

The Community Speaks out in Support of the U's Aspirations

People inside the University and in the community are talking about the goal of making the University of Minnesota one of the top three public research universities in the world within the next decade. Here's what they're saying.

"The rollout last week of a new 'strategic positioning plan' at the University of Minnesota was a sit-up-and-take-notice moment for those who want to maximize higher education's contributions to this state.... That's what this strategic plan proposes, without shutting anyone out of access to a collegiate education."

—*Star Tribune* editorial, 4-4-2005

"Changing the University of Minnesota with the aim to make it one of the three best research universities anywhere depends not just on internal leadership but public acceptance that today's U isn't good enough for tomorrow's world.... We agree with University President Robert Bruininks that the status quo—at General College and the university as a whole—is not an acceptable vision for the future of a great land grant university in a globalized, increasingly complex social and economic system."

—*Pioneer Press* editorial, 4-10-2005

"I am profoundly impressed and appreciative of leadership in challenging times, and President Bruininks is guiding this great university through a realignment process that I think, in the long haul, is going to serve our state very well."

—Gov. Tim Pawlenty, 4-12-2005

"Members of the Twin Cities Dean's Council are writing to express our very strong endorsement for the vision.... The time is right for the University to institute programmatic and cultural changes that will set the course for academic excellence.... We stand ready to help you in any way we can and look forward to continuing our dialogue on these very important issues."

—21 University Deans, letter to President Bruininks, 4-20-2005

"If the University of Minnesota is to become a top tier institution, the university community must be prepared to build and embrace a new transformational culture. The task force recommendations, although modest in scope, describe a workable plan for beginning to build such a culture."

—31 University Regents and McKnight Distinguished Professors, letter to President Bruininks, 4-8-2005

"A strategic plan for the University of Minnesota that makes it a world-class competitive research university, and measures the value of all programs against this vision, is exactly what all Minnesotans need.... President Bruininks's Strategic Positioning Plan is just a starting point. But it is the right starting point, and reflects both the realities of our new competition, and the spirit of a team that is playing to win."

—Vance Opperman and Rondi Erickson, cochairs, Citizens League Task Force on Higher Education, 4-18-2005

“For those of us who have devoted our lives to teaching, education is about successful learning. We believe it is not sufficient to focus on access to the University. We are committed to students graduating from the University. Students who graduate learn more, earn more and are better equipped to achieve their personal goals.”

—University professors Marvin Marshak, Patricia Hampl and David Tilman

“The University of Minnesota Alumni Association strongly endorses the university’s vision to be one of the top three public research institutions in the world.... We share the university’s goal to continue to embrace change and to build a campus culture centered on excellence, diversity and access to success.”

—University of Minnesota Alumni Association National Board of Directors, 5-7-05

“We’re behind the University’s new vision 100 percent.... This plan is a wise investment in the future of one of Minnesota’s precious assets and will have a far-reaching impact on our economy and quality of life.”

—Current and former members of the University of Minnesota Foundation Board of Directors, 4-15-2005

“[The strategic positioning process] is a positive step towards improving the quality of education and outcomes for students and enhancing the University’s research and outreach missions to better serve the people of Minnesota and the world.”

—University Faculty Consultative Committee, 3-30-2005

“The University Senate strongly endorses the goal of systematically reviewing and improving the University and the necessity for strategic planning. The increasingly rapid change in the structure of knowledge and the pressures on the University arising from decreasing state funding and resulting increases in tuition all mandate an ongoing effort to ensure congruence between the University’s structure and its goals.”

—University Senate, 4-28-2005

“The athletics department is a proud member of the University community. We are committed to attaining unprecedented levels of excellence in academics as well as athletics. Be assured that I share the philosophy of Bruininks that the pursuit of academic excellence and athletic excellence are mutually reinforcing concepts, not mutually exclusive.”

—University Athletic Director Joel Maturi, 4-15-2005