



Greetings from IUPUI

March 2009

In times of fear and doubt, focus is difficult . . . but key.

On the campaign trail, **John F. Kennedy** closed his stump speeches by saying:

We have had enough of anguish and despair. . . . It is time now to re-examine, to illuminate, and then to act.

Then, he would tell the story of **Colonel Abraham Davenport** and the "Dark Day." It was on the 19th of May, 1780, in Hartford, Connecticut, that the skies blackened over so densely that, in that religious age, men fell on their knees and begged a final blessing before the end came. The Connecticut House of Representatives was in session. As some lawmakers clamored for an immediate adjournment, the Speaker of the House, Colonel Davenport, came to his feet. He silenced the din with these words:

The Day of Judgment is either approaching or it is not. If it is not, there is no cause for adjournment. If it is, I choose to be found doing my duty. I wish, therefore, that candles may be brought.

Despite the gloom in the news these days, there is a convergence of opinion that **education is an investment worth protecting**.

Both sides of the aisle in the U.S. Congress have reinforced that message.

Republican **Lamar Alexander**, Senator from Tennessee, former university president and Secretary of Education, said in his "View from Capitol Hill" at the recent American Council on Education conference:

Higher education is one thing in our country that works and works well. It is our secret weapon for keeping our high standard of living.

Democrat **Evan Bayh**, our own Senator from Indiana, who was on campus last month announcing his support for a \$2,500 a year tax credit for families to pay college tuition (part of the **American Recovery and Reinvestment Act-ARRA**), said:

It helps stimulate the economy today by helping middle class families meet their burden. It also will create a better economy for tomorrow by making sure our kids have the skills they need to get good jobs.

The desire to keep fear and doubt at bay through focus and action on education is also reflected in the recent passage and signing of the **Omnibus Appropriations** bill into law. For higher education, this bill includes

\$17.3 billion for **Pell Grants** in addition to funds provided in the ARRA, or “stimulus package.” This would provide a maximum award of \$5,350 that will benefit some 7 million students.

The **Federal Work-Study Program** is funded at the same level as past years, at \$980 million, but received a boost from the ARRA of \$200 million. Currently serving 880,000 low-income students, this increase will help an additional 130,000 students. Colleges match the federal Work-Study money on a 25 percent-to-75 percent ratio.

The federally funded TRIO programs, which motivate and support students to overcome class, social, and cultural barriers to higher education, received an increase of \$19 million for a total of \$848 million. TRIO programs currently serve nearly 872,000 low-income Americans. At IUPUI, students in TRIO’s Upward Bound program are **four times more likely to earn an undergraduate degree** than students from similar backgrounds who do not participate in TRIO programs, so we know this is an investment that works.

Focusing on what works has allowed us to spend scarce dollars more wisely. At IUPUI we have committed to increasing our support for student financial aid even though this has been a challenge for us. In the last five years, we have **more than doubled financial aid to students** so that we currently provide close to \$86 million. Some of this is philanthropy, some tuition dollars, some reallocation.

Beginning last fall, **we committed \$2.1 million annually** to help pay college expenses for every eligible incoming freshman who received a state 21st Century Scholar award or a federal Pell Grant. This marked the **largest commitment of IUPUI financial resources for need-based aid in the history of the campus** and represents our goal to help meet the state’s need for more baccalaureate-holding adults.

In these challenging times, IUPUI must continue to have impact by keeping focused on enhancing the success of our students, growing our research productivity, and contributing through civic engagement. Thank you for your support in that effort.

Charles R. Bantz
Chancellor

[Manage your subscription to the Chancellor's newsletter](#)