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“Profiting by the Past: Celebrating the Renovation of the IU Kokomo Main Building”

Dedication of the Renovation of the IU Kokomo Main Building

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie

President, Indiana University

Kresge Auditorium

IU Kokomo

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5:30 p.m.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Charles Klauder, an architect who designed many university buildings around the country, including the magnificent and iconic Cathedral of Learning at the University of Pittsburgh, once wrote that colleges and universities are particularly well suited to reap the benefits of forethought and skill in planning.

“Nowhere is it more essential,” he wrote, “to have the physical plant beautiful and well-knit together; nowhere should it be more feasible to enlist the careful thought of well-trained minds, to weigh and reconcile all component parts, to profit by the past, to measure accurately the present, to forecast the future as well as it can be forecast...”<sup>1</sup>

Today, as we celebrate the splendid renovation of IU Kokomo’s Main Building, we note that Indiana University truly has “enlisted the careful thought of well-trained minds” in order to profit by the past, to measure accurately the present, and to forecast—and make provisions for—the future.

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<sup>1</sup> Charles Z. Klauder and Charles C. Wise, *College Architecture and its Part in the Development of the Campus*, (C. Scribner’s Sons, 1929), p. 23.

## 2. THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF THE REGIONAL CAMPUSES AND IU KOKOMO

Modern facilities like the one we dedicate today reflect the shared commitment of Indiana University and the State of Indiana to make provisions that allow IU Kokomo and IU's other regional campuses to build upon the vital contributions they make to their regions and to the state.

IU's regional campuses provide an education that is innovative, flexible, relevant, and accessible to a wide range of qualified learners.

They are at the forefront of the state's commitment to increasing the number of Hoosiers holding baccalaureate and postgraduate degrees.

Today, IU's regional campuses enroll about one-third of all IU students. They provide an excellent education to 36,000 students a year, the vast majority of whom are Hoosiers, and many of whom are non-traditional or first-generation students.

And nowhere is their impact felt more greatly than in Kokomo and north central Indiana, where Indiana University Kokomo combines the benefits of a large public university and all of its resources, with the close-knit learning environment typically found at smaller institutions.

Nearly 80 percent of IU Kokomo graduates stay in the region, using their new skills and knowledge to strengthen the local economy and enrich their home communities. A recent study estimated that the overall economic impact of the operations of IU Kokomo on the state of Indiana is more than \$52 million annually. But more importantly, IU Kokomo students, faculty, staff, and alumni contribute in countless ways, large and small, to the civic, economic, and cultural life of this region and the state.

As we approach the Bicentennial of Indiana University, which we will celebrate in 2020, IU Kokomo is also helping to advance IU's strategic goals of helping to build a

prosperous and innovative Indiana and to create and sustain a culture of building and making.

One excellent example of the campus's contributions to these goals is its partnership with Inventrek Technology Park, a venture in which both Chancellor Emeritus Person and Chancellor Sciame-Giesecke have been closely involved. Last fall, The Shared Drive was established at Inventrek with a \$25,000 grant from the Innovate Indiana initiative. The Shared Drive is Howard County's first public co-working space. Its mission is to give budding entrepreneurs access to professional and cost-effective work space, amenities, and support that allow them to grow their fledgling businesses into successful enterprises.

The Shared Drive also illustrates the importance of well-equipped, inspiring spaces that foster collaboration.

### 3. PROVIDING A HIGH QUALITY EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Providing such spaces is one of Indiana University's central priorities.

New, expanded, and renovated facilities are essential to support IU's missions of education, research, and the long-term preservation of knowledge. They are critical to recruiting and retaining the best faculty, to ensuring that IU remains competitive in research and scholarship, and to providing a high quality educational environment for students on all IU campuses.

IU's buildings are also an important part of the university's heritage. In many cases, these facilities represent a substantial investment by the people of Indiana. Thus, it is essential that we make the best possible use of them and that we ensure that they remain up to modern standards.

Many buildings on IU's regional campuses have been extensively renovated to bring them to current standards, to install updated equipment and infrastructure, to repurpose them for new uses, and to contribute to the aesthetic integrity of the campus.

Today, we celebrate the latest such renovation: the transformation of IU Kokomo's Main Building into a state-of-the-art learning space for the 21st century.

As most of you know, the Main Building opened in 1965. It was the first building on the South Washington Street campus when IU Kokomo moved from the Seiberling Mansion.

This much-needed renovation includes the addition of a splendid new limestone façade, the transformation of the former science labs into high-tech classrooms, the addition of a new student lounge and study area, and updated classrooms and offices—all of which will help IU Kokomo to continue its traditions of outstanding teaching and learning.

#### 4. SPECIAL THANKS

That we are dedicating this renovated facility today is testimony to the dedication of many groups and individuals.

On behalf of Indiana University, I want to express our most sincere appreciation to State Senator James Buck and State Representative Mike Karickhoff—from whom you will hear in a few moments—and to all the members of the Indiana General Assembly, not only for their allocation of \$14 million that made this renovation possible, but also for all they have done over the years to support Indiana University and higher education in general.

I also want to strongly commend Chancellor Sue Sciame-Giesecke and all of the IU Kokomo administrators, faculty, and staff whose contributions were integral to this renovation, as well as Vice President for Capital Planning and Facilities Tom Morrison, and the many design and construction professionals, both internal and external, who contributed to this project.

And, finally, I would like to thank our Trustees, not only for their steadfast and enthusiastic support for this renovation, but more generally for their continued and ongoing efforts to guard and care for the welfare of our institution.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Architect Charles Klauder, to whom I referred earlier, called the type of planning for which universities are particularly well-suited an “art,” but, in his words, “it is also a science.”<sup>2</sup>

Today, thanks to so many of you who have been involved in the processes that have allowed IU to profit by the past and to look to the future, we celebrate the latest benefits the “art and science” of planning has brought to IU Kokomo.

We look forward to celebrating the many achievements and advances that are yet to come.

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<sup>2</sup> Charles Z. Klauder and Charles C. Wise, *College Architecture and its Part in the Development of the Campus*, (C. Scribner’s Sons, 1929), p. 23.