IU Northwest Chancellor's Medallion Dinner
Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President, Indiana University
Avalon Manor
Merrillville, IN
Thursday, November 12, 2015
5:30 p.m. – Reception
6:30 p.m. - Dinner

1. INTRODUCTION

Thank you very much, Sharon [Johnson-Shirley], for that kind introduction, and thank you all for coming this evening. Your presence here tonight is a measure of the respect and importance in which the entire region holds the IU Northwest campus.

I am truly delighted to be here tonight to help honor this year's IU Northwest Chancellor's Medallion recipients. Occasions such as this remind us that people are at the true heart of Indiana University's long history of excellence.

2. THE VITAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF IU'S REGIONAL CAMPUSES

Over the course of nearly two centuries, that history has been shaped by outstanding faculty, students, and staff as well as loyal alumni and friends who helped to transform Indiana University from a small, traditional liberal arts college into one of the leading public universities of the 20th century, with an educational reach to every part of the state, from the north to the south and the east to the west, through vibrant regional campuses and prospering medical education centers.

Over more than four decades, the regional campuses of Indiana University have continued to make vital contributions to their regions and to the state of Indiana. As IU

Northwest exemplifies, they have become an indispensable part of the fabric of their communities and their regions.

Today, the regional campuses enroll about one-third of all IU students. They provide an excellent education to more than 35,000 students a year, the vast majority of whom are Hoosiers, and many of whom are non-traditional or first-generation students. They are increasingly a first choice for some of the best and brightest high school students in the state.

Beyond serving as an integral part of IU's broad mission to educate students from Indiana, our regional campuses also serve as invaluable economic and community development catalysts in their regions and are playing a key role in helping the state achieve its goal of substantially increasing the number of Indiana residents with college degrees.

3. FOR ALL: THE INDIANA UNIVERSITY BICENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN

The Bicentennial of Indiana University, which we will celebrate in the 2019-2020 academic year, will be an occasion for all of us with ties to IU across the state—and for alumni and friends around the world—to reflect with pride on all that IU has achieved in the previous 200 years.

The bicentennial is also an occasion for us to look to the future and to strengthen the foundation that will allow Indiana University to remain one of the nation's premier public universities.

We are focused on two paramount goals—providing students on all of our campuses with the best, most contemporary and most affordable education possible and pursuing transformative research and scholarship at the highest level of excellence.

To support these missions, we have launched “For All: The Indiana University Bicentennial Campaign.” It is the first true university-wide campaign, as it involves all campuses, and it will ensure that IU’s transformative impact on the state, the nation, and the world continues into our third century and for generations to come.

The campaign has the ambitious goal of raising $2.5 billion by 2020. This is the most ambitious fundraising goal ever in Indiana University’s history and one of the largest ever by a public university. I am delighted to announce that we are already very nearly halfway to achieving this ambitious goal, having raised just over $1.2 billion!

This will truly be a campaign “for all” but it will need all of us. It will be through all of our generous, unselfish and unstinting support for the Indiana University Bicentennial Campaign that we can ensure that IU remains, and grows further, as one of the great public universities of the world, one that is a shining beacon of hope and a better life, “for all”.

4. THE BICENTENNIAL CAMPAIGN PRIORITIES

The campaign will emphasize four broad priorities. These reflect the central goals of *The Bicentennial Strategic Plan for Indiana University*—the plan approved by our trustees last year for ensuring the enduring excellence of Indiana University.

First, we must do more to help students succeed.

But student success depends upon more than the content of individual courses or the curriculum of particular degree programs.

An important part of it is conditioned by an environment that provides support in other ways, from student organizations that encourage personal and social growth; to services that support the physical and mental health and wellness of students; to

physical environments that are safe and inspiring; and to building a community in which diversity of community and ideas is valued and in which all members of the community are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity.

Indiana University's longstanding commitment to embracing diversity in the broadest sense is also fundamental to student success.

The *Bicentennial Strategic Plan* embodies that commitment as a core value—and in light of recent events at other universities that have made national headlines, let me take a moment this evening to underscore and reaffirm Indiana University's unwavering commitment to diversity and free expression.

As part that commitment, we recruit students and faculty from diverse cultural backgrounds. We strive to ensure that cultural diversity is well represented in the curriculum. And we seek to ensure that members of our community who come from diverse backgrounds interact with one another in educationally purposeful ways. For through continued interaction with others who hold views that differ from our own—whose life experiences are vastly different from ours—our minds are opened to new ways of understanding. We comprehend, we empathize, we learn.

We must, all of us, bend our efforts—every day, and not just in the wake of a particular incident—to assure that our university community regards tolerance and tolerant diversity and the free expression of ideas as among its core values.

Your support will also provide scholarships to keep an IU education affordable for greater numbers of students and enable them to graduate with as little debt as possible. It will allow us to continue to expand opportunities for IU Northwest students to serve their communities and for fellow students to serve communities across the state and around the world. It will allow IU centers like the Center for P-16 Research and Collaboration to expand its partnerships that support student success and improve access to college for underrepresented minority students in northwest Indiana.

Second, our mission must be to create global leaders by increasing the number of IU students who serve and study abroad. The need for individuals with global cultural understanding and experience and the ability to work productively with people from different cultures and traditions has never been greater. While relatively few regional campus students participate in study abroad, those who do often find the experience to be life changing. Your support will increase their number, especially for those of talent and drive from the poorest and most straightened of circumstances.

Third, we must recruit and retain the very best and most creative faculty who are the innovators and leaders in their disciplines. There is no university without them. Your support will increase the number of endowed chairs and professorships that will allow us to attract and retain the outstanding scholars and artists who will teach the next generation, and who will develop the ideas and innovations that will transform the way people live, and improve Indiana's economy and our national competitiveness.

And finally, the Campaign will raise funds that will help IU create a healthier state, nation, and world. We will strengthen our efforts to help address Indiana's serious public health needs, and we will continue to invest in world-class research and training in selected areas of the health sciences to develop new and improved treatments and cures. Here in northwest Indiana, your support will allow the IU School of Medicine-Northwest-Gary to continue to provide outstanding training to greater numbers of students to help meet the looming shortage of physicians.

5. CONCLUSION

The Bicentennial Campaign will help to open doors of opportunity here at IU Northwest and across the entire university for students to have access to education, to scholars to freely follow their curiosity, to scientists to make dramatic discoveries, and to doctors and other health professionals who can perfect new treatments and cures that improve the health and wellness of citizens of the state. It will truly be “for all.”

On behalf of Indiana University, let me express our congratulations and deepest thanks to this year’s recipients of the IU Northwest Chancellor’s Medallion. And let me also express our thanks to all of you for all you have done—and continue to do for Indiana University. Your generosity with your time, your energy, and your resources has transformed Indiana University and the IU Northwest campus into an educational community of high quality and relevance and, thus, a driver of regional transformation.

Thank you very much.