Good Morning.

Historically, January is an auspicious month for the University of Michigan-Flint.

31 years ago this month, the University of Michigan moved its Physical Therapy program to Flint. Two years ago, we learned in January that we had just received the very important distinction of being a Carnegie Engaged Campus. Last January, the School of Management moved to the Riverfront Center. This is the month when our campus comes together in extraordinary acts of service as part of Martin Luther King Junior Day, a day which I am always proud to participate in with our students. January is a month of hope and promise for more good things to come for the University of Michigan-Flint.

I have been looking forward to this day for some time. I have been researching and reflecting upon all of our accomplishments. I am eager to put our university into context, to update you on the progress of the campus strategic plan, and then share with you my thoughts for 2013.

Just last week, I had two lunches with a number of our faculty. I listened intently to them talk excitedly about their work, and what it means to them. During those lunches, I was reminded about the special quality that this campus has. This quality—for lack of any sort of fancy term—is simply thoughtfulness. Thoughtfulness of individuals as seen in our actions.

This thoughtfulness manifests itself in many ways. It is interwoven in our decisions. It is a part of how we approach problems and search for solutions. It is how we intentionally work with students and each other to create a true campus community.

The theme of this address today is thoughtfulness. Thoughtfulness is an ideal that possesses a quiet power, and it is worth examining and exploring as we celebrate our good work and look toward our future.

Before I begin, I always believe in giving credit where credit is due. The credit for holding today’s address goes to our inspiring LEAD candidates who suggested that we have an annual “State of the University” meeting. As you know, our landmark LEAD program is unlike any other professional development program in higher education. This uncommon group of individuals came together in the spring of 2012, and worked very hard toward their goals of becoming future campus leaders.
At this time, I would like to recognize the graduates of our very first LEAD cohort: Qiana Smith, Jay Gandhi, Stephen Turner, Jerry Glasco, Theresa Landis, Mona Younis, Mickey Doyle, Sapna Thwait, Stacy Lee, Tonya Bailey, Melissa Brown, Stephanie Roach, Tamara McKay, and Nick Gaspar. Thanks to all of you for being our first group, and for doing so much to make the LEAD program a success! I am so proud of each of you. Please give them all a round of applause for their efforts!

So much happens here. Classroom work, research, engaging with community partners, planning, and preparation. Did you know that in the time it will take for me to deliver this address, over 50 classes will have convened across this campus? That’s just one hour of one day. In the midst of all the serious work we do, lifelong relationships and friendships are formed with our colleagues, our peers, our faculty, our students. This campus is a social network—a vibrant group of individuals sharing information that ultimately serves the good of all.

In spite of all the activity that is taking place, there is still more we would all like to do. People can sometimes be frustrated by the process of progress. It isn’t always immediate, and it never follows the timeline we want. Most things in life come to us in steps and stages, without a straight upward trajectory. Setbacks and disappointments are a part of growth. Progress is here. It is happening all around us.

To illustrate this point, I want to put in context for you the change that has occurred over the past 10 years. By looking back over the period of a decade, even though I have been chancellor for five years, it gives us a fuller picture of the significant and substantial change that has occurred at the University of Michigan-Flint. It will tell us how we have changed as a campus.

**A Look Back at the Last 10 Years**

Enrollment supports the largest percentage of our general fund operating budget. Growing enrollment is not only important financially, but is important for increasing the stature and diversity of the campus. Look at this graphic behind me. In the fall of 2002, we had a little over 6,400 students—557 graduate students and 5,877 undergraduate students. Fast forward to Fall 2012, we are now almost 8,300 students strong, having more than doubled the number of graduate students in a 10-year period and significantly increasing the number of undergraduate students.

These numbers alone only scratch the surface of our enrollment growth during a 10-year period. Our student body is more diverse than ever. If we look at the steady and consistent growth of our international student population, it shows that the University of Michigan-Flint is becoming a global destination for education. Jumping from 33 students to 348 students in 10 years is outstanding, and 65 new students have just joined us just this winter.

We are also achieving higher student retention rates. In a 10-year period, our retention rate has increased by 5%. Students who enroll as first-year students are having
success, and staying to continue their studies. That is certainly contributing to our strong enrollment growth.

With the addition of student housing during this 10 years, more students are coming from farther distances, living on or near campus as they pursue their degrees. In fact, this year, the decision was made to keep First Street open year-round to better meet the needs of students in foster care, international residents, and other residents. The fact that we are attracting students from a broader geographical area shows the academic reputation of our institution is spreading well beyond the borders of Genesee County.

