

University of Minnesota

From the President and Board Chair

The University of Minnesota is an integral part of our idea of Minnesota – a relatively small population of five million in a challenging climate that has built a high quality of life and nurtured an uncompromising aspiration for innovation and leadership.

Since its founding, the University has been a statewide resource that makes a significant impact on the economy, society, and culture of Minnesota. Through its land-grant mission – teaching and learning, research and discovery, and public engagement – it has been dedicated to advancing knowledge and serving as a partner for the public good.

As we begin the 21st century in a fiscally austere environment, our challenge is to ensure the continued excellence, strength, and vitality of the University for our students and for the people of Minnesota. To fulfill our mission in this new century, the University has embraced four over-arching goals:

- **Maintain excellence and push the boundaries of knowledge.** The University of Minnesota is actively committed to maintaining and strengthening excellence by investing in its outstanding academic programs and building a culture that supports interdisciplinary work.
- **Enhance the educational life of students.** The University is committed to enhancing the experience of its undergraduate, graduate, and professional-level students by: improving access to the University and affordability, enhancing teaching and learning, promoting better progress and improved graduation rates, and maintaining and improving student satisfaction levels.
- **Achieve improved stewardship and accountability.** The University is dedicated to good stewardship of its public and private resources and to accountability to citizens and members of its own community.
- **Create effective public engagement.** The University has made a renewed commitment to its public mission, one that reflects the changing conditions of public higher education, the needs of society, and the most current means of communication and public engagement.

As one of this country's and the world's premier research institutions, the University of Minnesota will continue its 153-year legacy as an open door to the power that knowledge provides and a crucible for new ideas, discoveries and connections.

Robert H. Bruininks
President

David R. Metzger
Chair, Board of Regents

1: Profile of the University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota is a statewide resource that makes a significant impact on the economy, society and culture of Minnesota. For 153 years, it has been dedicated to advancing knowledge and serving as a partner for the public good.

With more than 63,000 students enrolled in high-quality programs in the Twin Cities, Duluth, Crookston, Morris, and Rochester, the University is a key educational asset for the state and the region.

The University of Minnesota is one of the state's most important assets. As a top research institution, it serves as a magnet and a means of growth for talented people, a place where ideas and innovations flourish, and where discoveries and services materially advance Minnesota's economy and quality of life.

As a land grant institution, the University is strongly connected to Minnesota's communities, partnering with the public to apply its research for the benefit of the state.

A. 10 Things To Know About the University of Minnesota

1. The University of Minnesota awarded more than 11,500 degrees in 2002-03. Ten percent of all degrees awarded were in engineering, and 41 percent of the degrees awarded on the Twin Cities campus were graduate and first-professional degrees (e.g., M.S., Ph.D., M.D., D.D.S.). University graduates play a unique role in keeping Minnesota competitive and connected in our increasingly knowledge-based economy and global society.
2. The University of Minnesota is the state's only major research University. This sets Minnesota apart from the many states that have at least two major research institutions (e.g., Michigan and Michigan State; Iowa and Iowa State). Its research comprises 98.8 percent of sponsored academic research in Minnesota – more than one-half billion dollars each year. This accomplishment creates an estimated 20,000 jobs in Minnesota's private economy.
3. In economic terms, the University also provides significant return on the state's investment. A recent study showed that the University leveraged \$16 for every dollar of state investment in 2001. That means Minnesota realized nearly \$10 billion in economic activity from the state's \$600 million annual investment in the University – an outstanding return.
4. State appropriations provided 30.8 percent of University of Minnesota revenue in FY 2002, making it the most important, and the most flexible, source of funding. Grants and contracts provided another 24.3 percent of revenues while tuition and fees provided 14 percent. Private fundraising is an increasingly important source of funding within the University's diverse revenue mix, but this source represents less

than 5 percent of the annual operating budget. Most private funds are dedicated to the support of specific activities and cannot be used for general budget needs. In 2003, the University completed a six-year fundraising campaign that raised more than \$1.6 billion in private donations and pledges.

