

President Karen S. Haynes  
Convocation Address  
California Center for the Arts, Escondido  
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Happy anniversary! This fall celebrates 20 years of serving students. Although we were founded in 1989, it was not until fall 1990 that our doors opened to our first students. Over the course of this year, our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration has afforded us with the opportunity to reflect back on the founding of our University. Seeing the historic photos in that video and on our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary website, and hearing the stories of our founding, has heightened my appreciation for this campus and how far it has come in only twenty short years.

Cal State San Marcos positively influences everything from social to cultural to economic development in our region and beyond; and recently released economic impact data from our system confirms this. This year not only are we honoring our history and celebrating the enormous positive impact that our campus has had, we are looking forward and planning for the future educational needs of our rapidly growing and changing region.

### **CSUSM drives innovation**

Over these past 20 years, the pioneering spirit of our founders has been institutionalized into our core. Cal State San Marcos has proven itself as a campus in touch with, and responsive to, our region's needs. Relatively young in university years, we have the great ability to explore new ideas, new methods, new programs, and new concepts without the constraints of history or tradition. But I would venture to say that it is because of our capacity to think and act creatively that it has become tradition for us to be ever-changing and innovative.

Our university mission statement emphasizes the use of innovative curricula, and the application of new technologies in our classrooms and labs. Meanwhile, our university values statement includes innovation and creativity, openness to change, flexibility, responsiveness, and future focus. This is a place where new ideas are born, new technologies applied, and new methods practiced.

**In 2006 I said to you that by 2010 Cal State San Marcos would be the region's driving force in leading initiatives and partnering to meet community needs.**

**Our graduates, prepared by relevant curricula and student-centered services, will reflect the region and be empowered to lead it.**

**And as an engaged campus we will become a best place to work and study.**

Because of your innovation, your participation, your leadership, and your creativity – we realized and exceeded this vision for 2010.

### **Innovative Initiatives and Partnerships**

**Cal State San Marcos is the region's driving force in leading initiatives and partnering to meet community needs.**

Last September I joined with educational and civic leaders for a forum on the important role of public education in the future of San Marcos and our region. The theme, "Pathways to Success," resonated well with partnerships we have made to ensure that students arrive here prepared and graduate with the skills they need to be successful. In fact, in December I was invited to speak at a California School Board Association meeting regarding the now seven agreements we have signed with public schools and other agencies.

Regionally, we have continued to expand our innovative partnerships into Southwest Riverside County where Cal State San Marcos at Temecula thrives. In fact, the demand for our Temecula center is now so strong that we just moved to a larger facility. And thanks to the City of Temecula and the Temecula Valley Unified School District, we will be paying only one dollar a year for a ten-year lease! What's more, the Cities of Temecula and Murrieta have approved \$3.2 million dollars in redevelopment grants to pay for building renovations and the ongoing development of the center.

Community service has become a very important component of our commitment to being a university fully engaged in our community. This year, for the fourth year in a row, we have been named to the national Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest federal recognition a university can receive for its commitment to volunteering, service-learning, and civic engagement.

And we recently learned that our campus will be one of five CSU campuses that will serve as a "demonstration site" for service learning in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics – also known as the STEM disciplines. The initiative will provide resources for our

Office of Community Service Learning to offer service learning opportunities to our students that reach out to youth at middle and high schools.

As we have expanded community outreach and visibility, our message that education is important for both personal transformation and regional vitality is resonating. In this last academic year alone, I wrote or co-authored three op-ed pieces for publication in regional newspapers while members of my University Council wrote two more.

And people are taking notice! In May, a Chamber of Commerce CEO wrote in a regional paper, and I quote: “One of the reasons North County’s economy is moving in a positive direction is the economic engine located in San Marcos. The California state university on the hills overlooking state route 78 is the hub of a burgeoning new economy spreading slowly across the northern regions of San Diego County.” End quote.

### **Innovative Curriculum, Empowering Students**

It’s true; Cal State San Marcos has become an engine for economic growth because **our graduates, prepared by relevant curricula and student-centered services, reflect this region and are empowered to lead it.**

Through a variety of innovative and directed efforts we have increased our first time freshmen retention rate by four percent in one year alone. Remediation rates in English and math have also increased five percent due to setting measurable goals, and directing attention and resources to them.

This summer we were approved to open a chapter of Alpha Lambda Delta, a first-year honors society for students who are in the top 20 percent of their class during their first year of college. This achievement represents progress on one of the Foundations of Excellence action items: do more to recognize and encourage students who excel in their academic work.

In 2006 I set a goal that we would become an “Hispanic Serving Institution” by 2010. This spring the U.S. Department of Education officially awarded us with this designation! This, in addition to our previous designation as an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander serving institution, opens up new grant opportunities that will impact the academic experience of all of our students. In fact, this month we learned that our Department of Biology was awarded our first HSI grant from the USDA for nearly \$250,000. The overall goal of this project is to attract, retain, train, and support underrepresented undergraduate students in the field of

environmental and natural resource science through a comprehensive instructional, research, and mentoring program.