To accommodate the rise in the student population and our shift from being a commuter campus to a more residential campus, we have increased our number of faculty and staff. In 2002, we had a total of 744 employees, and today we have roughly 1,060 people working at the university. In the last several years, the Provost, deans, and faculty have worked to increase the number of tenure track faculty on campus. In the last four years, we have hired 88 faculty members, 69 of which were tenure track. I am very pleased that we are focusing our efforts to increase the number of tenured faculty on this campus, and I will do all I can to support these endeavors.

With a growing number of people on campus, we have expanded our physical footprint in downtown Flint over the years. In 2002, we opened the William S. White Building, and then later added the International Center, built the First Street Residence Hall, created the Student Veterans Resource Center, and then moved the School of Management to the Riverfront Center.

The number of degree programs we offer has risen. In 2001, we offered 92 undergraduate and 25 graduate degree programs. As of Fall 2012 we now offer 107 undergraduate degree programs, 49 graduate degree programs, plus 11 professional and post professional certificates. We have added a number of articulation agreements with community colleges around the state. Provost Voland has also led an effort to add a large number of articulation agreements with universities around the world.

Our university-wide commitment to civic engagement has also grown over the last 10 years. As this graphic shows, we have doubled the number of civic engagement courses and sections, and our total enrollment in those courses has doubled accordingly. Finally, on this slide, you’ll see that all this has resulted in a substantial increase of the degrees we confer annually. During the past academic year, we conferred nearly 1,500 degrees.

The conferring of degrees is a significant measure of our success. Due to our strong enrollment growth over the last several years, we have seen a rise in the number of students who are graduating. This is good news for our entire state because we want to have more people with college degrees in Michigan. The number of people earning their undergraduate and graduate degrees at UM-Flint has grown exponentially. In fact, when measured against peer institutions, UM-Flint exceeds national graduation rate averages. For each of these statistics shown, there is a personal story. Every student
who comes to the university comes with their own set of issues, needs, and aspirations. They have moved from that enrollment-graphic statistic to a degree-conferred statistic through a great deal of thoughtful interaction from our stellar faculty and staff, with the emphasis on thoughtful.

**Current Enrollment**

Let’s look at where we are today.

As we begin now to look at our enrollment numbers for the coming Fall, I am delighted with early indicators regarding the incoming class of students. Jon Davidson, Director of Undergraduate Admissions has provided me with a very encouraging update. Today our applications are at an all time high and 17% over Fall 2012 numbers. Admitted students are also at an all-time high, and up 35% over last year. Although it is early in the recruitment cycle for transfer students, we are also doing well and are currently up 70% over Fall 2012.

Our efforts to diversify recruitment geographically are paying off. What is truly remarkable about the statistics for this year are the growing number of students from outside Genesee County. A 27% increase in the number of non-Genesee County applicants as well as a 42% increase in non-Genesee County applicants over the previous year.

These numbers are not surprising if you have attended any of the recruitment events hosted by the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. I have attended several of these events, and spoken with families, some of whom have traveled from the west side of the state, the Upper Peninsula and even out of state. When they come to campus, they are surprised by what they find—a beautiful campus and a growing downtown area. So far this year, we have had 840 total event attendees at the undergraduate level alone and we still have several more events coming up. This level of attendance is up 320% over two years ago. Thank you to all of you who attend those events and help introduce prospective students and their families to UM-Flint.

Graduate programs are expected to continue their consistent growth and experience a slight enrollment increase this fall. Following an expected site visit by the Higher Learning Commission this spring, we hope to offer the first Doctor of Education degree on the Flint campus with a focus on Educational Leadership. We will also have a new concentration for the Doctor of Nursing Practice, offering a track in Adult-Gerontology Acute Care. We will offer a reconfiguration of the Technology in Education program. Finally, following an expected site visit by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) this spring, we anticipate offering our first Ph.D. degree at UM-Flint. The Ph.D. will be offered as a joint DPT/Ph.D. degree to PT students who wish to be educated as both therapists and researchers.

We fully expect the uptrend of our international student population to continue in the coming years. International Center Director Dan Adams tells me that many of our international student alums are returning to their home countries and telling their friends
and family to come here. New regional recruitment efforts are being made in the Americas, Eurasia, Europe, and Oceana, while continuing our strong presence in Sub Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Asia.