5. Total enrollment at the University of Minnesota's campuses for fall 2003 was 63,769. Sixty-three percent of registered students were undergraduates. Non-degree seeking students represented over 10 percent of total enrollment.
6. The Twin Cities campus ranks consistently within the top six public research universities in the nation, according to a University of Florida study. It is also among the nation's most comprehensive institutions, one of only four campuses nationally that have agricultural programs as well as an academic health center with a major medical school. The University prides itself on strong programs and departments – from theater and dance to chemical engineering and economics – and its breadth provides unique interdisciplinary strengths, particularly in the life sciences.
7. The University of Minnesota was founded in 1851, predating statehood by seven years. It is governed by a 12-member

Board of Regents, which is elected by the legislature. Eight members are elected to represent Minnesota's eight congressional districts and four are elected at large.

8. The statutory mission of the University of Minnesota is to “offer undergraduate, graduate, and professional instruction through the doctoral degree, and... be the primary state-supported academic agency for research and extension services.” (*Minnesota Statutes 135A.052*).
9. The University of Minnesota is a multi-campus university, one with no separate “system” office. This is an economical management structure, since the University's senior officers double as the chief operating officers for the Twin Cities campus.
10. The University of Minnesota has four established campuses (Twin Cities, Duluth, Morris, Crookston), a developing cooperative campus in Rochester, six agricultural experiment stations, one forestry center, 18 regional extension offices, and extension personnel in counties throughout the state. The University's public service programs (e.g., Extension Service, clinics in medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine, outreach to K-12 education) touch more than 1,000,000 people annually.

B. Academic Priorities

*“Founded in faith that men are ennobled by understanding
Dedicated to the advancement of learning and the search for truth
Devoted to the instruction of youth and the welfare of the state.”*

These words, composed by Hartley Burr Alexander and adopted by the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota in 1936, are inscribed over the Northrop Auditorium entrance on the Twin Cities

campus. The University remains committed to these great purposes, which are, appropriately, carved in stone. The University is an integral part of our idea of Minnesota – a relatively small population of 5 million in a challenging

climate that has built a high quality of life and nurtured an uncompromising aspiration for innovation and leadership.

That idea of Minnesota has always been premised on the importance of education, and the University has benefited at the same time it has served this state. Today, through the education of the more than 63,000 students it has enrolled, through the half billion dollars of external support for path-breaking research its scholars do each year, and through the many and varied ways it connects its work to the needs of the community, the University of Minnesota is even more relevant to the people of the state, the nation, and the world.

According to University President Robert Bruininks, “Our challenge today is to move ahead, to set high academic aspirations, and to ensure the excellence, strength, and vitality of the University for our students and for the people of Minnesota in a time of fiscal austerity. We must continue our legacy of advancing knowledge while serving as a partner for the public good.” Today the University of Minnesota is still advancing knowledge and serving as a partner for the public good, just as it has for 153 years, as it has through good times and bad.

Building for the future in the context of recent large state budget cuts means investing strategically while at the same time making difficult decisions to balance the University’s budget. The University has significantly reallocated its internal resources to address new opportunities, but in order to continue to improve – to reach the next level of excellence and to generate the dynamic intellectual capital that helps drive this region’s economy and quality of life – the University will need significant investment.

“We can learn from other states’ experiences, but I believe that Minnesota must blaze its own trail,” said President Bruininks in his 2003 State of the University address. “Our

future is still tied to a strong University of Minnesota, and I see no way for the University to continue to succeed without adequate state and private investment.”

Academic Research and Education: Maintaining Excellence, Pushing the Boundaries of Knowledge

The University of Minnesota is actively committed to maintaining and strengthening excellence by investing in its outstanding academic programs and building a culture that supports interdisciplinary work.

The University has many highly ranked academic programs, and it is critical that we continue to provide significant support to these departments in order to maintain the strong disciplines that form the core of basic knowledge. The distinctive contributions of individual disciplines create an intellectual framework for developing deep expertise in specific arenas.

At the same time, the University community recognizes that today, more than ever, pushing the boundaries of knowledge in one field often means crossing into other disciplines. Answering the big questions that confront us in the 21st century will require interdisciplinary teams of researchers working together.

