

President Robert C. Dynes
Remarks at Ventura County Regional Tour Community Luncheon
UC Hansen Agricultural Center, Faulkner Farm, Santa Paula
January 26, 2007



What Reg (Gomes) said is indeed the motivation for these tours that I have been and will continue to make. What I find is that if I can look people straight in the eye, leaders of the community, people who have some interest in or some association with the University of California, or even people who don't think they do but they do, I can learn an awful lot about what we do as a University and how we can affect your lives in positive ways.

I keep reminding folks that we are called "the University of California." That means that it is your university. We're a public institution, supported in part, but not totally, by the state of California, and as such, we have a responsibility to inform, educate, and transfer our knowledge to our society, which is you. ... Listening to you gives me insight as to how we are affecting you and how we can better affect your lives here in Ventura County. I've learned more about Ventura County in the last couple of days that I thought I ever would know. I've learned a lot about strawberries and lemons today. And we're benefiting from both strawberries and lemons at this lunch. I don't think we want to benefit from the third part of today's visits, which was integrated pest management.

The Agriculture and Natural Resources programs are a really important part of the University, and they are probably the least known, although not to you, but to many folks in the state of California. That's in part because the success of California agriculture has been so great that most people think that food comes from Ralph's. They don't understand the infrastructure, the hard work, the innovation, the creativity, and the risk-taking that goes on every day in California to deliver food to people's tables, not only in California but throughout the country. I was born and raised in Canada, in southern Ontario, and much of the produce that people eat in Canada comes from California, something that I took great delight in showing my father a couple of years ago.

This is my first visit in the year 2007, and I think of 2007 as a watershed year for the University of California. Over the past year, I've been thinking pretty hard with my colleagues about what I see as the future of what the University is and how it can better serve the community. I thought I'd take about 5 minutes to give you that vision and then stop and listen to comments and questions.

I proudly announce very frequently that we are the finest university in the world. And my friends from Princeton, Harvard, MIT, and Stanford, say, "Wait a minute, time out, what the hell are you talking about?" Of those schools that I just mentioned, there are two fundamental differences between them and the University of California. The first is that they are privates, and as privates, they don't have the same mission that we do. Of course, they have a mission of creating new knowledge and of educating young people. But they do not have the same public service mission. They do not have the responsibility to serve society. Let's go back to education. If you take all the Ivy League schools and put in Stanford and Cal Tech, the total number of students is less than half the number of students that are at the University of California. ...



We compete for recruiting faculty, we compete for federal grants, with these schools. And we are substantially poorer than they are, we rely much more on state funds, and these privates are very wealthy by comparison. So I ask myself, "Why do we compete so well?" And the answer is very simple, this is the point that, if you remember anything, I hope you remember this: We are 10 campuses of one university. We are huge by comparison. We have almost 210,000 students, 160,000 employees, and three national laboratories. We are huge, and so when opportunities or challenges come up, we can respond quickly and effectively if we think of ourselves as one university. We can use the resources from faculty and students from Riverside, Santa Barbara, and UCLA to work out a problem, let's say, in Ventura County. And so we think of ourselves as a single university with 10 campuses, and each of those campuses has different strengths. They specialize in some areas, and they teach in other areas, but they're not world-class in those other areas. When you bring that all together, as a university, we are world leaders in virtually everything. And that's our strength.

As I look forward, I think about three really important issues that we must focus on. The first goes along with the example that I was giving in terms of responding to opportunities. It's a mantra that I've used, I believe it, and I believe it's our mission, and that's R, D, and D. You've all heard of R and D, research and development. And we do that. We generate more patents than any other university in the world. But we also do R, D, and D, and that second D is delivery. We must deliver our people and our intellectual product to the community. That's the first issue.

The second is something that is important because the world is no longer a set of separate countries. When I talk to CEOs throughout the state of California, they're all international, and we must be international as well, and do that as a single university. So we're developing an international strategy with partners as close as Mexico and Canada and as far away as China and India and the continent of Africa. And when I go to those places, they've all heard of the University of California. In fact, we have alumni everywhere. I was in Tibet this fall, and we had an alumni meeting in Lhasa, Tibet. And there was a Tibetan saying, "Go Bears!" ... Having an international strategy means that we can compete, that California can remain competitive so we know what's going on, so we can draw some of the brightest people in the world to California and we can compete internationally. I don't mean the University, I mean California.



The third is something I actually learned earlier in these tours. I visited whole school districts where there were no, none, zero credentialed science and math teachers. And I was shocked. We hadn't seen that at UC because we pick the top 12½ percent. We have a growing catastrophe in education in California. And so I, without really knowing how we were going to do it, committed to the Governor that we were going to generate for the state of California a thousand science and math teachers a year. And the Governor, of course, liked it immediately, wouldn't let me out of the room until I described how this was going to work, so I invented it as I went along.

We're now a year and a half into this program, and it's going well. Each of the campuses is taking responsibility. Your nearest campus, Santa Barbara, is really moving rapidly on developing a curriculum. The faculty from the sciences and engineering are preparing a curriculum, and we have students already in the process. So by the year 2010, we will be

producing a thousand science and math teachers a year that will be spread into the schools of the state of California, elementary, middle school, and high school.

The reason that I am so committed to that is not that I want everybody to be scientists or mathematicians. In this world, being able to understand the technology that we're living with is important for everybody, whether you run a business, whether you're a private contractor, whatever you end up doing, being able to understand the simple scaling of numbers, being able to understand the technology that you're dealing with, is very important. And California must again become a leader in all aspects of education, not just higher education.



So that's my vision for the University of California, and the state of California, and how I believe we should respond to keep California competitive, to keep it the most innovative, risk-taking, diverse and exciting society in the world, which we are now, and we've got to continue to be that way. So, as we go forward, I know that some of you have actually signed up to be advocates for the UC. And I would like to solicit any and all of you if you would be an advocate for the University of California. It's not a lot of work. It might require an e-mail or something else every once in a while. We have some forms that Kate [Daby-Horpedahl] has – there you are, good – so come on over and give us your e-mail address or sign up if you can talk yourself into it. If you can't, that's okay. I've learned a lot from you in the past couple of days.

In the meantime, thank you for coming to lunch. Some of you have expressed your views and opinions quite bluntly, and I'm used to that, it's a good way to learn. And thank you for supporting this great university which is committed to supporting you. Thank you.