less, have greater demands for increased accountability, and will continue to make tough decisions. However, our willingness to lead in "changing" times, and rally around a shared vision for future success is that which our rich history calls us to do. I am confident we will continue to excel.

An unknown author noted, "Challenges make you discover things about yourself that you never really knew. They're what make the instrument stretch -- what make you go beyond the norm."

At UW-Parkside, I believe we embrace challenges and changes as opportunities and that we inspire our students and one another to always go beyond the norm. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." I am enthusiastic about our new academic year because I know we are on the path to greatness. Let's begin our next year of enriching minds, brightening futures, and changing lives!