

**REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY  
ENGAGING FOR THE COMMON GOOD**

**Thursday, February 2, 2012**

**Event Pavilion, Lot N**

**7 a.m.**

**President Karen S. Haynes**

## **INTRODUCTION**

**I want to send a clear message today that public higher education is a public good, and that we at Cal State San Marcos, YOUR university, possess an unwavering belief in the ability of education to transform lives and entire communities. And, I want you to know today, and everyday, that we do not just “believe” in transforming lives, but that we have done so with purpose by:**

- **Preparing tomorrow's leaders**
- **Building better communities... and**
- **Solving critical issues**

**And, we have done so by engaging our community for our common good.**

**The strategic plan we developed six years ago provided us with a clear path for what we needed to do to raise educational attainment rates in our region — particularly for the most educationally at risk among us. That strategic plan also enabled us to put in place measures that ensure the success of our students, and thus increase our retention and graduation rates. Our strategic plan provided guidance before this economic crisis and certainly has since.**

**Because of our plan, we know that supporting and encouraging our faculty to provide experiential learning that complements theoretical lessons is essential to developing our students as critical thinkers and community leaders.**

**We know, too, that publicly committing to community engagement meant that we, with purpose, would increase the ways in which the University interacts with our region. It meant that we would use our expertise to bring about profound and needed change to our region.**

**Higher education is under attack, and the state's de-investment in our students is real. State support is on the verge of falling 35 percent in this last year, during a time when the demand for a college-educated workforce is growing exponentially. By 2020, 67 percent of jobs will require a career certificate or a college degree, yet in California there will be a gap of one million persons between those with degrees and the number of people with degrees needed for our workforce.**

**We at Cal State San Marcos are working tirelessly to reduce this gap for our region, but we cannot do it alone. For our region to prosper, to be a nucleus of knowledge and to attempt to meet future workforce needs, we must commit today,**

**right here, right now, to reinvesting in higher education, thus investing in our students, our future workforce and, in turn, our region. We must build smarter, more engaged communities that will carry us forward as an epicenter of innovation and creative enterprise.**

**What does this mean for Cal State San Marcos? It means that we will focus our energies and efforts on what we have been doing and on what we do best: preparing, building and solving — engaging for the common good.**

### **PREPARING TOMORROW'S LEADERS**

**As a public institution, Cal State San Marcos must honor multiple and substantial responsibilities, and I hope that you share my belief that CSUSM's most important tasks are to educate the students of our region; to provide improved access to higher education; and to offer**

**one-of-a-kind experiences that will enable our graduates to make the deliberate decisions necessary to move into the workplace and to lead our changing region — and state — into the next century.**

**As a model of educational equity, CSUSM's diverse student body more closely reflects the demographics of tomorrow. Our focused recruitment strategies have resulted in students from underrepresented groups enrolling at CSUSM in record numbers. Half of all CSUSM undergraduates are first generation college students, and almost 45 percent of all students identify as African American, Hispanic, Asian, or Native American. Our region can only prosper if the future is owned by all, if we level the playing field.**

**To prepare every student who comes to Cal State San Marcos to be a leader, we have multiplied the services and support available to our students. We launched a new program — SOAR - Student Outreach and Referral —**

**to help students more successfully navigate through a new and often “foreign” college environment. Advisors answer any questions students and their families may have and point them toward appropriate university support services.**

We initiated freshmen learning communities, where certain courses or majors are grouped together based on a specific theme or topic. Research shows that students in their first year of college are more likely to continue their studies if they are able to learn in smaller groups and receive individualized attention.

Our focus is no less intense with other student populations on campus. We currently enroll more than 900 veterans and active duty students and their dependents — almost 10 percent of our student body. With our strong ties to Camp Pendleton and other installations in the area, military and veteran populations continue to choose us because of the exceptional services and support that we provide.

Because of the support and encouragement Army veteran Shaun received from our Veterans Affairs office, he is graduating this semester after overcoming post-traumatic stress disorder and other issues that could have prevented him from earning his degree. He's currently a mentor to other veteran students, works for the U.S. Office of Veteran's Affairs and is starting an energy supplement company not too far from campus — all while finishing his degree requirements.