The reason we have grown in enrollment over the last several years is the individualized attention that we focus on our students. We are a first choice for students who want the experience of a premier urban university that offers opportunity for undergraduate research, service learning, and outstanding faculty. Over 80% of our graduates stay to live and work in the state of Michigan, with more than 60% remaining in and around Genesee County.

With all of this growth, we must work very hard to maintain our campus culture that is dedicated to student centeredness. As we grow into a more complex organization, we must remain thoughtful and connected to our students and to one another.

**K-12 Partnerships**

One of the most significant strategic decisions that we have made is to fully partner with K-12 districts to help prepare students for their post secondary educations. Whether it is by reaching out early to middle school students through the Choosing to Succeed or Committed to Excellence programs offered by the Office of Educational Opportunity Initiatives, or by creating unique dual enrollment programs throughout the state, the University of Michigan-Flint is leading in preparing our young people for success in their academic futures.

The school districts of Livingston County, Lapeer County, and Utica Community Schools are answering the call for preparing high school students for college by creating landmark dual enrollment programs. Qualified students can enroll in college-level courses, getting a headstart on their post-secondary educations. The credits they earn are transferable to UM-Flint and to most other institutions of higher education. In 2012, we welcomed 206 high school students as dual enrollees; a 50% increase over the previous year.

How do we define success with dual enrollment programs? This can best be illustrated by what has occurred with the Pre-Engineering program in Lapeer, now beginning its 5th year. 34% of those students subsequently chose to enroll as regular students at UM-Flint following high school graduation, and the overall grade point average performance of these students in UM-Flint coursework is about 3.1, a solid level of performance.

The Genesee Early College continues to thrive. This iconic partnership with the Genesee Intermediate School District has been a resounding success and shows the power of creativity as it relates to preparing students for higher education. We now have had students not just graduate from Genesee Early College but from UM-Flint as well. Today the typical Genesee Early College student graduates at the end of year 13 (one year beyond normal high school completion) with a Michigan Merit high school diploma.
and 50 or more UM-Flint credits at no cost to their parents. About 60% of GEC graduates enroll following graduation at UM-Flint.

This past fall, I had the chance to meet one of those graduates from both of our institutions. Christina Ramo spoke at the Regents meeting here on campus in October. Christina graduated from the Genesee Early College in 2011 with over 80 undergraduate credits from UM-Flint completed. In 2012, she earned her Bachelor of Science in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology from UM-Flint. She is now enrolled at the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor where she reports that her experiences at UM-Flint have better prepared her for the rigors of medical school over her fellow students who graduated from other institutions. That is pure student success.

The commitment to offer dual enrollment opportunities to high school students within their own high schools is extraordinary. Progressive school districts are recognizing that in order to meet their best and brightest students where they’re at, they have to move to a higher level of curriculum in order to prepare them. Our effort to physically locate within these school districts is a sea change.

The Neff Center for Place-Based Education is our latest initiative. Located in the northwest wing of the Beecher Community School District’s combined middle-high school, the purpose of the center is to mutually enrich university and northern Flint communities through place-based education, research, and student services. Operated under the auspices of UM-Flint’s Office of the Provost and University Outreach, the facility will accommodate engaged teaching and research projects, while also offering space for an increasing number of university programs involving students, citizens, and organizations.

What is now happening is that these districts are asking for more courses and more choices for their students. I would like to thank the many, many faculty, administrators, and high school personnel who helped to design and implement these programs. The time, energy, and thoughtfulness you put into this exciting endeavor have paid great dividends and will continue to do so.

**Marketing**

Understanding the audiences we serve is fundamental to our growth. That is why we agreed to work with our colleagues in Ann Arbor when they were engaged with marketing research for the entire university. We worked with Maguire and Associates on the first comprehensive market research since 2008. The new data was revealing. The good news is: we are growing and our key constituencies think very highly of the university. Allow me to share a few statistics with you from the research:

In the testing, we were found to be perceived as academically strong by all of our stakeholders. In fact, only UM-Ann Arbor, Michigan State University, and Kettering University rated slightly higher than UM-Flint on the lengthy list of universities that were
mentioned. Both our university and the city of Flint are viewed as “on the rise.” People feel pride in this institution and what it has meant to them personally.

Here is one direct quote from a student who was interviewed:

“I feel that the University of Michigan-Flint has challenged me, and therefore, has changed me to who I am now. It has established my value for the city of Flint and has made me proud to be part of the student community here.”

