“What It Means to Play Thirteen”

President’s Circle Luncheon at the Insight Bowl

Remarks of Michael A. McRobbie
President
Indiana University
Ritz Carlton Hotel
Sunday, December 30, 2007
12:00 (Luncheon begins)
1:00 (Remarks begin)

1. INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you, Curt, and thank you all for being here this afternoon.

Let me begin by offering a special welcome to: Representative Larry Buell and his wife, Janice; Representative Ralph Foley, joined by his son and grandson; Representative Eric Koch and his wife, Connie. I appreciate your effort to be here. Trustee Sue Talbot and her husband, Bob; Trustee Bill Cast and his wife, Anita; Trustee Pat Shoulders, Vice President of the IU Board of Trustees and his wife, Lisa; Trustee Phil Eskew and his wife, Anne; and Trustee A.D. King.

Support like that of all the people in his room extends across the country and around the world is the reason that American higher education is the best in the world. And this is a weekend to celebrate Indiana University, to celebrate our pursuit of excellence from the classroom to the gridiron and everywhere in between.

2. INDIANA UNIVERSITY AS A COMMUNITY OF EXCELLENCE

In my inaugural address in October, I laid out my vision for Indiana University.

That vision, I said, “should be neither surprising nor controversial: it is to confirm our traditions of excellence in our two fundamental missions of education and research, and by doing so ensure that we will be a leader among the great universities of the 21st century.”

Indiana University has always been a community of excellence. When we are talking about athletics, we call it TEAMWORK, but they really amount to the same thing. Both community and teamwork are about working together toward a shared goal in the pursuit of excellence.

2.1 EXCELLENCE IN THE CLASSROOM AND LAB

This is true of education at IU where the best classes are often ones where students come together to support each other in learning and where professors balance correction and encouragement. And this is true of research where scientists and scholars join intellectual forces to drive towards the next innovation.

2.2 EXCELLENCE ON THE FIELD

Of course, community is just as important in athletics. The entire team—from coaches to trainers to assistants to our accomplished student athletes—play a vital role in each and every victory. The road towards excellence—a road that has led to tomorrow’s contest—requires that we set our sights high in every endeavor, both on and off the field. It requires a dedication that goes beyond the gridiron and the court. It requires that we belong to a community.

Our current football team exemplifies that sense of community. It has pulled together and supported each other under the most difficult of circumstances. Under Coach Lynch, it now has within its reach the goals set by Coach Hep. And this sense of community has a long history that reaches the present.

2.3 ANTHONY THOMPSON

It was only a month or so ago that we honored Anthony Thompson for his induction into the College Football Hall of Fame. With his characteristic grace and humility, Anthony credited others for his success. He said, "It would not have been possible without Coach [Bill] Mallory, his coaching staff and the support of my teammates. . . . I am not going into the Hall of Fame because of Anthony Thompson; I'm going in because of all of those guys." (IU Hoosiers Athletics website iuhoosiers.cstv.com)

Anthony Thompson exemplifies the strength of character that IU works to build in its students.

Indiana University strives to instill such character through our innovative programs that aim towards educational and research excellence, achievement, and success.

3. DEGREES OF EXCELLENCE

You may remember this fall I announced a new program called Degrees of Excellence. It is designed to increase graduation rates on all of our campuses. Under this initiative, we will extend the Pell Promise and 21st Century Covenant programs and reinvest existing funds as IUPUI has already done to improve graduation rates.

In addition, last spring IU Bloomington announced three scholarship programs that invest $10 million per year in scholarships for Hoosier students. Our $1 billion Matching

the Promise campaign has also added to this amount, raising $216 million for scholarships and fellowships as part of nearly $700 million already raised, a significant part of this coming from people in this room. All of this means that this year for the first time, the neediest students are attending IU Bloomington nearly free. There are 1000 in-state freshmen at IUB with family incomes under $50,000. These financial-aid-eligible students now pay an average of just $341 annually for tuition, room, and board.

