

## **PRESIDENT'S DINNER – NOVEMBER 14, 2009**

THANK YOU, CAROL. AND I WANT TO THANK ALL OF YOU (ABOUT 575) FOR BEING HERE TONIGHT. WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR A VERY BROAD SPECTRUM OF PEOPLE PRESENT HERE FROM ALL PARTS OF WESTERN NEW YORK.

I WANT TO THANK BISHOP EDWARD KMIEC FOR HIS PRESENCE HERE TONIGHT AS THE BISHOP OF OUR CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BUFFALO. WELCOME, PRIESTS, RELIGIOUS SISTERS AND BROTHERS.

ALSO, I THANK FR. MICHAEL CARROLL FOR BEING HERE; HE SERVES AS THE VICE CHAIR OF OUR BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND AS THE PROVINCIAL SUPERIOR OF OUR VINCENTIAN CONGREGATION.

THANK YOU, TRUSTEES AND ADVISORS FOR YOUR PRESENCE HERE TONIGHT. GREETINGS, TO YOU DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS, ACADEMIC AND COMMUNITY COLLEAGUES/LEADERS OF OUR COMMUNITY.

DEAR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS.

AS SOME OF YOU KNOW, I HAVE BEEN A PART OF NIAGARA UNIVERSITY FOR 40 YEARS NOW; AND ONE OF THE THINGS THAT IS SHARED WITH ME, AS A COMPLIMENT, WHEN PEOPLE SPEAK ABOUT NIAGARA UNIVERSITY IS: "FATHER, N.U. IS ONE OF THE BEST KEPT SECRETS AROUND. YOU HAVE TO DO MORE TO TELL PEOPLE ALL THE WONDERFUL THINGS THAT THE UNIVERSITY IS AND DOES."

ALLOW ME TO GIVE YOU THE SHORT VERSION TONIGHT. THERE IS A LOT OF EXCITEMENT ON OUR BEAUTIFUL, QUIET-LOOKING CAMPUS. THE FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS ARE FULLY ALIVE WITH A DESIRE FOR LEARNING. EXCELLENT STUDENTS DEMAND EXCELLENCE FROM THE ENTIRE UNIVERSITYCOMMUNITY, AND WE ALL RESPOND. WE WORK TOGETHER, WE RESEARCH TOGETHER, WE PUBLISH TOGETHER, WE HELP EACH OTHER, WE SERVE ONE ANOTHER IN OUR NEEDS AND CELEBRATIONS. EVEN THE CRANES ON CAMPUS AND THE AMAZING PHYSICAL GROWTH OF NEW CENTERS AND ACADEMIC

AND STUDENT BUILDINGS EXUDE A DYNAMISM OF WHICH WE ARE ALL A PART. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE ARE AT A TIPPING POINT IN THE WORLD OF ACADEMICS, AND WE WANT TO MOVE BEYOND, AND EXCEL IN EVERY WAY POSSIBLE.

WHAT IS OUR DIFFERENCE AND WHAT IS OUR EXCELLENCE?

WE ARE A CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY. WE PROCLAIM THAT GOD IS AT THE CENTER OF OUR CAMPUS. WE OFFER ONE ANOTHER THE GOD-GIVEN RESPECT THAT EACH PERSON DESERVES, AND THAT COMES FROM KNOWING WE ARE ALL MADE BY AND GIFTED BY THE GOD WHO LOVES AND CARES FOR US.

PRAYER BEGINS EVERY IMPORTANT MEETING WE HAVE ON CAMPUS. WE CELEBRATE MASS AND SPECIAL TIMES OF PRAYER EACH DAY ON CAMPUS. ETHICS IS TAUGHT WELL AND HAS BECOME A PART OF JUST ABOUT EVERY ASPECT OF OUR CURRICULUM. AND ETHICS AND MORAL VALUES ARE IMBUED IN THE HEARTS, WORDS AND ACTIONS OF OUR FACULTY AND STUDENTS. PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES ARE REQUIRED FOR ALL OUR STUDENTS; AND THEY ARE TAUGHT SO WELL AND SO DYNAMICALLY THAT OUR STUDENTS ARE CREATING MINORS IN BOTH THESE AREAS OF STUDY.

WE ARE A VINCENTIAN UNIVERSITY. ST. VINCENT DE PAUL STANDS IN OUR MIDST ON CAMPUS AND CALLS US TO DEVOTE OURSELVES TO THE SERVICE OF OTHERS. WE ARE ALL SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS AND, IN A VERY SPECIAL WAY, TO THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY AROUND US. WE REACH OUT TO SERVE...AND OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY RESPONDS WELL. WE TRY TO LET ALL KNOW HOW WORTHWHILE IT IS TO HAVE A UNIVERSITY IN THE MIDST OF THIS COMMUNITY AND HOW WE WANT TO BECOME A PART OF ALL THAT IS IMPORTANT IN THE LIFE AND GROWTH OF THIS COMMUNITY. WE CONTRIBUTE \$178 MILLION ANNUALLY TO THIS COMMUNITY. WE HAVE BUILT AND RENOVATED BUILDINGS ON OUR CAMPUS VALUED AT ALMOST \$80M. WE ARE PREPARING NOW TO BUILD OUR NEW SCIENCE CENTER WHICH WILL COST US \$33M AND WILL BE A BOON FOR THE ECONOMY ESTIMATED AT ABOUT \$45M. COLLABORATING WITH OTHERS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A HALLMARK IN THE RECENT YEARS OF OUR UNIVERSITY. AND EVERYONE AROUND WNY KNOWS THAT.