Now that we have all the research results, the Office of University Relations is working with Maguire to establish an update to our marketing and communication efforts. They will be rolling out some of the changes later this spring.

**Economic and Community Development**

Public universities are economic boosters to the communities in which we reside. They provide jobs, both inside the university and in the community. They provide human resources in the form of student volunteers and class projects. Research opportunities in communities can help to identify and solve common problems. Like other universities that are anchors of their regions, many rely upon UM-Flint for its excellent reputation and the stability that a public university provides its hometown. Millions of dollars are spent on goods and services, benefitting large industries and small businesses alike. During the last fiscal year alone, the University of Michigan-Flint contributed to the local economy by spending approximately $59 million on purchases, payroll, and funds released to students in Genesee County. The relationship between the university and the city has never been stronger.

I recently had the opportunity to co-author a blog post for the Michigan Municipal League with Mayor Dayne Walling about our Town Gown Relationship with the City of Flint.

This is a brief excerpt from our post:

In fact, at a time when talent, economic development, and thriving places are intertwined, it is necessary to nurture city-university partnerships so they grow and expand in innovative and remarkable ways. We believe this will require an unprecedented cooperative effort among public officials and higher education leaders. Our hope is that the dialogue started here about the exciting partnerships already underway will spark greater enthusiasm for this essential effort.

These are not just mere words that I used in writing this post. We have thoughtful, concrete actions to back up these words. Here are ways the university is joining with the community to address the critical issues of our time.

On my way home to Ross House, I take great joy in driving past the Urban Alternatives House in the Central Park Neighborhood. It is nearly complete. The new house will be
used as a classroom and laboratory to teach and explore better ideas for urban living. It will also contain two residential units. This is truly an exemplary project of bringing together institutions such as the Land Bank, corporations like Consumers Energy, and foundations such as the Kresge and C.S. Mott Foundations to bring about change and true innovation. This project will help to teach sustainable living and green building renovation, as well as promote neighborhood sustainability in the city.

According to government statistics, Genesee County has a large number of uninsured residents, more than 13%. That fact caused our Physical Therapy students to take action, and they created PTHEART. The group launched a pro bono clinic to provide physical therapy and health education to the uninsured and underinsured in Genesee County.

A new, thoroughly original center was formed in 2012 between the University of Michigan-Flint Philosophy Department and Flint’s Insight Institute for Neurosurgery and Neuroscience. They created Michigan’s only center charged with exploring the intersections of mind, medicine, and morality: The Center for Cognition and Neuroethics. Since the Center launched, UM-Flint faculty and students have worked alongside brain surgeons on issues of the mind.

These three initiatives and many, many more are thoughtful extensions of our campus into the community.

Safety

One of our biggest challenges, especially in the area of recruitment, is crime. It is the perfect time to partner with our community to take on this challenge.

Our campus participates in various City of Flint and work groups designed to enhance the quality of life and safety in the community, including Lifelines (formerly known as CeaseFire Flint), Community Action, Advocates and Leaders for Policing and Community Trust, and Neighborhoods without Borders. We are also seeking signed Cooperative Policing Agreements with the City of Flint and Genesee County Sheriff Department.

Chief Hall has done an exemplary job not just fighting crime, but engaging in prevention and educational techniques. From putting officers on bike patrol to outfitting student safety employees in bright yellow uniforms, and encouraging people to stop by for Pop with a Cop in the University Center, Chief Hall is always thinking about ways to reach out to people. But Chief Hall really made his mark on the community with the Touch a Truck event in September. This event brought hundreds of people to campus to interact with law enforcement officials from across the county. Kids got up close and personal with all sorts of emergency vehicles including fire and police trucks, as well as the U-M Survival Flight Helicopter.
We are constantly working to keep the campus safe. We have identified new technology to deliver live camera surveillance to the Department of Public Safety, as well as added more cameras around campus. Bike patrols and foot patrols have been expanded in and around the campus. We are also providing education sessions on personal safety.

Enhancing emergency preparedness planning has always been a priority. A great deal of effort is spent on planning and training for situations that we hope will never occur on this campus. The All Hazards Group meets on a regular basis and is up to date on the very latest best practices for every aspect of emergency management.

The Eleven Strategic Plan Priorities

Now, a view toward our future.

