



GREETINGS FROM IUPUI

September 2012

Indianapolis and IUPUI have achieved so much over the last 25 years.

From the Pan Am Games in 1987 to Super Bowl host city in 2012, Indianapolis has shown how a targeted economic development strategy like sports tourism, along with strategic investments, can greatly enhance a city's economic development over time.

For IUPUI, our partnership with Indianapolis has also enhanced our reputation and, in turn, our effectiveness in attracting students, faculty, and gift and grant support. We have time and again been recognized as one of the most engaged urban universities. Now, it's time to think about the next 25 years. It's time to envision IUPUI's future and how IUPUI is intertwined with our community. We are beginning that process this month to map the next strategic plan for IUPUI. We're looking for big ideas.

What trends have you intrigued (or worried)? What opportunities could propel us forward? What obstacles might hold us back or slow us down? What talents and resources will be required to meet changing needs? How do we find the right niche in the marketplace competition for talent? How do we define our distinctiveness as an urban public research university?

In a recent Urbanophile blog, Aaron Renn (an opinion-leading urban affairs analyst), cautioned that envisioning the future is much more than simply wanting to be better than we used to be. We have achieved that. The mark of progress for the 21st century will be whether we can make our city more compelling than others we compete with so that we attract and retain more talent than our competitors. Universities and cities depend upon talent. So we must strive to recruit and retain the very best people. It will not be a linear movement toward progress. It will be more like a swirl of changing conditions that must be anticipated and dealt with strategically.

We have to be analytical about what's working and what's not. Recently, research published by Forbes found young professionals in Indianapolis to be among the happiest in the country. We were the only city in the top five that wasn't in California! The researcher concluded, "Understanding where their peers have found happiness and what types of factors impact their happiness is a valuable resource"

We are doing something right. Do we know what?

IUPUI has long utilized data-driven decision making. Demographic data will be particularly informative to our planning process. For example, one key question for planning is to think about who our competitors are in different areas: faculty, students, staff, graduates?

- Who are we competing with to hire and retain faculty?
- Where else do our students apply?
- Where do our students go when they transfer and why?
- Where do our graduates go?

To be competitive, we must strive not only to have the kind of city we want, and be the kind of urban university we want to be, but also to create a community outsiders might choose to live, work,

or study in. As Aaron Renn says, "Just remember, talented, ambitious people—those with big dreams and hopes for themselves and their societies—want to live in a place where the civic aspiration matches their personal aspiration."

That is why we have to think big. We have to be more than good enough. Indianapolis and IUPUI were transformed in the past decades by a commitment to push for fundamental change. Nine years ago, I challenged the campus to double our impact in education, research, and engagement. We have made astonishing progress—so now is the time to "double-down" and challenge ourselves and our community.

To make bold plans we follow our values and ask:

- What can we do to truly transform the culture of Indiana to one where more people value education (and pursue it)?
- How do we bring influence and expertise to bear so that more people value good health (and maintain it)?
- How do we prepare our citizens so that more people are prepared to create and pursue opportunities, whether as entrepreneurs, inventors, creative artists, or community leaders?

Will you engage with us, as you have in the past, in achieving a collective vision for IUPUI and Indianapolis, one that will have an impact 25 years from now that is even greater than what we've achieved in the last quarter-century?

CHANCELLOR CHARLES R. BANTZ

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