Senior biology student Nastassja is a former foster youth who was unsure about attending college. She is now engrossed in rigorous pioneering stem cell research at the San Diego Zoo's Institute for Conservation and is a model for other foster youth, a brilliant testament of the dreams that can come true with a college education. Nastassja will even exceed her dreams when she enters a doctoral program in her field this fall.

The emphasis that Cal State San Marcos places on getting our students from admission to graduation is impressive. For Fall 2011, both the state and national averages for continuation were about 67% while our continuation rate was 80 percent! Students stay at our university because of our investment in them and our commitment to give them a well rounded, globally connected education.

In every way, our students are discovering firsthand how to become more engaged and responsible citizens of the world. Their educations extend well beyond the classroom and into our communities. Our students by their nature are dynamic and inventive, and I believe that to prepare them for leadership roles, their education should develop their creativity and entrepreneurship, it should prepare them to be team players, and it should encourage them to be civically minded.

I am proud to say that at Cal State San Marcos, education does just that. At Twin Oaks Valley Elementary School, 28 of our science students are engaging fourth graders in the sciences by adapting child's play to teach college-level ecology lessons. Roughly 200 grade-schoolers will take part in weekly hour-long sessions aimed at boosting education in science, technology, engineering and math.

Faculty in our visual and performing arts department have been working with 1,800 area third and fourth graders and their teachers since 2009 to increase reading and writing scores among underserved students. Through puppetry, theater, painting, and illustration, students learn how to read and put stories together. The results are worth sharing. Student test scores have risen 90 points — way above basic proficiency — since we began the program. To give you an indication of how significant this is basic proficiency is considered 50 points. Students in our program scored 40 points higher.

Through projects like these, and a curriculum that highlights and connects world views, students learn that the goal of class lessons is not to help them pass tests, but to apply that knowledge in imaginative ways to advance our region. We are educating our students to be globally aware, culturally competent, and socially engaged. Indeed, we are preparing tomorrow's leaders to be engaged for the common good.

### **BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITIES**

There are many ways to build better communities - and Cal State San Marcos contributes to all of them. Obviously our economic impact is large, and I've said before that for every dollar we receive, the return to this region is five fold. CSUSM's impact on our region has manifested itself in over one hundred million dollars of capital projects since 2009 alone —projects essential to students' education, scholarly research and campus life.

We continue also to focus on smart and relevant growth, and on thoughtful investment in our facilities. Our buildings are “green” and conform architecturally to strict federal “green” standards.

When I arrived on campus in 2004, we dedicated the Kellogg Library, the university's seventh building. Since then, we have carefully planned, designed and built six more:

**Markstein Hall**

**The Center for Children and Families**

**The McMahan House**

**The first parking structure**

**The Public Safety Building**

**and The Social and Behavioral Sciences Building.**

**And though not true “buildings,” our softball and baseball fields are certainly community spaces.**

**Every structure at CSUSM is built with a distinct purpose. The new student housing and multi-use complex, The Quad, will create living spaces for students and welcoming spaces for residents to shop and relax. The affiliation partnership with the North City developer is a wonderful example of a public-private partnership that promotes smart development.**

**The partnership allows us to provide student housing five years before we could have self-developed it and to focus our limited debt capacity and resources on other core infrastructure needs. The project is also the launch of what will be a very exciting mixed-use development in the City of San Marcos, a win-win partnership for the University, the development community and the City.**

**In just two weeks we will break ground on our new student union, which will become the heart of campus life for students and an inviting gathering place for the community with its large meeting spaces and ballroom. And the multipurpose event center for which we are seeking partnership opportunities and philanthropic support will further transform our region.**

**With each of these projects, we continue to blend the edges of our university with our community. The cones and cranes that abound today are among the surest signs of advancement, of our building better communities and engaging with you.**

**As an engaged and forward thinking university, CSUSM listens to what our constituents want. We create partnerships that “build community” and demonstrate our commitment to you. Residents in Southwest Riverside County asked us to help envision and create an educational center with courses relevant to the area's population and**

businesses. That's exactly what we built with their help - an educational center for them, a center specific to their needs, an educational community to call home.