All of these accomplishments I have just mentioned are certainly something to celebrate. But we cannot be content to bask in the glory of past successes. We must move thoughtfully forward, and the way forward is by following the blueprint that was established by this campus community.

Strategic plans, by design, are intended to progress in phases. To some, our strategic plan may appear daunting. With over 100 initiatives to attend to, it requires focus and dedication to the many tasks at hand. The good news is that we already have some items to check off our collective to-do list. When I reviewed the eleven priorities identified in the plan, I was pleased to note that we are certainly making progress on each and every one. Let us now focus our attention on our teamwork on the university-wide strategic plan. I will quickly go through the 11 priorities, and explain what has occurred to date.

Priority one – enhance the quality and breadth of academic programs, and be a school of first choice. As I stated previously, we are on the verge of announcing our first Ph.D. program, plus more graduate programs. In addition we were recently named number three on the list of best satellite campuses in the country. The combination of our academic offerings as well as our fine reputation makes us a first choice for prospective students.

Priority two – Foster a culture in which faculty are supported in pursuing disciplinary and interdisciplinary teaching, scholarship, and creative activity, and expand faculty professional development.

Key to this priority of fostering a scholarly culture on campus is research. We are moving in a strong direction in this area. In the last 10 years, the number of research grants the university has received has grown from approximately $1.7 million to over $6.8 million dollars. Six years ago, we had six students participating in the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program. This past year, we reached a level of 111 students conducting research projects under faculty mentors. Last spring we hosted
the Student Research Conference where 153 students participated in co-authoring projects, presentations, and posters.

We often speak of our commitment to undergraduate research, and it is important to highlight some specific examples of faculty and students working side by side on research. Associate Professor of Biology, Joe Sucic actively recruits and works with students on research in his lab, and they often co-author publications on their findings. In the past year, Professor of Political Science Peggy Kahn worked with student Mary Robinson, looking at access to dental care for children in the City of Flint. These are just two examples of the extraordinary efforts of faculty to fully involve our students in the exciting work of research. We should do all we can to support these endeavors.

Our faculty not only supports students, but each other as well. Our excellent Faculty Mentoring program, led by Professor Alicia Kent, is a vital resource for providing tenure track faculty with a network of assistance as they work toward their career goals.

I must also specifically laud the excellent work of Jan Worth and the Thompson Center for Learning and Teaching. The TCLT has helped to lead the way in creative thinking when it comes to teaching and pedagogy. From innovative workshops to the stellar Catalyst Program for faculty, the TCLT is helping to deliver on the promise of our second strategic priority.

Priority Three – Expand staff professional development. As I mentioned, we launched the LEAD program in 2012, but we also developed the EXCEL program which is open to all UM-Flint employees. EXCEL is a two-year program now in its second year. I encourage all employees to take advantage of these opportunities.

Priority Four – Expand participation in civic engagement, experiential learning, and service learning. More than ever, our students are engaged with the community around them. We are tracking their participation in such activities on their student transcripts. Here is just one example of outstanding civic engagement.

Carrie Miller is a student veteran here at UM-Flint. She started a non-profit called Our Home Transitional which offers transitional housing for female veterans and their children as well as other services. With the help of local community members, organizations, and grants, Our Home Transitional renovates homes throughout Genesee County for these military families. Our Home Transitional is an Associate Business of the UM-Flint Innovation Incubator, which facilitates opportunities for university and community members to innovate, create, and grow successful organizations to initiate economic and social progress resulting in well-being of the community.

Priority Five – Fulfill our student-centered mission as we serve a growing and increasingly diverse student population.
Following a comprehensive site review of counseling services last winter, Student Affairs began making changes to the former Student Development Center. Now known as Counseling, Accessibility, and Psychological Services (or CAPS), implementation of two key recommendations continues this year with the hiring of a third full-time counselor, and a complete redesign of the space occupied by CAPS.

Student Affairs was the recipient of a $450,000 grant intended to remove barriers to college access, retention, and success for foster and homeless youth. Genesee County is second in the state to Wayne County in the number of youth in foster care with approximately 1,200 young people in the system. Of this number, it is estimated that roughly 400 are at or near college age. Our program, Mpowering My Success, will eliminate obstacles while helping students understand their roles in personal growth, career preparation, financial management, and academic success. We expect to annually serve between 12 and 25 students.

