Dear Colleagues,

In my recent address to the senate on the state of academic affairs, I continued the theme of last year’s address of thinking about the make-up of a great university. If you recall, last year I asked the faculty two questions, how do we progress from good to great and how will we get there? I challenged us to think creatively of what we wanted to become and to define our unique strengths. In my remarks this year, I offered five pragmatic suggestions as to how we might move forward, and I promised that I would report in this month’s newsletter on the progress that has been made. Happily, I can report that within each of the schools and colleges and academic units progress is visible. The School of the Arts under the leadership of the new dean, Marvin Curtis, has an ambitious agenda of making the Raclin School of the Arts a household name and a brand that will be recognized regionally as a premier visual and performing arts center. The School of Business and Economics, capably led by Rob Ducoffe, enjoys national acclaim for the performance of its students on the ETS field tests that measure knowledge and competence. The School of Education, with Michael Horvath at the helm, is actively engaged in partnership with area school corporations, the civic and business community, IU Bloomington and the state legislature in improving math and science education.
The Division of Nursing and Health Professions, under the sturdy leadership of Mary Jo Regan-Kubinski, has a stellar reputation for providing extraordinarily talented and dedicated health care professions to the region. The division’s new master’s program and its bachelor’s degrees in dental hygiene and medical imaging are prime examples of program growth to meet community demand. It is highly anticipated the division will receive approval this month from the Board of Trustees to change its name to the College of Health Sciences. And at the heart of the educational experience for all our students is the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, under the creative leadership of Lynn Williams. There, within the College of Arts and Sciences, the seeds are planted for discovery and learning, and where knowledge is melded into interdisciplinary examination of what gives meaning to students’ lives. The undergraduate programs at IU South Bend rank among the best regionally in the preparation of students for graduate and professional schools. Among regional libraries, ours stands shoulders above in technology-supported learning. The Hammes Commons has become a model of how learning and technology are integrated thanks to the visionary leadership of Michele Russo assisted by her extraordinarily talented staff. And, too, we’re making inroads in distance education through the creative energies of Jackie Newman and Jenni Klein.

As I mentioned in my remarks to the senate, all of these things are accomplished through our partners in student affairs, public affairs and university advancement, administrative and fiscal affairs, information technology and the exemplary leadership of our chancellor. They facilitate our academic mission in numerous and immeasurable ways, and to them we are deeply appreciative. But what ultimately defines our success is our students. We hear numerous testimonials from them about how well we prepare and care for them. Their appreciation of their undergraduate experience is expressed in the letters that the chancellor and I periodically receive (undoubtedly you receive appreciative letters as well); in the NSSE data that demonstrably affirm that students relish the attention faculty give to them; in the testimony of students studying abroad who point to dramatic changes in how they see the world; among students who effusively praise their professors for inspiring them to attend graduate school and for instilling in them the confidence to compete with students from more “prestigious” institutions; in their joy to do collaborative research with faculty, and, finally through the bonding that occurs among and between student faculty, and staff in advising and mentoring.

As educators we play an influential and critical role in the lives of our students. That thought was echoed recently by a student at the Scholarship Recognition ceremony. Speaking to the audience of donors, parents and other scholarship recipients, she proclaimed that she was proud of her IU South Bend education and history major; saying further that her education has opened her mind. By that I believed she meant that her education has exposed her to new ways of thinking and that she has learned to integrate knowledge and use the tools of critical and computational thinking in understanding the world around her.

Ours indeed is a sacred trust. I am grateful to each of you for your nurture of our students’ intellectual growth and for your careful attention to their aspirations. Amidst the strife and struggles of many around the world, let us work toward world harmony through the education we extend to our students. And in this season of joy, may peace be manifested in each one of us according to our traditions.

Sincerely,

Alfred J. Guillaume, Jr., Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

Ilan Levine (at right), 2008 recipient of the IU South Bend Distinguished Research Award, speaks to (from left) Vice Chancellor Alfred Guillaume, and Jerry Hinnefeld. Picture taken at the reception following Professor Levine’s award presentation on November 18.
We want to welcome Tim Ryan to the staff of Extended Learning Services. Tim joins us as Director of Business Outreach and will be working to strengthen existing business relations with Michiana businesses and to identify and address their needs for training and professional development. Tim (and his wife) is an IU South Bend graduate from the School of Business in accounting. Welcome, Tim!

On Friday, December 5th, Sarita Soni, Vice Provost for Research will visit the IU South Bend campus. As described in her IU Leadership Bio, Professor Soni is responsible for research development activities and helps to coordinate and develop research across disciplines and schools at IU Bloomington and elsewhere in the university. In addition, she is responsible for the Special State Research Fund, Faculty Research Support Program, IU/Purdue Collaboration in Life Sciences and Informatics Research Pilot Grant Program, and oversees all of the internal grant programs that are administered by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research. Vice Provost Soni’s visit to IU South Bend is primarily intended to inform the campus of the availability of research grant funds for faculty on regional campuses through the Regional Campus Research Program (formerly the Intercampus Research Fund). The program is a collaborative effort between the Office of the Vice Provost for Research (OVPR) and the regional campuses. During her visit she will meet with several groups of faculty and administrators on campus to discuss the research program. For more details, visit the webpage for the OVPR and the link for Internal Funding Opportunities.

Kudos to Mike Keen for the coverage of his work on the Center for a Sustainable Future as well as that of Deb Marr and Scott Sernau on sustainability at IU South Bend in the most recent issue of the IU Research and Creative Activity Magazine (Fall 2008 issue, Vol. 31(1))

As part of our university’s commitment to diversity, in partnership with UCET I’d like to extend an invitation to faculty and staff to join in discussion on the book Driving Change Through Diversity and Globalization, by James A. Anderson. The author is a former colleague of mine at another university and is the former Vice President for Student Success and Vice Provost for Institutional Assessment and Diversity at the University of Albany; he is currently the president of Fayetteville State University in North Carolina. I’d like to form five faculty/staff groups of ten. Academic...