In the last decade, the academy has begun to realize the untapped potential of interdisciplinary research, and increasingly funding agencies are encouraging interdisciplinary proposals. Many scholars at the University of Minnesota are already involved in interdisciplinary research, and new initiatives will provide the infrastructure for enhancing these collaborations.

Investments in interdisciplinary academic programs will be made through the newly announced Presidential Initiatives. In addition, through the University’s strategic

planning (compact) process, colleges will be encouraged to consider investments in the highest level of interdisciplinary collaboration in the President’s Interdisciplinary Academic Initiatives as well as in areas not covered by these initiatives.

The President’s Interdisciplinary Conference Series will provide opportunities for the development of new interdisciplinary

collaborations and expand the connections of University of Minnesota research to the needs of society.

Table 1-1 shows the conferences planned for 2004 and 2005. For more information about this conference series also see the “Creating Effective Public Engagement” later in this section.

Table 1-1. President’s 21st Century Conference Series, 2004-05.

<u>2004 Conferences</u>	
Intellectual Property Rights for the Public Good: Obligations of U.S. Universities to Developing Countries	From Inquiry to Impact: Youth Development in Out-of-School Time
Access Versus Congestion: Rethinking the Transportation Future of Our Region	Environmental Threats to Children's Health: Legal and Policy Challenges
The Power of Water: Integrating the Social, Economic and Environmental Dimensions	Annual Symposium on Small Towns
Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives: Setting the Agenda	Design of Medical Devices
Publication, the Public University, and Public Interest: A University-wide Conference on Scholarly Communication in the Digital Age	Transforming Health Care in Minnesota
Improving Disability Services Across the Age Spectrum	Reclaiming the Arts: Strategies for Commitment
<u>2005 Conferences</u>	
Information, Technology, and Everyday Life	Globalization, Modernization, and Violence
Promoting Healthy Communities for Children: the Social and Physical Environments	Governing the Global Workplace
Promoting Interactionism Within and Among the Disciplines	A Cognitive Neuroscience Perspective on Typical and Atypical Development

The President’s Interdisciplinary Academic Initiatives represent areas of comparative advantage for the University, have high-quality foundational programs, are central to our land-grant mission and research enterprise, and reflect the needs and resources of Minnesota. They are areas where further investment will yield significant return in intellectual quality and capital, and where we can leverage considerable outside resources. The University’s students at all levels also

reap the rewards as they learn in a dynamic interdisciplinary environment.

Three of these initiatives – Children, Youth, and Families; Arts and Humanities; and the Consortium on Law And Values in Health, Environment, and the Life Sciences – are more established programs where significant resources have already been allocated. They will be funded through reallocation of existing resources and private philanthropy.

The remaining five (Brain Vitality Across the Lifespan; Biosciences and Biotechnology; Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives; Biocatalysis; Environment and Renewable Energy; and Translational Research in Human Health) cannot be fully capitalized without additional support from the state and partnerships with the private sector.

Under the direction of faculty leaders, working documents have been developed for all of the following initiatives. Working groups are being convened to develop long-term strategies that will take into account the breadth of connections inherent in each initiative.

Initiative on Arts and Humanities: This initiative will build on the University's strengths in the arts and humanities. About six years ago, the University developed and supported the Humanities Institute and a new educational partnership with the Guthrie Theatre. At the core of this expanded effort will be the creation of the University of Minnesota Institute for Advanced Study that will promote and support distinguished, path-breaking research and creative work at the intersection of the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

The initiative will also seek to transform the arts and humanities at the University and beyond by developing a new interdisciplinary arts and humanities curriculum, supporting new creative processes and works of art, and deepening collaborations with arts organizations and educators in the community.

Initiative on Children, Youth, and Families: The contributions an individual can make to society as an adult can be traced directly to the first few years of life, and Minnesota has an important stake in the adults its children will become. This initiative represents an institutional commitment to deepen and broaden the University's capacity to address

the pressing issues that face the state when it comes to children, youth, and families.

President Bruininks launched this initiative in 2002 through a statewide summit. It will create new and enhance existing mechanisms for leveraging faculty support for cross-disciplinary approaches to research, teaching, and public engagement. By bringing together researchers and educators from around the University with practitioners, policy makers, and opinion leaders, this initiative seeks to create new ways to enhance outcomes for children at every developmental stage.

