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State of the University: 2006
President Judy Genshaft's Remarks

January 31, 2007

Good afternoon.

Thank you to our Faculty Senate for hosting today's event. Special thanks to Senate President Michael Barber for his leadership and commitment to our university. I look forward to our continued work together.

Typically, I would give this address in the fall, but I delayed it to give us time to finish our 50th year celebrations. As we enter our 51st year, I am pleased to report on the state of our university, to celebrate our accomplishments, and to present the first steps of our strategic planning process. So, I'd like to start the new year off with a brief look back.

Some seven years ago, we decided that the University of South Florida would establish the underpinnings to transform itself into a major research university. Those of us who were here then will remember we were at a crossroads. The words of William Jennings Bryant come to mind – "Destiny is not a matter of chance; it is a matter of choice."

And choose, we did! We began to codify and focus on an ambitious plan. Today, that plan is paying off! We are clearly a major national research institution. We are a major state-player in research, innovation, and economic development.

Today, it is with great pleasure that I stand before you and say – unequivocally – The State of Our University Is Strong! We have campuses in Tampa – including USF-Health – St. Petersburg, Sarasota-Manatee and Lakeland. We have more than 200 undergraduate and graduate degree programs. More than 11-thousand employees and a \$1.6 billion budget.

I would like to share with you some of the many important university initiatives and faculty achievements across all disciplines. And please know, there are many more! All of them are tangible evidence that this is a university on the move. And that move is upward!

Last fall USF was chosen as one of only 63 public research universities in the country to be named to the highest tier of the prestigious Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This designation is known as "Research University with Very High Research Activity." I am also proud that the National Science Foundation recognized USF as one of the two fastest-growing research institutions in the nation, based on research & development expenditures.

Research takes funding. Thanks to your efforts, 2006 was a record-breaking year. Our distinguished faculty and staff brought in more than \$310 million dollars in research funding. This accomplishment places us number two among Florida's public universities. And in the Big East Conference, we are number three out of sixteen universities.

This is critically important. Funding is a key benchmark in a research university's standing. It's how quality and productivity are measured. Some 69 of you brought in \$1 million or more last year. It's a huge accomplishment.

The single largest research grant we received was more than \$20 million from the National Institutes of Health – thanks to the work of our colleague, Dr. Jeffrey Krischer and his team. Dr. Krischer is establishing & directing a data-coordinating center. Its mission: to identify environmental filters that may contribute to the development of Type 1 diabetes in children all over the world.

And that's not all! Dr. Krischer was recognized by the journal, *The Scientist*, as one of the 20 highest federally-funded researchers in the nation. One of the top 20! A significant achievement that reflects on the transformation of this university.

On top of that, we competed for – and won – \$8 million dollars to create Florida's very first "Center of Excellence" which has the potential to change how illness is detected and treated. Ours was the top-ranked application in a pool of 32 proposals from all over the state. Our colleagues, Dr. Daniel Lim in Biology; Dr. Ed Turos in Chemistry; Dr. Peter Stroot in Engineering; and Dr. Richard Heller in Molecular Medicine will all play leadership roles in this collaborative venture. Executive Vice President Dr. Carl Carlucci was instrumental in providing leadership and guidance in this highly competitive process. I thank Dr. Carlucci for this success and all the ways he contributes.

Besides the groundbreaking *pure research* going on here, our faculty is extraordinarily active when pure research is applied practically. It's what our biotechnology colleagues call "bench-to-bedside." To help do that, the university has forged some important commercial partnerships.

Last month we announced an initiative between our College of Marine Science, the Center for Ocean Technology and the prestigious Silicon Valley corporate partner, SRI International – formerly known as Stanford Research Institute. SRI's initial focus will be on research & development, technology transfer and the commercialization of marine science. This collaboration is expected to have a huge impact on our local economy. A \$172 million impact!

USF Health is making tremendous strides under the leadership of Dr. Stephen Klasko, Vice President and Dean of the College of Medicine. In November, The National Institutes of Health gave top rankings for USF Health's efforts in two areas I like to call "babies and brains." Our Department of Pediatrics placed third nationally among all pediatric departments in research grants. The Department of Neurosurgery climbed to ninth place nationally in research dollars. The research being conducted at USF Health is truly improving lives on a daily basis.

