

**State of the University Address January 23, 2004  
Dr. Ross Paul, President, University of Windsor**

***FROM THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS...TO GREATER HEIGHTS:***

As we start 2004, there is an exciting climate of change in the air. We have a new Prime Minister and he's from Windsor! We have a new Premier and a new Liberal Government in Queen's Park. This has brought us two new provincial cabinet ministers from our city and renewed hope that Windsor and environs will be much higher on the provincial radar screen. We have a new mayor, four new city councillors and what looks to be a new spirit of cooperation and collaboration to address and resolve some long-term city priorities.

In short, it is a time of renewal and change. Now, it's true that I may look like the same old President but I have just started this month on my second term and, in six months time, we will have completed the five-year period covered by our first strategic plan, *The Best of Both Worlds*, and are already starting to move on the priorities set out in the plan for the next five years which we have called *To Greater Heights*.

I've got the same old Vice-President Academic, too, but that is one of the primary reasons why I am so optimistic about the year and years ahead – Neil Gold has been given an overwhelming mandate of support for another term of office, no mean feat in his most demanding job, and he is now Provost and Vice-President Academic, reflecting his role as the senior academic on a new senior management team that has added the position of Vice-President Research. And, of course, we have the same dedicated old Eric Harbottle presiding over Administration and Finance, although he's having an identity crisis at the moment and has so disguised himself that we're not sure where he is.

We have some great new additions to the team and I want to stress that we really are building a team here at Windsor. I am currently negotiating with a fabulous appointee as the University's first Vice-President Research and we are completing the process of selecting a new University Counsel to replace Charlie James, who has given us outstanding leadership and support for many years in the post. Amanda Gellman, a woman who defines the word "dynamo", is the new Vice-President University Advancement and she is already making a tremendous difference.

And the changing of the guard at City Hall has afforded us a marvellous opportunity that I could not pass up and I am very pleased and excited to be able to announce officially here today the appointment of another Windsor dynamo, Jane Boyd, as Executive Assistant to the President. Welcome, Jane! (Takes bow). In addition to ensuring that there is much more effective follow-through and support for initiatives involving the President, Jane will assume the responsibility of Secretary to the Board of Governors and help us embark on a strong programme of Board development. The good news for Jane is that she gets to start in this part of her role working closely with her good friend and our Board Chair, Carol Derbyshire, who has stepped in so graciously and so ably following the premature death of the previous incumbent, the late, lamented and fondly remembered Chuck Wills.

The bad news is I still haven't found Jane an office! We really need help with space, Mr. McGuinty! In fact, the University of Windsor was the second most generous University for the double cohort in Ontario – we took more students per SuperBuild dollar than all but one of Ontario's 18 universities. Translation – we didn't have the political clout under the last government and very much hope that our strong presence in the new one will yield more capital investment over the next five years! Stadium, buildings for Engineering, Music, Visual Arts ... take your pick or, better still, let's do them all!

Speaking of the Board of Governors, we have recently added some outstanding community citizens to the roster, notably Windsor Regional Hospital CEO and double alumnus, Martin Girash; leading businesswoman and engineering alumna, Jenny Coco; Matthew Moroun of the Ambassador Bridge company and new labour representative, Tom Burton, who is Deputy-Mayor of Tecumseh. The first three bring longstanding relationships with the University to our Board and I know that all will be outstanding in helping us to advance our mission and mandate to make Windsor one of Canada's premier universities.

Today's message is about three things in particular – it is about achievement, it is about investment and it is about pride. I want you to take a few moments to recognize how much we have achieved over the past five years and to reflect on how much more we can do in the next five.

I want to make the case to you that investment in the University of Windsor is investment in the economic and social future of Windsor and Essex County, of Southwestern Ontario and of Canada. And I want to you share in the pride I feel for what we have achieved, not just for the University but for the community and how important it is for us to build on that pride for a very promising and bright future for our children and for their children after them.