In so doing, we will be able to reap tangible benefits for not only the children and families themselves, but also the common public good, including enhanced returns in school readiness, parenting skills, children's mental health, workforce capacity, and economic and community development.

Bioscience and Biotechnology Initiatives

The University plays a critical role in the health of the state as a center of bioscience and biotechnology research and development and bioscience industry. It is vital that the University remain a center for cutting-edge basic research, an innovative laboratory for applications of basic research, a magnet for the highest level of talent, and an educator of the next generation of bioscience and biotechnology workers.

In concert with the Governor's bioscience initiative and the emerging growth of partnerships to improve the transfer of technology, the University will continue to invest in strengthening Minnesota's capacity to lead in bioscience and biotechnology. A number of the President's Interdisciplinary Initiatives focus directly on increasing the University's contributions in areas ranging from industrial biology to bioenergy to translational research in human health.

Initiative on Biocatalysis: As a result of former President Yudof's initiative in molecular and cellular biology, the University has a strengthened basic science program in these areas. It is critical that the University maintain its strength in basic science while at the same time moving to the next stage. The University is poised to launch a wide range of investments in the application of molecular and cellular biology and genetics.

The University has a long tradition and world-class expertise in the science of biocatalysis, the use of biological catalysts and processes to transform plant material into useful products. Biocatalysis enables renewable resources, such as forests, grasslands, and the wheat and corn raised by farmers, to become the new raw materials to meet production and energy needs. This initiative will use the most advanced approaches to biology, in areas where we have great strength in faculty and facilities, to develop exciting new uses for Minnesota's abundant agricultural products and natural resources, from plastics and other industrial products to new drugs.

Initiative on Translational Research in Human Health: This initiative will strengthen the ability of the University to continue to play a leading role in the rapidly changing world of health sciences. The working group for this initiative will collaborate with working groups from the other bioscience- and health science-based initiatives in an effort to solidify the University's commitment and reach. Three key components of this initiative are: 1) the McGuire Translational Research Facility that will provide scientists with a physical environment that promotes collaboration, fosters creativity, promotes innovation, and shortens the time it takes to develop new technologies; 2) the Minnesota Partnership for Biotechnology and Medical Genomics that will bring together Mayo Clinic and University researchers to collaborate on projects creating

innovations that promote human health; and 3) targeted investments in faculty to maintain leadership in cutting-edge research in areas like oncology (cancer), neurosciences (brain functions and diseases), cardiovascular (heart) disease, organ transplantation, applications of stem cell development, and clinical research.

Initiative on Brain Development and Vitality Across the Lifespan: New tools, including state-of-the-art imaging techniques, have transformed our ability to study how the normal brain develops and what can go wrong with it throughout life. Our core academic fields that support this initiative are highly recognized and productive.

This expanded interdisciplinary initiative will create new synergies and expand our capacity to bring together many research strengths, from basic neuroscience to education, to contribute to our understanding of how changes in the brain during development, adulthood, and aging influence the way we think and feel. A Center for Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, modeled after the Cancer Center, will be proposed under this initiative.

Initiative on Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives: The University is uniquely positioned as a national leader to focus on food and health promotion, being one of only two U.S. universities to integrate six key components on one campus: agriculture, human nutrition, medicine, public health, exercise science, and veterinary medicine. This initiative will bring together activities within four priority areas to address critical health issues over the next 10 years – bridging quality science to sound public policy, and transforming what we know into what we do.

The four priority areas are: to use and advance knowledge about integrating agriculture, food science, nutrition, and medicine to promote healthy lives; to emphasize prevention of diet-related chronic diseases and obesity through

diet, exercise, and human behavior; to enhance food safety at all stages, from farm to table; and to inform public policy.

Initiative on Environment and Renewable

Energy: Perhaps the most critical global challenge for the 21st century is maintaining a healthy, productive environment that will continue to support life in the face of an increasing world population, energy shortages, shrinking freshwater supplies, destruction of natural habitats, and declining genetic diversity. Integrating all we know – from scientific, economic, social, and spiritual perspectives – is key to understanding and resolving these issues.