I would like to acknowledge Vice President for Research Dr. Bob Chang and his team for all their efforts. There are projects in every stage of development. In every department. On every USF campus.

I know we agree on the importance of investing in our university's intellectual capital. We already have a world-class faculty and staff, and one of my personal goals this year is to continue to add significantly credentialed faculty members, while working hard to retain our best and brightest.

It is worth noting that the state of Florida offered special funding to state universities to attract 20 of the best faculty from around the world. USF was granted funding for four! That is approximately 20 percent of the entire state's funding last year for world-class scholars. On top of that, we were able to attract 247 new faculty from other leading research universities last year.

I am pleased to share with you that *Nobel Laureate* in Physics Ivar Giaver has accepted a three-year appointment as Eminent Scholar in our Physics Department beginning this semester. Five Faculty members are representing USF around the world, visiting universities and colleges as Fullbright Scholars. Here at home, we are hosting a Fullbright Scholar from Uzbekistan in our College of Engineering.

Provost and Senior Vice President Dr. Renu Khator is my partner in academic excellence. Provost Khator is ensuring we have the best faculty and the resources to retain them. She and her Academic Affairs team are responsible for gains in the selectivity of USF students, while improving our systems to help our students graduate. It is important because research & faculty plays a critical role in our ability to attract stronger students and it supports our transformation.

In our College of Visual and Performing Arts, art historian Dr. Elisabeth Fraser has been designated a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellow for 2007-2008. The college itself also received a top honor. It is responsible for our ranking in the top ten of best art-on-campus programs by Public Art Review.

Another honor goes to the USF Tampa College of Education. It is ranked in the top 25 percent of all graduate education programs by U.S. News & World Report.

Student leadership is central as we move forward. USF Student Body President Frank Harrison has the dual distinction of serving our university on the USF Board of Trustees and the Florida Board of Governors, and representing students from all our state universities. I am proud to say that our Student Body President is actively shaping discussions on education policy for the entire state of Florida.

Also making us proud is a group of more than 400 USF student recipients of "First Generation" grants. The program was created and funded by the Florida legislature last spring. As the name suggests, the intent is to help students who are the first in their families to attend and complete a college degree. USF raised \$1.2 million dollars to match this state funding, providing resources to undergraduates who might not otherwise be able to stay at USF and ultimately graduate.

Another important indicator of a changing student body is that 50 percent of our freshmen reside on campus. Plans are well underway to add another 1,000 beds on our main campus in Tampa. Last fall, we enrolled a record-setting 44,038 students. We are now the ninth largest public higher-education institution in the nation.

“First-Time-in-College” data demonstrates our forward momentum. This fall produced the most select freshman class in our history! I am confident this trend will continue. Our freshmen admit-pool for Fall 2007 is stronger and more diverse than ever. The *Princeton Review* ranks USF 18th in the nation for having an ethnically diverse student body and a diversity-friendly campus.

Our Honors College provides further evidence of our transformation and momentum. By the end of December, Honors had extended invitations to more than 1,300 new students for next fall’s class. It’s an impressive number when you consider that in 2006, USF accepted just over 1,200 students for the entire year!

While it’s true that most of the work going on at the university is cerebral and goes on quietly, it’s hard to miss the sights and sounds of some of the other work we’re doing!

Environment enhances learning, and this year we finished a beautiful new building on our USF Sarasota-Manatee campus. Campus Executive Officer Dr. Laurey Stryker was instrumental in creating the new USF Sarasota-Manatee campus. As many of you may know, she retired last month. Her legacies are many and I thank her. I welcome Dr. Arthur Guilford as Interim Campus Executive Officer of USF Sarasota-Manatee.

USF St. Petersburg was accredited by SACS, marking the first time in the state of Florida that a regional campus has received separate accreditation. Additionally, USF St Petersburg opened a new residence hall, a bookstore, and a parking garage. These beautiful new facilities are an asset to the university and our community in Downtown St. Petersburg. Congratulations to Regional Chancellor Karen White and her team.

In Lakeland, we opened our new joint-use facility. USF Lakeland has a new campus executive and a new vision for progress. I am pleased to welcome Dr. Marshall Goodman who we recruited from Silicon Valley to lead the exciting changes at USF Lakeland.