### ***THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS:***

#### **Five Years of Achievement**

Driven by our strategic blueprint for change, *The Best of Both Worlds*, I want you to know that I am really proud of you, the faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters of the University of Windsor, for what we have achieved over the past five years. I am not going to go into detail on this, having done so many times before, but I do not want to miss this opportunity to remind you that we have:

- a) Turned a declining enrolment position into six straight years of significant increases
- b) Reached our goal of making this one of the most international campuses in Canada
- c) Tripled our research grants, had 100% success in our research chair submissions and made major steps in establishing a strong culture for research support and promotion on campus
- d) Made teaching and learning a very high focal point for improvement and support
- e) Hired more than half our faculty in a programme of major renewal that represents the best hope for our future
- f) Built some badly needed and tremendously well received physical facilities – the Toldo Health Education Centre, a gem of a building for teaching, learning and research; the beautiful new Alumni Hall residence; the new Dramatic Art building; the CARE building that gives us a base for engineering expansion in the future; and millions of dollars of renovations to classrooms and laboratories across campus.
- g) Become the host institution for AUTO 21, the largest of Canada's Centres of Excellence for research and helped develop the \$500 million U of W/DaimlerChrysler Canada ARDC into one of the best such facilities in the world!
- h) Developed an exciting electronic library that is revolutionizing the way we retrieve and deal with information
- i) And continued to improve our grounds, signage and campus look, with a new Engineering Memorial in the final planning stages.

### **The Special Achievements of 2003:**

Our Annual Report for the year 2002-2003 gives some indication of what we have achieved since I last spoke to you from this platform, but let me remind you of some of the great achievements of the past year. Time goes so fast, we sometimes forget the challenges we have faced and how well we have met them.

First and foremost, despite all the gloom and doom in the media about the double cohort, we have had our smoothest and best year yet, even though we took in an unprecedented 4500 students into first year, some 1200 more than ever before, even though we were stricter on entering averages. What's more, our new buildings were ready, our faculty and services were in place and campus morale soared.

We named five more Canada Research Chairs in 2003, bringing our total to 11. They were **Lori Buchanan, Hoda ElMaraghy, David Fowle, Rob Letcher** and **Ming Zheng**. We came in the top 10 in Canada on a national ranking of accountability, our research grants increased 24% over the previous year, we hired a huge number of tremendously qualified new faculty, our sports teams won national and provincial championships and we had a fabulous 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary party on the quad in front of Dillon Hall. It was a great year for Engineering! We won an Yves Landry Award for the Engineering Co-op, a \$2.5 million Ontario Strategic Skills Initiative award and received \$1.6 million from DXC, a huge contribution to the Faculty's educational, promotional and experiential activities.

### **Some People Who Have Really Made a Difference**

Of course, it is the people, not the institution, who really make the difference. We all know that achievements don't just happen and I want to take this annual opportunity to recognize a few special people who are really making a difference on our campus, in our community and beyond. This is a representative list, not an exhaustive one, and I try not to repeat names from previous years, but there are easily ten more people for every one that I cite here today and I hope that you will all accept this tribute in that spirit.

I would like to start with some of the student leaders who work hard to make this a better place – **Rob Dufour, Jeff Laporte** and the rest of the UWSA executive for making this one of the most positive years for students this campus has ever seen; male Canadian athlete-of-the-year, **Ryan Mackenzie**, for showing almost daily what you can achieve with dedication and talent; and **Vivian Chow**, who came agonizingly close to winning a Rhodes Scholarship this year,

Our beautiful new Toldo Health Education Centre and the Dramatic Art buildings would probably still not be open but for the dedication of **Gary McMann** and **Dan Castellan**.

There were well publicized homages to a number of faculty and staff in 2003, including teaching award winners **Dale Jacobs, Danielle Soulliere, Rosemay Cassano**, and **Gordon Drake**. **Roger Thibert** won an Alumni award for mentoring; OPUS awards went to **Liz Fallaise, Janice Facecchia, Renee Wintermute** and **Nancy Steeves**. **Kim Moore** won yet another award for her incredible service to international students. The creative and dedicated star of our GIS Lab, **Alice Grgicac-Mannion** was recognized at the Christmas lunch as our Employee of the Year.

University of Windsor Awards for excellence in Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity went to **Di Brandt, Lori Buchanan, Rob Schurko, David Ting** and, in the senior category, la crème de la crème, **Doug Stephan**.