Our innovative and hands-on academic programs are expanding. Today we have 41 programs of study and 16 credential programs – an increase of nearly 30 percent since 2004. New programs such as Mass Media, Global Studies, and a Professional Science Masters are just a few examples of how we are working hard to insure that Cal State San Marcos continues to be innovative to meet our region’s workforce needs today and tomorrow.

### **An Innovative and Best Place to Work and Study**

#### **As an engaged campus, we are a best place to work and study.**

Since our founding 20 years ago, we have made diversity a core value seeking to enhance sensitivity, respect, and support to all members of our community. This has made us one of the most diverse and welcoming institutions in the region. But when hateful graffiti appeared on campus this spring we were challenged to reaffirm our principles of social equity and justice.

I was proud of the courage shown by you—our students, faculty, and staff—who confronted these shameful acts at all levels of the university. And after meeting with members of our campus community to listen, gather input, and generate ideas, I outlined seven specific action steps to move us even further toward the campus that we envision. Once again, I offer my thanks and admiration to those of you on campus who have committed so much to the ongoing process and whose collective work provides a foundation for further growth and development.

Just a few years ago, in 2008, we opened our new Veteran’s Center – the second such center in our system. Today nearly 900 students self-identify as active duty personnel, veterans, or their dependents — that’s almost 10 percent of our student population! Well, just two weeks ago, we received word that our campus has been named a Military Friendly School by G.I. Jobs magazine. This designation places us in the top 15 percent of universities nationally who offer the best education and value, and are welcoming and inclusive to those who have served or are currently serving our country.

Athletics, an important component of student life, has made significant strides toward our goal of becoming an NCAA Division II school. Last year we founded and seated the Cougar Athletic Advisory Council. During the spring, students passed an athletics fee increase referendum allowing us to hire three new coaches, adding men’s and women’s basketball and

women's volleyball in 2011/12. And, thanks to the generosity of donors, our new softball field opened in January and we have begun grading for our new baseball field!

Because a university is a collection of many divisions and departments, all with unique purposes and cultures, in 2005 I developed Campus Connect as a program where participants could garner a broader perspective of our university community. This program was an important component of my goal of making this campus a "best place to work" for employees. Today, these Campus Connect alumni—now 125 strong—are our best ambassadors who are, internally, sharing what they have learned with colleagues while, externally, helping us spread the word that Cal State San Marcos is an institution that transforms lives and communities.

In testimony to our faculty who are engaged in research, during the last academic year we were awarded over \$8 million in grants. Our faculty's success in competing for these grants is a tangible example of how well we're advancing research frontiers in many fields to the benefit of our region and our students' education.

We have successfully continued our efforts to build a greener campus for all of us. We were named the winner of the San Diego Excellence in Energy award in the Outstanding Organizational Achievement category for our comprehensive energy conservation project. And I am proud that for the sixth year in a row, we are Recyclemania champions! Cal State San Marcos is still the school to beat with a 72 percent recycle rate and, I think you can agree with me, winning this title never gets old.

### Reflections on Furloughs/Budget

I often tell people that one of the highlights of my role as president is that I am in a position of seeing the big picture, of observing our interconnectedness, of identifying and leveraging our collective strengths. And I can tell you that I am more positive than ever about the future of our university as we enter our third decade.

Staff and faculty furloughs, student fee increases, and enrollment reductions created many challenges to overcome during the last two years. We have used innovation to not just get through these difficult times but to continue to achieve our strategic priorities. Our campus continues to be in a better place financially than many of our sister institutions and the key to that success has been your good work.

Last year, I challenged you to say, “*si, se puede,*” in the face of budget limitations, staffing challenges, and workload issues. Well, you more than delivered. I have each of you to thank for that. Thank you for saying “yes” to the challenge, thank you for continuing to produce quality work, and thank you for keeping your perspective “University First” and student centered.

The nature of our fiscal challenges requires great flexibility, innovation, and collaboration – qualities that you have visibly exhibited throughout this crisis. It is clear to me that each of you has the best interest of our university at heart when you do your work. And it is because of your love for and your commitment to our university that I know we will continue to push the boundaries of innovation as we pursue our common goal of making this an institution of distinction in our region and well beyond.

### Looking ahead – Goals for 2015

Twenty years ago, Cal State San Marcos was located in a small store front. Over the past two decades, the campus has been transformed. All told, our campus now consists of 19 buildings with over one million square feet of classroom, office, and operational space. Over the last six years alone Markstein Hall, the Center for Children and Families, The McMahan House, and our first parking structure have opened. Within the next year the Social and Behavioral Science Building and the new Public Safety Building will open. And, as we move forward with our new Student Union and partner with Urban Villages San Marcos on the University District project, soon we will have even more space for student living and learning, not to mention teaching and working.