On our Tampa campus, we hear the sounds of continued progress at the Center for Advanced Health Care. The 194,000 square-foot building is well underway. Also under construction is our Health Pavilion South. This 126,000 square foot medical building at Tampa General Hospital will bring new meaning to the phrase “state-of-the-art”!

I am also excited about the enormous 300,000 square foot student union that is under construction in USF Tampa. The floor plans include modern, fun spaces for our students, as well as retail and gathering spots. It is the first true student union to be built at the University of South Florida.

And there is hammering going on at our Joint Military Leadership Center. A 52,000 square foot facility, the JMLC will also add critically needed classroom space to our Tampa campus. We offer special thanks to Congressman Bill Young for making this project a reality.

On the drawing board are several other vital projects. In Tampa, we have the Visual and Performing Arts Teaching Facility, the Patel Center for Global Solutions, and the Interdisciplinary Science, Teaching and Research Facility. In St Petersburg, we have the Science and Technology building. And at USF Lakeland, we are moving forward with our campus master plan.

Private funding also plays a material role in our success. Those dollars support our programs, our students and our faculty. This past year, we raised almost \$70 million. That is a 29 percent increase from last year. Our faculty and staff contributed \$2.4 million. You are the best and I say thank you.

Frank and Carol Morsani presented the university with a gift valued at \$17 million, with a match. Their gift goes to USF Health and Athletics. Also champions for USF are Les and Pam Muma! Their gift will advance research in neonatal intensive care. It is a collaboration between USF Health and Tampa General Hospital. The total impact of their gift will exceed \$14 million.

These philanthropists are choosing USF because they understand that we are serving our community and the world. We have transformed USF into the kind of institution that makes a difference.

Our Foundation now has assets of \$330 million dollars. Joanne Alessandrini, our Interim Vice President for Advancement, has been outstanding in keeping us focused on our goals. Our Foundation Board is working hard, setting ambitious goals. A big announcement will come later this year about our comprehensive campaign.

I have never believed that a university operates in a vacuum. Judging by the important outside constituencies our faculty is engaging, neither do you.

Proof is in our selection by the prestigious Carnegie Foundation. USF now ranks as one of 76 universities in the nation that are “most engaged” with their local communities. The Carnegie Foundation also gave USF the distinction of being one of only ten universities across the country ranked both “very high research” and community-engaged. Doctors Susan Greenbaum and Kathleen Moore directed our efforts. I thank them and all their partners across USF campuses who created our powerful and successful application.

To our students, who volunteered a grand total of 85,000 hours last year, thank you! Just ten days ago, we held the 2007 Stampede of Service as the final event of our annual Martin Luther King Jr. commemoration week. It was the largest service day in our history! We had 1,300 students volunteering across Tampa Bay.

We are also connecting with our community via the air waves. WUSF Public Broadcasting now has an audience of nearly one million television viewers and 300,000 radio listeners. That audience is learning about USF every day.

Our Anthropology Department has been ranked number two in the nation for public engagement. The top five includes UC Berkeley, Michigan State, University of Pennsylvania and Arizona State. Kudos to Department Chair Dr. Liz Bird and all of her colleagues for achieving this national ranking!

To inspire even more community engagement, we established the Center for Civic Engagement & Volunteerism. Our mission is to continue to engage students, faculty and staff in service activities on campus and within our communities.

Turning our attention to sports, it is undeniable how USF athletics connect us to our communities! Our first bowl win – the Papajohns.com Bowl last month – capped a winning season for our football team and Athletic Director Doug Woolard. Our women's basketball team participated in their first NCAA tournament game.

Belonging to the Big East helps us in many ways. The televised games bring USF into the homes of families in top media markets across the country. Whether it is on the playing field or in the classroom, teamwork helps us succeed. Together, we are making our communities better!

As we move forward, it becomes even more important to build a single brand & identity for the University of South Florida. It is critical that the outside world see the University of South Florida as one university. Our Board of Trustees is the sole local governing body for the university and is responsible for the single university platform. I will work hard to bring all parts of USF closer together in shared services, shared programs and shared efforts in community and public relations.