As you know, serving student veterans is a core function of UM-Flint. The Student Veterans Center has been expanded in an effort to provide more support and services to the growing student veteran population at UM-Flint. Funds from the sale of UM-Flint license plates now go toward a new student veteran scholarship. Supporting veterans is very important and we will continue to do all we can for veterans as a way of thanking them for service to our country.

Priority six – Cultivate a campus climate that embraces diverse social identities and perspectives. This priority is of particular importance for the campus. I am pleased to announce that an exploration of the creation of a Center for Social Justice has begun. Under the direction of the Provost’s Office and Academic Affairs, with the help of Dean David Gordon, we will begin a campus-wide conversation on the complex issues of culture, race, and diversity. I hope you will join the conversation, because campus-wide participation is vital to fostering and celebrating a climate that is accepting of all people and beliefs.

Priority seven – Increase enrollment, student retention, and degree completion to achieve planned growth. As I mentioned earlier, much progress has been made in terms of enrollment. I want to now talk specifically about an initiative that is going to strengthen enrollment, especially when it comes to retaining students: the Student Success Center. First, a bit of background:

Academic Affairs and Student Affairs partnered in October 2011 to explore the creation of a Student Success Center, intent on meeting, “. . . the needs of our campus in a manner that is both aspirational and achievable.” Chris Waters and Mary Jo Sekelsky co-chaired the Steering Committee. Over the course of nine months, Chris and Mary Jo, along with 14 Steering Committee members engaged in deep discussion, reviewed current literature, identified best practices, and hosted two Town Hall meetings attended by a wide range of campus stakeholders. The Steering Committee submitted its Final Report and Recommendations nine months later on July 3, 2012. The transition to this point has been seamless while implementation continues, and I am confident the
Student Success Center will fulfill its mission to, “…encourage and enable every student to achieve academic excellence, attain personal well-being, and possess a deep sense of community.”

The first step toward this was moving Academic Advising, Career Center, and Orientation to Academic Affairs. This occurred in August 2012. In September 2012, an Advisory Committee for the center was formed consisting of faculty and staff who have been major stakeholders in efforts on our campus toward student success. This group has decided to focus on a few issues and high impact practices during this academic year. These include:

- Academic Advising and Mentoring – headed by Aimi Moss
- Experiential Learning, Internships, and Active Learning – headed by Aimi Moss
- First Year Experience – headed by Chris Waters
- Overlap and Integration of Services – headed by Chris Waters
- Data – headed by both Aimi Moss and Chris Waters

These groups will meet and report with recommendations next month. In addition, this group will examine and discuss which units will be central to a Student Success Center and which groups will require close collaboration, as well as space requirements of the Center.

Priority eight – Diversify revenues in keeping with the university’s mission. Aside from state support and tuition, we have a third revenue stream that must be more robust, and that is fundraising. To that end, we have just completed an exhaustive search for a new executive director of fundraising and development. Linda Moxam will join UM-Flint on February 11 as the new executive director of development and alumni relations. Linda has extensive fundraising experience, both as a major gift officer for the Mott Community College Foundation and the Flint Cultural Center. This fall, we will join the other two University of Michigan campuses in launching a new capital campaign. I will be entrusting the capital campaign to Linda and her team who will provide leadership for the campus on this vital initiative.

As we review our funding priorities, first and foremost on my list is increasing student scholarships. I am all too aware of the struggles and sacrifices our students and their families make for the sake of their educations. It is my heartfelt wish that students can come to the university, free of the worry of financial burdens and able to focus wholly and completely on their studies.

I have heard the stories of hardship that have become all too common, and I feel a personal responsibility to address the issue of affordability for our students. That is why we have worked with our leadership team here on this campus to keep our tuition rate as low as possible without impacting academic quality. It is an incredibly difficult balancing act because there are needs and wishes that we would like to fulfill across the campus. However, during these ongoing economic times that seem to have no end, we have an obligation to carefully monitor spending and keep tuition affordable.
While we strive to diversify revenue streams, we must continue to be ever vigilant when it comes to cost containment. The fiscal discipline that is in place at UM-Flint is very strong. For the 10-year period of Fiscal Years 2002-2012, we estimate $10.6M in annualized cost reductions/reallocations. In response to reductions in the level of state support, the University of Michigan-Flint has implemented effective cost control strategies. Some of the actions we have taken include:

- Filling only positions deemed critical to the mission of the university
- Improved energy efficiency
- Higher medical premiums for faculty and staff
- Elimination of all non-essential travel

One of our largest expenses is utilities. The University of Michigan-Flint has made significant strides in improving its energy efficiency over the last several years. Our primary efforts in 2012 have focused on campus lighting upgrades, installation of variable frequency drives to air supply unit motors, and installation of more instantaneous water heaters. We have been working on plans to replace boilers in our Central Energy Plant with new, energy efficient equipment. We are also focusing on the installation of motion- and light-harvesting sensors. When the latest group of energy projects is completed, we anticipate about $300,000 in annual savings.