And the average out-of-pocket cost for Hoosier students with family incomes between $50,000 and $100,000 who are eligible for financial aid has fallen to $8,300. That is 40 percent below full cost. This fall, almost 1,500 of IUB's incoming Indiana freshmen are in that category.

As society faces college expenses that put higher education out of reach for many, your alma mater is leading the nation, as a number of recent media stories have testified, in keeping that education accessible and affordable.

3.1 RESEARCH AND SPACE

A priority for our efforts to build excellence in research is the life and health sciences.

We have a magnificent tradition in this area with four Nobel Prize winners, and numerous other awards for both fundamental research and new treatments or cures for diseases.

We have the second largest medical school in the nation and over the last five years have made around 500 new faculty and staff appointments in the life and health sciences in Bloomington and Indianapolis. But in this, as in all other areas in which we aspire to excellence, space is essential!

A report I commissioned in 2004 as Vice President for Research stated that lack of research space “was the greatest single impediment to IU reaching its full potential as a research university.”

The equation is very simple—more space equals more research dollars, equals more research.

Since 1820, IU has relied on the steadfast support of the General Assembly, in good times and bad, to fund its buildings.

But our needs for space in order to ensure we are one of the great research universities of the 21st century are such that we can no longer rely on the General Assembly alone to fund all these needs.

In fact, about half of the $500 million in new buildings we have constructed over the last five years has come from sources other than the State.

In my Inaugural Address then, I announced that we would build $250 million in major new buildings in the life sciences, international studies, the arts, humanities and social sciences, and to support economic development.

To achieve this, IU will match, one for one, all gifts received in support of these essential new facilities.

Together with the $500 million of new planned construction and the $250 million we hope to receive from the General Assembly over the next few budget sessions, our goal is to have nothing less than a billion dollars of new construction underway at IU on all our campuses by the beginning of the next decade.

4. THE INTERNATIONAL IMPERATIVE

Access and affordability are vital in the face of increasing globalization. We must generate maximum intellectual capital within our shores to stay competitive beyond them.

Student achievement must extend beyond the boundaries of our state-wide system to reach the furthest corners of the globe. In a flat world, a more uncertain world, and a more competitive world, the best programs in most professions and disciplines will increasingly require a period of study abroad. In turn, students will demand this as part of a world-class education. Already 20% of students at IU Bloomington have studied abroad by the time they have graduated. In the future we will need to find the resources to support many more IU students studying abroad. Ed Hutton has led the way here with a $9 million gift to assist students to study abroad.

I just returned from my first trip abroad as president to help reinforce IU's relationship with a number of universities, including Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, which is known as China's Silicon Valley. Trips such as this one are focused on ensuring that Indiana University continues to provide the highest quality education to all of its students no matter where they are studying.

5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND VITALITY

At the same time as we are building relationships with universities around the world that provide educational and research opportunities, we are also working with innovation centers and technology parks across the state to help enhance collaboration with regional economies. Our partnerships with Purdue University and Ivy Tech are also aimed at bringing educational opportunity to more Hoosiers, improving workforce development, and enhancing efficiency.

IU's newest economic development initiative is called Innovate Indiana. Its first major project will be the construction of a new Indiana University incubator facility in Bloomington at 10th and the Bypass. We are also exploring the possibility of constructing a further facility of this kind in Indianapolis, since our incubator facility there, the IU Emerging Technology Center, is at capacity. These types of collaborations combine faculty expertise and business acumen, but they also provide enhanced opportunities for faculty and student research, teaching and learning.

6. CONCLUSION: WINNING GAME 13

Whether we are working toward statewide economic prosperity or individual student achievement, we must always remember that good enough is never good enough. We must strive to reach a higher level of achievement. Rather than reaching our goals, may we surpass them and achieve what we may never have imagined possible. This is the larger meaning of playing—and winning—game thirteen.

So please join me in raising your glasses to Indiana University, to Hoosier football, and the many people who made this day possible. Here's to winning game thirteen!

Now it gives me great pleasure to introduce the person who deserves a good portion of the credit for bringing us to this great moment in IU's history, Coach Bill Lynch. And Go IU!!