The initiative will begin with three major projects. The first will build on recommendations of the University's Commission on Environmental Science and Policy, appointed by then Provost Robert Bruininks, to create an integrated, transparent approach to the environment at the University of Minnesota. The second will focus research and technology transfer on renewable energy with funding from Xcel Energy under a mandate from the legislature through the Prairie Island Bill. The third will be aimed at integrating sustainable practices and energy conservation across the full range of University activities under the leadership of the Office of University Services.

Initiative on Law and Values in Health, Environment, and the Life Sciences: This initiative deepens the University's commitment to the Consortium on Law and Values in Health, Environment, and the Life Sciences. The consortium was founded in 2000 to respond to the most challenging legal and ethical questions of the 21st century, questions posed by biomedicine and the life sciences. These are questions that require a new kind of cross-disciplinary work fully marrying legal, ethical, and scientific expertise. The consortium leverages the

University's strengths in the life sciences, humanities, law, bioethics, and public policy to do cutting-edge work on the societal implications of the life sciences.

Enhancing the Educational Life of Students

President Bruininks has articulated four interrelated goals for student life and student learning: improving access to the University and affordability for students, enhancing teaching and learning, promoting better progress and improved graduation rates, and maintaining and improving student satisfaction levels.

For the University of Minnesota, there is no greater obligation than delivering the best possible education to students at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. We owe students our undivided attention and commitment. The University is deepening its commitment to the development, support, and learning of students.

Under the leadership of former Presidents Hasselmo and Yudof, the University of Minnesota made great strides in improving the undergraduate experience. Some of those gains have affected the quality of students' lives outside the classroom, through new residence halls and vastly improved services, including online class registration. Other improvements have affected student learning more directly. During President Yudof's tenure, these improvements included the growth of freshman seminars; the creation of the Academy of Distinguished Teachers, and expanded faculty development and award programs designed to build excellence in teaching; the reinstatement of freshman convocation; and upgrades of classrooms. Opportunities to study abroad and to perform research have also been expanded. In addition, the University has implemented policies and incentives that are gradually

improving undergraduate graduation rates.

The University will continue and strengthen its commitment to all students, “trickling up” improvements in student life from the undergraduate to the professional and graduate levels.

Access and Affordability: Students today pay an increasingly greater share of the cost of their education, in large part because the University has refused to sacrifice educational quality in the face of a long-term trend of reduced state investment. To help ensure that rising tuition and fees do not become barriers to a University education, funding for scholarships was a priority in the last year of Campaign Minnesota, and it remains a top priority in the post-campaign period through a newly inaugurated matching incentive for private gifts.

Restructuring of tuition (to make credits above 13 free) provides an important incentive for timely graduation. A student who takes 15 credits a term and graduates in four years will save 20 percent in tuition as compared with a student who takes 12 credits a term and graduates in five years.

Teaching and Learning: President Bruininks has called on the University community to “dedicate more of our attention to the science of learning and apply it to our central obligation of education.” The enhancement of teaching and learning is clustered in six areas:

- **Learning Outcomes:** The Council for Enhancing Student Learning will articulate the learning outcomes the University expects its students to achieve during their experience on the Twin Cities campus.
- **The Learning Environment:** The University must ensure that all classrooms offer effective learning environments for students at all levels and on all campuses, and complete pre-existing plans for

technology enhancements

- **Expanded Learning Communities:** New learning communities in residential halls, such as Biology House and Spanish House on the Twin Cities campus, have better connected students to the University and motivated their academic work. We will expand the concept of learning communities outside of residential halls and involve a larger proportion of students.
- **Strengthening Honors Opportunities:** To continue to be attractive to the best and brightest students in Minnesota and elsewhere, the University is expanding honors opportunities.
- **Undergraduate Research Opportunities:** The University is expanding opportunities for undergraduates for direct involvement in faculty research projects, particularly for students interested in health careers.
- **Undergraduate Library Initiative:** To help students navigate the explosion of online knowledge resources, the University Library is working with vendors and others to develop integrative tools that will enable students to access all materials in a seamless, one-stop environment.