One of our true strengths is our Board of Trustees. The founding board of 2001-2006, led by Chairman Dick Beard, was critical to our success. This past summer, Rhea Law was elected as the new Chair of our Board of Trustees. As many of you may know, Chair Law has deep personal roots to USF. She is a tireless leader and is joined by an engaged Board of Trustees. We are lucky to have such bright and talented trustees.

Upon becoming Chair, Trustee Law charged Trustee Lee Arnold and me to direct the university's strategic plan for 2007-2012. We are underway and will continue to meet with you and other key stakeholders. We will be finalizing the plan and will present it to Trustees later this spring.

Our goal is very simple, but also very ambitious! We plan to meet the criteria for membership in the Association of American Universities. AAU is an association of 62 leading research institutions in the United States and Canada. They are distinguished by the breadth and quality of their research programs and graduate education. Membership is by invitation only and is based on nine indicators. Our Big East peer institutions include three

AAU institutions—Rutgers, Syracuse, and Pittsburgh. Our state is the fourth largest in the nation, and yet only one university belongs.

We are the bellwether for social and scientific concerns – most notable are health, pharmaceuticals, international trade, technology, gerontology and urban development. Because of you, our fine faculty, I believe strongly that USF is in the best position to become the second Florida institution invited to join the AAU. We will be ready to be invited!

Continuing to transform the university using AAU-readiness as a guide will admit us to this upper echelon of academia. Many of the initiatives I've mentioned here today are critically important to that goal. Rest assured. We can get there, by focusing on the goals of our strategic plan. The plan is bold and ambitious, setting our sites on a global approach, student success, community engagement and an inter-disciplinary approach. These goals will make us stronger and better position USF for membership in AAU.

Each part of our strategic plan states clearly who we are and where we are going. The bedrock of the plan is our values. USF is recruiting and retaining the very best faculty, staff, and high-potential students. We are providing excellence in teaching and learning, scholarship and research, and community engagement. We firmly believe it is important to foster an environment where we can exchange and debate ideas with respect, integrity, and civility.

One significant theme weaved throughout our strategic plan is our interdisciplinary approach to learning, research, and community engagement. An example of this is our “Sustainable Healthy Communities” initiative. It includes faculty, students and staff from the sciences, humanities, the Patel Center for Global Solutions, and USF Health.

In these complex times, we need to work together – each bringing our expertise to the table – to create real world solutions. To that end, I will continue to fund initiatives that cross disciplines, schools, colleges, and campuses.

Another theme of our strategic plan is our move to a more global approach. We must rigorously review our current practices relating to global and cultural literacy and implement change. We must strengthen our recruitment of international students. We must increase the number of our faculty who seek Fullbrights. And we must move deliberately to invite more Fullbright Scholars to our campuses. I look forward to the day when our incoming students receive a passport application along with their acceptance letter to USF.

Speaking of global matters, I hope all of you know that Betty Castor has joined the Patel Center as its new director. I am confident she will help set the pace in our global initiatives.

Student success is also an important theme in the Strategic Plan. We have made great improvements in our organization and the allocation of resources to ensure our students have quality living and learning. Leading our Student Affairs is Vice President Dr. Jennifer Meningall. Among her important projects is the expansion of our residence halls, with floor

plans that include innovative learning opportunities. We know that our graduate and commuter students have different needs and we are working hard to continue to address those needs as well.

The last major theme of the Strategic Plan is community engagement and partnership. As our recent Carnegie designation reminds us, we are exceptional in connecting with and serving our communities. We are partnering with state & local governments and the private sector to leverage our intellectual resources, always with the goal of making our world better.

I encourage each of you to review the latest draft of the strategic plan. It is available on-line at the Board of Trustees website and the Academic Affairs website. We have set meetings throughout the university. I invite each of you to attend and share your thoughts with Trustee Arnold, the Vice Presidents, and with me. I look forward to those conversations.

In closing, I want to re-iterate my genuine excitement about our university. There is so much to be proud of! Around the country and around the world, USF is being recognized as a choice destination for research, innovation and community engagement. Each of you makes this happen. I thank you and commend you for your efforts.

Going back to the words of William Jennings Bryant: “Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice.” Our destiny is to begin to write the next 50 years of the University of South Florida history today. Thank you for giving me the privilege of serving as your President. I hold this position with great seriousness and commitment.