We have much to be proud of today as we reflect on our development and our collective successes. Cal State San Marcos is a young and innovative institution poised for tremendous growth. With so much positive momentum, it is time to capitalize on our university-wide strengths and focus on the future; to aim high; and to position our university for even greater success and impact.

At the culmination of our twentieth anniversary, it is time to look toward 2015, our 25th anniversary, and begin to discuss our hopes, dreams, and goals for that milestone. I want to begin that conversation with you today.

Although we talk among ourselves that we are still young, we have in that short time, quite obviously, become visible and respected— in our region, our system, and nationally. In

five more years, and after this dramatic and unprecedented economic downturn, imagine what we will become!

While we will hold fast to our strategic priorities—Academic Excellence, Student Life, Diversity and Educational Equity, Campus Climate and Community Partnerships—and recalibrate our measurable goals for these, we will, for these next five years, describe a compelling case to our communities of what we can be with their help. We will create a philanthropic campaign to close during 2015 that will support our priorities and goals, and we will create stories that our friends and donors can embrace.

While the campaign themes are not yet entirely defined, they will be derived from the work you already do, from the successes we have already had, and from the hopes we see for these activities: to be both sustainable and enhanced through philanthropic gifts and non-state revenues. The stories we will share are not difficult to construct as they will celebrate you—your talent, your successes, your commitment to students, and the intellectual capital that you use to make our region, indeed our nation and beyond, stronger and better.

The three draft “themes” of our campaign are emerging:

1. Preparing tomorrow’s leaders through first class undergraduate experiences.

The many “stories” that are captured within this theme relate to our classroom teaching, which brings the best out of faculty research, which is enhanced by student internships, and community service learning projects. We will share how our students’ undergraduate experiences are informed by national best practices as well as the forward thinking use of technology and professional support services.

2. Building great communities— within and without.

We will communicate with pride our unique efforts and services to our local tribes, to our military installations, and to our other external communities. Our expanding athletics and visual and performing arts activities are examples of existing programs that already bring the external community to us, helping them to become more fully engaged and more intimately experienced in how we enrich the lives of this region. Our Temecula Center and Extended Learning course offerings expand our reach beyond the limits of physical borders and beyond our existing offerings.

3. Partnering through research and technology to solve critical 21<sup>st</sup> century issues

Because of the efforts taking place in our classrooms, our Centers, and through the research activities of our faculty, we already know that we are engaged in understanding current and future societal problems and, more importantly, utilizing that understanding to improve conditions and solve problems. Your work and involvement in health and health disparities; in sustainability; in climate change; and in biomedical and coastal issues are just a few extraordinary examples of the work being done here that needs to be shared.

While my vision for 2015 is incomplete at this time, let me start this conversation by saying that it is my commitment, centered on these draft themes, that:

By 2015 we will have garnered additional resources to more fully support student learning through faculty development and co-curricular activity enhancements; to create sustainable mechanisms to promote and support community building activities; and to help fund research and related activities directed toward critical societal problems and their solutions.

This ambitious plan is, no doubt, going to take hard work, your commitment, careful planning, and, yes, some resources. To that end we will launch the first ever campaign to friend raise and fundraise. As I noted, these priorities will focus on our students, our faculty, our facilities, and our partnerships. They will connect with and support our strategic priorities. We will celebrate you—our talented faculty and staff—by sharing your stories of how you serve students and impact our region in meaningful ways every day.

2015 may seem like a long time away, but you know it will be here before we know it. And since these are draft themes and a beginning vision, let me note that I will continue the conversations with you as I have now for 6.5 years and recommit to my core principles:

I believe in walking the talk. It is easy to talk about a set of values and institutional principles. It is far different to examine whether you adhere to them on a daily operational basis. I commit to you that I will continue to provide steady, open, honest, and enthusiastic leadership.

My executive leadership team and I will continue to dedicate ourselves to probing new ideas and decisions, and to collegiality and mutual respect.

I believe in being an active listener. Over the last six and a half years I have hosted 20 faculty, staff, and student open forums and 10 budget forums. These forums have been vehicles for me to share news, answer questions, and have an open dialogue about issues of the day.

Moving forward, I will continue to provide opportunities such as these for you to speak and for me to listen.

I believe in focusing on people and the good work being done. I appreciate your strengths, your skills, and your commitment to this campus. A university campus is so much more than its physical structures. You, the faculty and staff, make Cal State San Marcos the place of innovation, growth, and knowledge that it is today. The effects of your work are felt beyond the boundaries of the campus into the community, region, and beyond.

So with 20 successful years behind us, today we will begin the conversation toward 2015 and beyond.

Cal State San Marcos is our university!

We have made it what it is today!

So, let's start "thinking about tomorrow!"