Better Progress and Improved Graduation

Rates: The University will build on recent improvements in undergraduate graduation rates at all of its campuses through enhanced advising and other interventions, including increased faculty development and recognition. In general, timely graduation (four or five years) serves students better by providing a more intense, focused academic experience; it serves the institution by freeing up valuable class openings for other students.

The most dramatic change related to retention and graduation rates has been the requirement that students take at least 13 credits each semester unless they have permission to take a

reduced credit load. Coupled with the restructuring of tuition, this policy has had encouraging results in its first two years:

- credit loads are higher;
- the most recent four-year graduation rate on the Twin Cities campus shows an increase from 28.8 percent in FY02 to 31.8 percent in FY03;
- we are on track for improving four-year graduation rates, including a 50 percent goal on the Twin Cities campus; and
- retention rates are also increasing.

The University has also made significant improvements in course availability for students, guaranteeing that critical first-year courses are available to freshmen. We need to insure that courses continue to be available when students need them so that students can stay on track for graduation.

The University has made major investments in advising and seeks to expand those investments to insure that career development information is closely integrated with advising throughout a student's time at the University. Helping students see the connection between their academic work and career opportunities can make an important contribution to retention and timely graduation.

Student Satisfaction Levels: Undergraduate satisfaction indicators rose during the last decade and remain at high rates. Students are most satisfied when they are engaged with the learning experience and connected to the University in meaningful ways. To help improve student satisfaction and timely graduation, the University seeks to engage students more fully in their education. Keys to this involvement are student engagement and civic leadership. The University is using electronic portfolios or activities transcripts to capture student progress toward these outcomes.

The University is committed to making as many student services such as financial aid and registration as easy and seamless for students as it can. In fall 2003 we introduced e-pay and e-bill, allowing the elimination of mailed paper bills and the payment of bills online. A web project to give students more information and more control over their financial aid packages is underway.

The University is also developing the online Grad Planner, which will give students detailed information about the sequence of courses necessary for each major and allow students to develop individualized graduation plans. The Grad Planner will give advisors more timely and accurate indications of student progress toward graduation.

Achieving Improved Stewardship and Accountability

The University of Minnesota is dedicated to good stewardship of its resources – public and private – and to accountability to citizens of the state and members of our own community.

The University takes a comprehensive, strategic approach to stewardship of its resources and accountability to Minnesota's citizens and members of the University community. This approach includes comprehensive strategic planning and reporting; making the case for critical state funding; private fundraising focused on four strategic goals; and a broad commitment to efficiency and quality of service.

As an institution, the University of Minnesota engages in strategic planning, including a long-term capital plan and a strategic agreement (compact) process that holds the administration and units accountable to well-articulated and measurable goals. These goals reflect the University's overall priorities and the desired directions of colleges, departments,

and administrative units; these agreements are monitored closely. The University also tracks key indicators of progress and excellence in this document, the *University Plan, Performance, and Accountability Report*.

In order to attract and retain the faculty, students, and staff to maintain and bolster academic excellence, the University will continue to make the case that **state investment in a research university provides unparalleled economic, social, and cultural returns**. For the foreseeable future, state funding provides the crucial, unrestricted operating resources that allow the University to take advantage of new opportunities while maintaining continuity in overall academic planning. Still, the University will continue to diversify its revenue streams.

State funding is leveraged most obviously by the more than half billion dollars in sponsored academic funds the University attracts each year. Although critical to the research enterprise and the academic reputation of the University, these sponsored funds are almost always restricted to specific purposes, and cannot be diverted to meet other needs.

Private fundraising is also crucial to the University's long-term success. The recently completed Campaign Minnesota raised more than \$1.6 billion and reflected a high level of confidence in the University direction and its management among donors. In the post-campaign period, President Bruininks has identified four areas of focus for fundraising:

- support for students at all levels;
- resources to support critically important capital projects;
- broad, all-University interdisciplinary themes and strategies; and
- collegiate and campus-based priorities.

In order to take care of what it has – the physical infrastructure that the people of

Minnesota have been instrumental in building and renewing – the University's 2004 capital request to the State of Minnesota is composed largely of projects that will preserve past investments in existing buildings through repair and renovations. The small part of the capital request dedicated to new construction is targeted to meet increased student demand for classrooms and other facilities.