WE ARE NOT IN COMPETITION WITH OUR CLOSEST NEIGHBORS, WE ARE IN COLLABORATION WITH NCCC AND NIAGARA COLLEGE IN ONTARIO; WE RESPECT THOSE COLLEAGUES AND THE EXCELLENCE THAT THEY PURSUE FOR OUR COMMUNITY ALSO. THANKS, PRESIDENTS JIM KLYCZEK AND DAN PATTERSON.

WITH SUCH DISTINCTIONS FOR OUR UNIVERSITY, AND HAVING 4 STRONG COLLEGES AND MANY OTHER LIBERAL ARTS EMPHASES, WE KNOW THAT WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR STUDENTS. THEY TELL US SO, WE CAN SEE IT IN THEIR LIVES AND WE TALK ABOUT IT AT OUR ALUMNI REUNIONS. EDUCATION THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE ...THAT IS OUR TAGLINE. THERE IS NO SECRET ABOUT WHO WE ARE. EVERYONE CAN SEE IT! LOOK AT AND MEET OUR GRADUATES.

THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING TO THIS DINNER. YOUR SCHOLARSHIP DOLLARS HERE TONIGHT WILL HELP US GAIN MORE EXCELLENT STUDENTS. WE ASSIST 98% OF ALL OUR STUDENTS WITH FINANCIAL AID. THE UNIVERSITY ITSELF SETS ASIDE \$35M ANNUALLY JUST FOR SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE. AND YOUR BEING HERE TONIGHT HAS HELPED US DO EVEN MORE. THANK YOU.

WE PROMISE YOU WE WILL CONTINUE TO GROW, AND ONLY IN EXCELLENT WAYS HERE AT NIAGARA UNIVERSITY. WE DO NOT WISH TO KEEP ANYTHING WE DO A SECRET. IF I COULD START AN N.U. PUBLIC NEWSPAPER TOMORROW, I WOULD....TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE KNOWS WHO WE ARE AND ALL THE EXCELLENT WORK WE DO....FIRST, FOR OUR STUDENTS.....AND THEN FOR OUR COMMUNITY.

I ASK ALL OF YOU HERE TONIGHT FOR YOUR CONTINUED HELP. CONTINUE TO COME TO THIS DINNER TO HELP US WITH SCHOLARSHIP DOLLARS...ESPECIALLY YOUR SPECIAL SPONSORSHIPS. WE HAVE OUTSTANDING DONORS TONIGHT....READ THE BOOK PLACED IN FRONT OF YOU...WE HAVE SPONSORSHIP DONORS OF \$10,000, AND \$7500. AND \$5,000 AND \$3,000.....AND MANY OTHER GIFTS IN GENEROUS AMOUNTS. THANK YOU. THANK YOU. ALSO, BE OUR ADVOCATE. HELP ME SPREAD THE STORY ABOUT N.U. WE HAVE A GREAT STORY, AND IT SHOULD BE TOLD EVERYWHERE. TALK ABOUT IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES. BECOME OUR ADVOCATE, SO THAT MANY OTHER EXCELLENT YOUNG

PEOPLE WILL JOIN US AND GAIN AN OUTSTANDING EDUCATION, AND THAT MORE GOOD CAN BE DONE FOR OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.

OUR STUDENTS OF TODAY ARE YOUR NEIGHBORS AND EMPLOYEES OF TOMORROW. COME TO MEET THEM AND KNOW THEM. YOU MET SOME OF THEM TONIGHT AS THEY GREETED YOU COMING TO THIS DINNER. COME ON CAMPUS AND MEET MORE OF THEM...AND ASK OUR STAFF AND FACULTY TO INTRODUCE THEM TO YOU.

LIKE THE GREAT BROADCASTER OF YESTERYEAR, GABRIEL HEATER, I SAY AS HE ALWAYS SAID....THERE'S GOOD NEWS IN THE WORLD TONIGHT, FRIENDS. NIAGARA UNIVERSITY IS A UNIVERSITY, IT IS CATHOLIC, IT IS VINCENTIAN, IT IS COLLABORATIVE, IT IS BUILDING UP THE WNY COMMUNITY, IT IS EDUCATING STUDENTS WHO WILL MAKE OUR WORLD A DIFFERENT PLACE, THAT IS, A FAR BETTER PLACE THAN IT HAS EVER BEEN. THIS IS NIAGARA UNIVERSITY. THIS IS WHY I AM SO HAPPY TO BE ITS PRESIDENT. JUST AS WE TRY TO EXCEL IN ALL WE DO—SO WE TAKE TIME TO HONOR SUCH OUTSTANDING PEOPLE AS WE HAVE DONE TONIGHT. AGAIN, THANK YOU DEAR HONOREES. JOYCE FINK, FRANK AND BARBARA LAYDEN, AND THE GREAT BRANNEN AND MONTANI FAMILIES AND NIACET, I AM HUMBLED BY YOUR GREAT EXAMPLE OF BEING LEADERS, GENEROUS BEYOND ALL NORMAL DESCRIPTION, AND A MODEL FOR OUR STUDENTS AND ALL OTHERS.

AND FINALLY I KNOW THAT ALL OF YOU IN THIS BANQUET CELEBRATION TONIGHT DESERVE OUTSTANDING ACCOLADES FOR WHAT YOU DO IN YOUR LIFE WITH YOUR GENEROSITY....I LIFT YOU ALL UP ON HIGH. YOU ARE THE BEST. GOD BLESS YOU!

AND THANK YOU.