

The Installation of Nasser Paydar as Chancellor of IUPUI

IUPUI Chancellor Installation Ceremony

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie

President, Indiana University

IUPUI Campus Center

Room 450

Indianapolis, IN

Tuesday, November 17, 2015

2:00 p.m.

1. INTRODUCTION: URBAN UNIVERSITIES, AGENTS OF CHANGE

Trustees of Indiana University and Purdue University, President Daniels, Mayor Ballard, faculty and staff colleagues, students, friends, and distinguished guests:

Charles Hathaway, one of the founders of the Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities, of which IUPUI is a member, wrote that urban universities “are agents of change. Just as the (urban) university transforms the society of which it is a part, so will it be transformed by that society.”¹

Today, as we celebrate the installation of Nasser Paydar as chancellor of the Indianapolis campus, we also celebrate a campus that has—for nearly 50 years—served the people of Indianapolis, the state, the nation and the world through research, service, and engagement that contribute solutions to society’s most pressing problems and by educating the next generation of men and women to take on the work most needed by our society. In so doing, it is helping to transform—and is continually being transformed by—the society it so ably serves.

¹ Charles E. Hathaway, Paige E. Mulhollan, and Karen A. White, “Metropolitan Universities: Models for the Twenty-First Century,” in Daniel Milo Johnson, David Arnold Bell, eds., *Metropolitan Universities: An Emerging Model in American Higher Education*, (University of North Texas Press, 1995), 13.

2. A DYNAMIC AND THRIVING URBAN RESEARCH CAMPUS

We need only look around this dynamic and thriving campus to see evidence of this mutual transformation.

The campus's longstanding strengths in the academic health sciences have allowed Indiana University to play an essential role in the provision of health-related services to the people of Indiana and the nation, in educating the overwhelming majority of health sciences professionals in Indiana, and in conducting research that leads to new treatments and cures.

The campus is also home to outstanding professional schools in business and law, and to first-rate graduate and undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences.

Just as the faculty, staff, students, and alumni of these programs are making vital contributions that help to transform the city of Indianapolis and the state, so too are the campus's academic programs being transformed in response to the needs of the city and state and the demands of students.

For example, we recently established the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy, the world's first school devoted to philanthropic studies and research, as well as the Fairbanks School of Public Health, which focuses on urban public health and which is helping to address public health problems that impact the city of Indianapolis and its citizens.

The campus also has a tremendous history of civic engagement, with students contributing tens of thousands of hours of volunteer service to the community each year. The campus's unwavering commitment to community, service-learning, and civic engagement is one of the most powerful and visible ways the IUPUI campus helps to

transform the community it serves. The campus continues to receive recognition at the highest level for supporting exemplary community service programs that achieve meaningful results. In fact, IUPUI has been named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll each of the seven years the Corporation for National and Community Service has compiled the list.

The campus is also widely acknowledged as a leader in information technology infrastructure and is home to the Global Research Network Operations Center, which manages more than 20 major national and international research and education networks that connect the United States research community to networks around the world.

We see additional evidence of the growth and the impact of this campus in facilities like the Science and Engineering Laboratory Building and this splendid Campus Center. We also see such evidence in new residence halls that contribute immeasurably to student success, including North Hall, which is rapidly approaching completion, and the very successful conversion of the former University Place Hotel and Conference Center into University Tower.

Of course, a distinguished history of leadership has also contributed to the success of the IUPUI campus. The campus began, in part, as the vision of Senator Richard Lugar, then mayor of Indianapolis; Purdue President Frederick Hovde, IU Chancellor Herman Wells; IU President Joseph Sutton; IUPUI's first chancellor, Maynard Hine, and many other community leaders. IUPUI Chancellor Glenn Irwin built on this legacy of leadership, and, of course, emeritus chancellors Gerald Bepko and Charles Bantz, who honor us with their presence today, have both been vital and energetic parts of that history of leadership.

3. INTRODUCING NASSER PAYDAR

And today, we celebrate a new chapter in the history of this outstanding campus, as we officially install Nasser Paydar as the fifth chancellor of the IUPUI campus.

Nasser officially began his duties on August 16th, but, having served this campus and Indiana University in a variety of positions over 30 years, he needs no introduction to many of you.

But let me take a few moments to share some of Nasser's background and a few of his many accomplishments.

Nasser earned bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in Mechanical Engineering from Syracuse University.

During his 30 years with Indiana University, Nasser has—time and again—demonstrated outstanding leadership. He joined the faculty in 1985 as assistant professor of mechanical engineering and went on to become chair of his department. He accepted a position as associate dean for graduate programs in the School of Engineering and Technology in 1995, was named associate dean for academic programs in 1996, and moved on to become the executive associate dean for academic programs in 2002.

In 2004, he became Vice Chancellor and Dean of Indiana University Purdue University Columbus, where he initiated the Bold Aspirations fund-raising campaign, a \$4 million campaign that was the largest fundraising effort in IUPUC's history. He also negotiated articulation agreements with six IUPUI schools to establish joint baccalaureate programs. And he worked with educators, businesses, and Columbus community leaders to identify areas of study that most significantly impacted south central Indiana and to prepare students for success in the region.

In 2007, he was named interim chancellor of IU East, and officially accepted the role as IU East's fifth chancellor on January 1, 2009. His service in Richmond was a continuation of the fine work that has characterized his decades of service to this university. He led strategic planning and a campus transformation that resulted in an 87 percent enrollment increase, an improved first-year retention rate, and a marked increase in graduation rates. Through his leadership, the campus planned and implemented online education programs that placed the campus at the forefront of such activity at IU. He also worked with community stakeholders and the campus to enhance university facilities, revitalize the image of the campus and its fundraising, and improve faculty and staff morale and campus pride.

In 2012, Nasser returned to the Indianapolis campus as executive vice chancellor. In that role, he led a comprehensive and inclusive strategic planning process that resulted in *Our Commitment to Indiana and Beyond: the IUPUI Strategic Plan*, which is guided by and derives from the *Indiana University Bicentennial Strategic Plan*, the overarching university-wide strategic plan. In the past year, he has led the campus in implementing the strategic plan's 10 goals for the campus, including enhancements to undergraduate education and other developments that will help IUPUI fulfill its new vision, help the campus achieve greater success and distinction, and contribute further to economic development in the state.

Nasser is a man of great energy, integrity, and conviction. He is a man dedicated to the values at the heart of the very best liberal education. We are most fortunate to count him among the leadership of this great university at this historic time—as IUPUI prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary as a campus in 2019, and as Indiana University as a whole prepares to celebrate its Bicentennial in 2020—and as all of us at Indiana University recommit ourselves to building the foundation for the university's enduring strength.