In a recent speech, President Bruininks expressed his hope that, "One day the University will be known as much for how efficiently it operates and its quality of service as for what we create in our research breakthroughs or high-quality education programs." He launched a Service and Productivity Initiative in October 2002 with that objective in mind. The initiative encompasses four broad goals:

- creating a system-wide culture of excellence in service to students, to people and organizations that support us, and to the general community;
- determining opportunities where resources can be used to bolster the University's internal economy in solving problems with available resources;
- developing approaches for how the University can regularly monitor the effectiveness of key service/support areas; and
- identifying innovations that transform University business practices.

Creating Effective Public Engagement

The University of Minnesota has made a renewed commitment to its public mission, one that reflects the changing conditions of public higher education, the needs of society, and the most current means of communication and public engagement.

Throughout its history the University has embraced public values and pursued public purposes. Today, because of dramatic decreases in state support for the University, some observers have predicted that the University's commitment to its public mission will be sacrificed for other academic priorities. But President Bruininks believes that in these difficult times, public engagement is more important than ever. As former University President Lotus Coffman once said: the University "breathes the spirit of the social order ... is constantly engaged in an attempt to understand the meaning of the age [and is] dominated by a philosophy of helpfulness."

President Bruininks has asked the University community to hold onto that helpfulness as the institution looks to the future and to strengthen the connection between the University's research and education missions and the needs of society. The University is working to create more effective public engagement by strengthening the connection between its research and education and society's needs.

"You can see these deeply embedded connections in programs like the Bachelor of Fine Arts degree we offer in conjunction with the Guthrie Theatre," Bruininks said, "where undergraduates combine rigorous education in theatre arts with a solid liberal arts curriculum; and in the work of Baby Space, a center where the University has brought considerable expertise in child development and family support to the table to partner with the needs of the Little Earth community in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis.

"And we see it in the progress we've made in commercializing University technology; that's one of the primary ways that the discoveries in our labs make their way to the public. That's as true today, with new magnetic resonance imaging technology, as it was with the pacemaker, and as it was with the development of apples, berries, corn, and even flowers that

could thrive in our northern climate."

The University's Extension Service is its best-known avenue of outreach and community engagement. Recently, the Extension Service was reconfigured and reconstructed to make the best use of the resources allotted by the county, state, and federal governments. Extension's primary goal is to bring high-quality university research and knowledge to bear on the challenges facing Minnesota's economy and society.

Through its new regional strategy and its new agreements with Minnesota counties, which now have a significant range of choices among the University's programs, the Extension Service seeks to better leverage the specialized knowledge of its faculty – those in the regional centers, Research and Outreach Centers, and on its campuses. Technology will also have an increasing role to play in strengthening the connection of the broad range of research resources of Extension to the needs of Minnesota's communities. The changes in Extension have required difficult choices, but they will ultimately serve Minnesota's communities better.

The University has established a rich conversation on its public responsibility through the Council on Public Engagement and through implementation of the Outstanding Community Service Award. In addition, over the past year, the University has been working closely with some of Minnesota's largest foundations and state and local governments to better align resources dedicated to community and economic development. The University has served as convener for these discussions and seeks to deepen its role as an analytical resource for local and regional economic ideas.

The University is also engaged in public conversations and initiatives on important issues facing society, such as the President's Initiative on Children, Youth and Families.

Because the health of higher education and the nation will rely on the generation who are children today, the University is convening and connecting its considerable intellectual resources with the work being done with youth and families in the community.

Last year the University held a Children's Summit to bring child advocates and academics together; launched a commission on out-of-school time to examine how Minnesota's children spend and are supervised during the many hours they spend outside of school; launched a Center for Excellence in

Children's Mental Health; and is planning a second children's summit this year.

The President's 21st Century Interdisciplinary Conference Series also provides resources for promising areas where the University's dynamic base of knowledge can be applied to enrich our society. Planned conference topics include Design of Medical Devices; Environmental Threats to Children's Health; Legal and Policy Challenges; Annual Symposium on Small Towns; and Intellectual Property Rights for the Public Good.