External awards for research were too numerous to mention, but several must be noted here – Philosopher **Ralph Johnson** was elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada; Historian **Leslie Howsam** will fill the prestigious James P.R. Lyell readership in Bibliography at Oxford in 2005-2006; **Hugh MacIsaac** was named Aquatic Invasions Biology Research Chair by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, **Ricardo Aroca** won the Gerhard Herzberg Award from the Spectroscopy Society of Canada; **Jan Ciborowski** was the first recipient of the International Joint Commission Biennial Award for Great Lakes Science; **David Antonelli** was one of only 15 chemists in Canada to receive a \$400,000 NSERC Accelerator Grant for Exceptional New Opportunities and **Mary Lou Drake** simply got a lot of money – over one million dollars! – for her Building Blocks for Better Babies programme.

And five of our best young faculty won Premier's Research Excellence Awards – **Dan Heath, David Fowle, Maria Cioppa, Ali Polat** and a name you've already heard several times, **Lori Buchanan**.

Another example of external recognition was **Bill MacArthur's** Windsor Business Excellence Award.

There are important behind-the-scenes workers without whom we would find it hard to survive – **Carrie Hunting** and the huge workload she carries in ensuring the integrity of so many academic personnel dossiers; super Windsor promoters like **Wayne Marino** and **Diane Rawlings**; miracle coach **Dennis Fairall** who epitomizes dedication, excellence and phenomenal success and was again named Canadian Intercollegiate Sports Coach of the Year in both Track and Cross Country ; **Norm Diffey**, who is the pillar of strength behind the huge practice teaching component of teacher training; soon-to-be-retired and very much missed **Orv Houser** who is always there to fill in on a key task, whether it is assisting with campus police, touring job candidates around our campus, volunteering at Convocation or spreading bad jokes around which, theoretically at least, are supposed to improve campus morale; **Allen Gold** and **Mike Salter** in their support of international exchange programmes and agreements; **Tammy Brown**, who helped make move-in day 2003 a fabulously well coordinated event instead of a huge headache; **Liz Bartholomew**, who has made a positive difference in her new role of coordinating the planting and maintenance of campus gardens; **John MacGinlay** in his new role in the Safety office, **Cheryl Paglione** in Pensions, **Violetta Enriquez** as a superfriendly cashier in the Marketplace, **Richard Ponik** in Food Services, not to mention those who play leadership roles in our various unions and associations to look after the best interests of their members.

And there are some relatively new people who have brought great enthusiasm, energy and talent to their endeavours – people like **Ruthanne Tobin** in Education, **Eric Vandenbrouke** in Athletics, **Brenda Rudiger** and **Helen Ellis-Govette** in University Advancement, **Susan Holbrook** in English, **Todd Brown** in Health and Safety, **Gerry Kerr** and **Craig Fleischer** in the Odette School of Business, **Brenda Gourlay** as our new Head of Visual Arts and **Elaine Duffy**, the up from Down Under Dean of Nursing, and **Brent Lee**, Composer-in-Residence for the Windsor Symphony and a key figure in this year's annual WSO Festival of Music which so prominently involved our students and faculty musicians,

There are some staff who really raise the bar in making this a special place for students – **Diane Dupuis** in Kinesiology, **Mitch Fields** in executive education, **Diana Kao** in the Odette School of Business, **Mary Ann Johnston** and her counselling team who carry such an enormous and critical load; and Associate Dean of Law, **Mary Gold**.

And there are other staff who make this an especially welcoming place for visitors and anyone who interacts with them – the ever-cheery **Chris Charlebois**, **Linda Rucollo**, and **Marium Tolson-Murty** of our VIP programme

And you don't even have to be directly connected to make a huge difference – I would like to salute **Helen Moore**, who not only donated but tends on a weekly basis the gem of a little garden outside the Leddy Library that is dedicated to her husband, the late Stewart Moore, and which so brightens our campus. And don't forget our constantly supportive benefactors and friends like **Bud and Ed Odette, Tony Toldo**, and retiring Board member **Ed Brust** and alumnus and friend **Bob Renaud**.

### **THE UNIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY:**

We've focussed on achievement, past and present, now for investment!

It is critical that we all realize that an investment in our university is an investment in the future of this community. More than anything else, universities are about the long-term, about investing in our youth and reaping the benefits for many years to come. While past State of the University addresses have been predominantly about issues internal to the University, I want to broaden the theme this year to address the citizens of our surrounding community.