We also participate in the State of Michigan Higher Education Purchasing Consortium in an effort to leverage purchasing power and reduce our utility expense in the current fiscal year and beyond. We make strategic purchases of natural gas when market conditions are favorable.

Thanks to our relationship with the main campus in Ann Arbor, we can also leverage those resources to help us save. One example is our earlier decision to be a client of the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor Library rather than lease and operate our own local turnkey online library catalog, resulting in annual savings of $65,000.

Finally, we have outsourced certain non-core functions in order to reduce operating costs to include the campus bookstore, food service, credit card processing, and lease management. In addition, we lease some space to outside tenants at Northbank Center to reduce our operating costs for this older office building. We will continue to pursue smart costs savings without impacting the academic quality of the university.

Priority nine – Create a more integrated and systematic accounting of institutional data; use technology to provide a competitive advantage in recruitment and retention.

Professor Cindy Pfalzer is leading the charge in this area that will help us to develop and monitor indicators of success. Earlier this fall, the Office of Institutional Analysis developed our first dashboard for monitoring enrollment. A task force will be in place by the end of this semester to help us better track the flow of data across the campus.

Technology is very important to this campus. I recall one of my first meetings with the All Hazards planning group here on campus, and my first question was how are we
backing up all of the vital information we have in the event of an emergency or disaster? Being up to date on all the latest technological advances is essential for any university in the 21st century, and we want UM-Flint to lead the way.

The university website is paramount to student recruitment. During the last calendar year, nearly 1.2 million unique visitors went to the UM-Flint website. These unique visitors are from Genesee County, the state of Michigan, the United States, and around the world. It is our virtual front door.

Because of the importance of the university website to nearly everything we do here at the university, we are changing our content management system. The offices of University Relations and Information Technology Services have created a solid plan for change. This year, we will cease to use the current content management system, and we will move to Drupal, an open-source content management system. This move over time will save the university $25,000 on an annual basis. In addition, the Drupal content management system has quickly become a standard bearer in higher education—it is used at 11 of the 15 public universities in Michigan, including on the Ann Arbor campus. In fact, it is interesting to note that the White House website uses Drupal.

The change to the new content management system will happen by October 1st. More information on the transition will be out in the next few weeks.

Priority ten – Use and develop space that is responsive to a growing university. Space is an issue on every college campus and the University of Michigan-Flint is no different than the rest. We are moving forward with the Murchie Science Building renovation in order to prepare future scientists and science educators. A renovation of approximately 85,000 gross square feet of space is planned, adding instructional labs for chemistry and biology and associated support space. The renovation will also update the building’s infrastructure.

Currently we are focused on relocating several academic departments in advance of the construction work. After careful consideration, we are moving the Psychology Department to the 5th floor of French Hall. This will also mean the movement of the Marian E. Wright Writing Center and the Marian E. Wright Computer Writing Classroom to the Library. The estimated cost of the project is $22,170,000. The state will fund nearly $17 million and UM-Flint will fund about $5.5 million with university resources. Construction is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2015.

The other building on campus that is seeing a fair share of work is the Northbank Center. We have relocated the English as a Second Language training rooms and administrative offices to the 8th floor of the building, which frees up classroom space elsewhere on campus. We are also in the process of replacing the elevators in that building. Two of four new elevators went into service in January 2013. The other two are scheduled for completion by spring. In addition, we have negotiated two federal government leases at Northbank Center which help to provide a stable level of rental income to support operating costs of the Northbank Center.
Finally, we will upgrade and replace aging boilers in the Central Energy Plant at an estimated cost of $2.5M to improve campus energy efficiency. All of these projects are important as our campus community needs grow and evolve.