A recent study from the Brookings Institution makes the case that flourishing metropolitan areas will be the key staging ground for new economic growth and vitality in the years ahead. That makes it all the more gratifying to note that the brain drain we hear so much about is not afflicting our region. In fact, San Diego and its surrounding counties rank among the handful of metropolitan areas nationwide experiencing a brain gain.

Our Extended Learning program is a main contributor to these gains, offering the most timely, relevant courses and programs that are closely aligned with the needs of area companies and that accelerate the time toward a degree.

Nearly 500 students are currently pursuing degrees and certificates in nursing, human resource management, biotechnology fields, event planning, and more. And over the past year, 600 community members have taken courses in everything from art and health to the politics of archaeology as part of our Osher Lifelong Learning program, aimed at those aged 50 and older.

We are filling the demand for an educated workforce and building a community of inquisitive, knowledgeable citizens. Eighty-five percent of our alumni stay in the region, contributing their talents to the economic recovery of our cities; students like Erica and Gina.

After years in a corporate setting, Erica came to CSUSM to make a career change. She knew that there was great demand in our region for well-trained and educated nurses. She enrolled in the accelerated bachelor's of science in nursing degree program offered through Extended Learning and is currently a full-time nurse on the surgical floor at Kaiser.

Gina was laid off after many years at a mortgage company and decided to pursue a new career in human resources. She enrolled in our HR certificate program and received a job offer before she even finished the program. She now helps manage an HR department.

CSUSM is serious about engaging with our community and creating thoughtful leaders. Our region needs strong, decisive, individuals — individuals who listen, who respect differences, and who act boldly on behalf of our region's citizens. We are building communities of these individuals right here.

**Leadership North County fosters the growth of area community leaders. Our Chamber Champions program reaches more than 10,000 businesses and 25,000 employees to whom we extend our message of education, training, consulting, and community building. Our longstanding work with native tribes has resulted in increased enrollment at CSUSM of Native American students from 59 in 2004 to nearly double that today; numbers that will only rise with the recent opening of our California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center.**

**And since we began guaranteeing college admission to area high school students in 2006, more than 1,200 have been admitted to CSUSM. This means that more students are coming to us prepared, that more students who only dreamed of going to college are learning early what it takes to get in to college.**

**This is especially important given that fewer than half of all high school students in North County complete the required courses for admission into the CSU and UC systems. For historically underserved student populations, the numbers are even lower — less than 25 percent are college eligible.**

**By helping these students gain entry to college, we are building our community. This is engagement for the common good.**

**Yes, there are other universities that have one agreement with their local school district, but we have nine agreements — 5 with school districts, 3 for former foster youth, and 1 with a native tribe. This is unique within our system and beyond.**

**Cal State San Marcos is this region's driving force, expanding our community outreach and visibility, and working to address the challenges and issues facing our region. This is what it takes to build better communities.**

**We are cultivating a stronger culture of engagement across every facet of the university. Our athletic teams are drawing deserved recognition, winning repeated national championships and acclaim. This year, we have added new sports teams — volleyball and basketball — that bring us closer to NCAA membership and provide more opportunities for our neighbors to get to know our students and our university.**

**And with the possible addition of a multipurpose event center in our future, CSUSM will become a true focal point for the region, bringing residents from Riverside to**

**Poway, from Oceanside to Escondido together for sporting events, cultural activities, conferences, and more.**

**As we “build better communities” in all these ways, we will remind our region that amid the business of teaching and learning and discovery that takes place at CSUSM each day, the mission of this University is forever directed outward toward the service of our region, toward engaging with you and building better communities.**

### **SOLVING CRITICAL ISSUES**

**Solving issues critical to our region is the hallmark of an engaged institution. And, as a public university, I believe that community engagement is a moral obligation. We cannot consider ourselves to be YOUR university without interacting with you around the issues of our time.**

**Quite simply, community engagement makes sense because it builds on a core CSUSM strength: putting academic inquiry at the service of solving real-world problems. This CSUSM difference crosses all of our majors and takes a hundred different forms. I find this blend of intellect, entrepreneurialism, and service everywhere on campus.**

**Faculty are developing novel vaccines to curb cancers and protect against viral diseases. The university is earning significant grants from the National Institutes of Health to help prepare underserved students for professional careers in biomedical research. We collaborated with Palomar College to earn a grant from the National Science Foundation to develop programs to increase enrollment in science, technology, math and engineering. And our Visual and Performing Arts department earned a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to teach reading through theater.**

**Efforts are taking place right now in all of our classrooms and centers to engage in the research and scholarly activities critical to understanding, reducing, preventing, and solving some of society's most pressing issues.**

**Nearly two-dozen CSUSM students spent last summer in laboratories, conducting studies on treatment options for osteoporosis, researching the effectiveness of knee braces, and using mathematical equations to stimulate the reprogramming of stem cells.**

**Students are studying the complexities of border communities to help improve U.S.-Mexico relations, and others are working with faculty to determine why adolescent brains may be more vulnerable than adult brains to developing addictions to drugs.**

**Casey, a chemistry graduate, is developing therapeutic approaches for the treatment of malaria at the No-VAR-tis Research Foundation in La Jolla. Joseph, a psychology major, is studying new methods of treating post-traumatic stress disorder and stress-related injuries. Jennifer, an Ed.D. candidate, is researching the effects of mobile technology on Spanish speaking students' ability to more quickly learn English and how to read. And anthropology students Ashley and Diane are exploring the environment's impact on Native food sources and basket-weaving traditions.**

**In Temecula, we are putting the environment at the forefront of decision makers' minds through our Environmental Certificate program. More than 30 public officials are studying climate change, water conservation and endangered species in hopes of creating a more informed community and more balanced legislation.**

**Every discipline at CSUSM aims to answer the questions vital to our region's growth and prosperity. We are a catalytic force in our region. Through our students, faculty, alumni, and our countless connections to business, Cal State San Marcos is our region's great agent of change and progress — economically, socially, intellectually, and culturally.**

## **CLOSING**

**When we examine this evidence — increased educational attainment rates across our region — truly “leaving no child behind” and helping to guarantee an educated workforce for our region, when you think about the impact of improved retention and graduation rates for our students, which means graduating more students, more quickly each year for this region, and when you imagine that by this May, more than 27,500 alumni will be working in and leading our region, can you imagine what we would be doing if higher education hadn't been under attack for the last four years?**

**When you think about veterans finding post-war careers and success, and first-generation students engaged in experiential learning and critical research, you should be proud of what you've created here.**

**We have contributed successfully to businesses, the performing arts, and the biotech and medical fields. We have provided**

**non-degree and certificate programs to thousands. And we have brought talented faculty, staff, students and administrators to our region to live, work and engage with our community.**

**For 21 years, you have entrusted us with the education of our region's talent and with the development of our region. We have returned that trust by crafting a university that is uniquely yours, one that not only responds to but anticipates your needs; one focused on preparing tomorrow's leaders, building better communities, and solving critical issues.**

**And we have continued on this trajectory during the toughest times that public higher education has ever known. We have done it without whining, without hunkering down, without slowing our pace. We have done it with a constancy of purpose and with a focus on the future. We have done it with your support and help. We have done it for the common good.**

**With state funding at an all time low, we need your continued commitment to us and your continued belief in our value to this region. We need you to advocate for us and to engage with us on all levels. We must move forward as a university, a community united in purpose and in action.**

**We need to look beyond today's budget crisis, eyes focused on the horizon. This region's prosperity clearly rests on the success of higher education and on the success of Cal State San Marcos.**

**Engaged for the common good, preparing tomorrow's leaders, building better communities, and solving critical issues, there is no limit to what an educated region can do.**