Priority eleven – Enhance Alumni Relations to create a culture of university pride. Brent Nickola has lead the way with increasing alumni participation on this campus. He has a cadre of Alumni volunteers who do everything from attend student recruitment events to assist at commencement. The annual alumni party during Back to the Bricks brings over 700 alums back to campus each summer. I attend nearly every alumni event, and I often host alumni at Ross House. A culture of university pride absolutely exists. What we must do now is work to expand this circle of pride to our alumni who are outside of the state of Michigan and around the world. That work is ongoing because it is about relationship-building, which must be nurtured.

Eleven priorities. Eleven stories of progress. I am pleased with the forward motion on our 11 priorities. However, this does not mean we are done. We still have much work ahead of us. We are working our way down our to-do list. We will continue to chip away at the items we have decided are essential for our students, our campus, and our community. Right now, there are departments, committees, working groups, and task forces immersed in finding ways to implement the recommendations that were made during the strategic planning process. There are over 100 items that are on that list, and we will do our best to address each and every issue that has been raised.

We must look beyond our current academic offerings and ask ourselves, what else can we do? How can we better respond to the demands of a changing world? What new degrees can we develop? How can we work together to create interdisciplinary opportunities for our students? How can we stay true to our roots as a liberal arts institution while changing in ways that are needed in the 21st century? One way we are doing this is through the Science Technology Engineering and Math Task Force chaired by Dr. Vahid Lotfi and Dr. Stephen Turner. This is a great start and I would like us to delve deeply into the issue of developing academic programs, to review current statistics and projections.

What can we do to further advance the scholarly work of research at the University of Michigan-Flint? We will invest in acquisitions for the Library in the coming year. We will continue to encourage our students to engage in undergraduate research. The Student Research Conference and the Meeting of the Minds event are two important ways for our students to showcase their research efforts. These are all important steps.

What are your good ideas? Often times we talk about the need to save money, but we must also have an ongoing conversation about revenue and other potential for growth. There is a need for smart investments, especially those that will bear fruit in years to come. If you have a good idea, we want to hear from you. The creativity on this campus is boundless, and a little outside the box thinking is in order.
What will the future hold? We know some absolutes: people will always pursue
education. Scholarly research is essential for understanding. Universities are vital
centers and focal points for communities. In spite of constant change, I see the
University of Michigan-Flint growing in stature as a model institution. Already regionally
we are known as one of the best universities for serving veterans. We have received the
distinction of Best in the Midwest from the Princeton Review for over a decade. We are
recognized as a leader in civic engagement. But more importantly than any awards or
accolades we can receive, we know that our students feel they are getting an excellent
education that they cannot get anywhere else. We know that because of the fine results
from our most recent Student Satisfaction Inventory. UM-Flint scored above average in
nearly every category tested.

That matters if we are to be known as a university that is student-centered. And that
matters to our future. As long as students feel this university is outstanding, that we are
delivering on our promise as one of the three campuses of the University of Michigan,
we will continue to meet our goals and thrive.

Conclusion

A final thought today.

It has been my goal all along to be a good steward of this fine university. A great deal of
my job is to mindfully weigh decisions and consider all the options. We have made
tremendous progress. Not all major changes on campus happen quickly and with a big
announcement. Rather, they evolve over time after study, collecting information, and
synthesis of ideas. This careful consideration has been for the good of the campus as a
whole. I will continue to be deliberate in decision-making, and will continue to ask for
input from the campus community. That is what leaders do—they listen to facts and
consider all the stakeholders before reaching a conclusion. That is thoughtfulness, and
it is one of my core values.

In 2017, the University of Michigan will mark its bicentennial anniversary. The year prior
to that, we will mark the 60th year of the existence of the University of Michigan-Flint. I
will appoint a committee in the coming months to help organize plans to mark our
anniversary and to contribute to the entire University of Michigan event.

In the meantime, there are things we can celebrate today. You should leave here today
knowing this: We are growing. We are doing amazing things. We are setting standards,
and we are excelling. We are the University of Michigan-Flint.

I have thoroughly enjoyed serving as the Chancellor of the University of Michigan-Flint.
It has been a privilege to serve in this role, and rewarding to see such progress and
momentum. My five year term will conclude this August. I have asked President
Coleman, and she has agreed, to extend my contract for one additional year in order to
complete important initiatives now underway. This summer she will form a committee
and begin the search process for my successor so there will be a smooth transition in the summer of 2014.

I am honored to be part of this campus and this thoughtful community of students and scholars, colleagues and community members. I am extremely optimistic about our shared future, and it is my hope that we can continue our good work together in the years to come.

Thank you for your attendance and your attention this morning.