### **Synergies and Common Concerns: Windsor as a Community (Subtitle: It's time to tell the world!)**

What I really want to do here today is talk about the future of this part of Canada and the absolutely vital role that the University must play in its development. There is not one major challenge before this community that does not have significant implications for the University of Windsor and, perhaps even more importantly, there is not one for which the University is not one of the principal players in the solution.

Let me start by citing a few challenges facing Windsor and Essex County at this time and then address how the University is a key player in helping us to resolve each. First, the challenges:

1. **The border issue**, a local one in terms of quality of life and the regional economy but also a major concern for the Province of Ontario and for Canada, especially in its impact on the automotive industry that employs, directly or indirectly, one in seven Canadians.
2. **Environmental pollution** – air and water quality and their impact on health, tourism and the quality of life we all seek
3. **Health care** – the need to attract and retain physicians, nurses, nurse practitioners and other health care workers so that we are no longer significantly deprived in this crucial area of concern.
4. **Downtown development** – the need to attract more people to live downtown, especially the young and the elderly. This means affordable housing and a diverse range of attractions that cater to different parts of the population
5. **The profile and reputation** of the City and the Region, combating outdated images of the automotive industry to represent what it really is – an increasingly knowledge-based industry staffed by a highly trained and skilled workforce.
6. The need for a more **diverse regional economy** that is less dependent upon the value of the Canadian dollar and the automotive industry alone.
7. Recognition that modern cities are successful, economically and socially, to the extent that they thrive on **diversity** – on a mix of industries, of ethnicities, of lifestyles – and that diversity is the hallmark of an educated society.

8. **A thriving tourism industry** that is based on a number of attractions that are unique and special – yes, the casino and the race track, the downtown bars and the great restaurants, but also the art gallery, the symphony, local theatre, museums, festivals, wineries, bicycle paths, outdoor venues and sport and recreational activities.
9. Combating perceptions that Windsor is not a good place to invest in because it doesn't have the **skilled and educated workforce** of other Ontario centres like Kingston, London or Kitchener-Waterloo. I would refer you here to the North Star study commissioned several years ago by the late Chuck Wills which showed how important this issue is in limiting investment in our community.
10. The need to establish, celebrate and **promote the quality of life** in our community.

I think it is pretty easy to see how important the University is to each and every one of these issues.

1. **The Border** – As the academic representative on the Canadian Automotive Partnership Council (CAPC) and a member of Windsor's Business Transportation Task Force, I have been directly involved in proposing solutions and expressing concern to political leaders about the urgency of resolving this issue, as have numerous faculty, staff and students. From this perspective, I am very encouraged by the resolve of the new Mayor and Council to work together to find a solution that best suits the long-term development and quality of life in Windsor.
2. **The Environment** – The University of Windsor has been a strong leader on this issue. In 1998, we established environmental research as one of our three pinnacle areas and have put together an outstanding team of researchers in the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research, Environmental Engineering, Biological Sciences and Environmental Studies. We are putting together exciting cross-disciplinary teams to work with the local Cancer Centre, the hospitals and other universities to conduct important research on the environmental health issues that affect our daily lives. We have worked closely with the CAW, the City and others to establish the Ontario Centre for Environmental Health which is now located on our campus. And we have exciting plans for a visual arts project that will graphically portray our commitment to the world!
3. **Downtown development.** Look behind almost every initiative designed to improve the quality of life in our community and you will find the University of Windsor. Whether it is supporting or volunteering on the boards of the Art Gallery, the WSO, the United Way, the Chamber of Commerce, Children's Aid, Hospice Windsor, Leadership Windsor/Essex, the Multicultural Council, or the hospital boards, or providing such direct services as Legal Aid Windsor or executive education programmes, the University is directly involved in enriching life across our community. We have also actively been exploring moving some of our programmes and services downtown.

Actually, if you will bear with me, I have a dramatic proposal for downtown development that the Mayor will love because it will solve a number of his problems in one fell swoop. It is my suggestion that we move the entire University of Windsor campus to the Western Super Anchor site downtown, taking over the Art Gallery, the Cleary and the Canderel buildings, and building a stadium and arena. This will give us an ultramodern waterfront University, will relieve the City of a number of expensive headaches, dramatically increase the demand for downtown accommodation and bring all sorts of people into a thriving city centre. Not only that, it will leave behind a huge parking lot for all those trucks as they queue to cross the bridge. Any takers?

4. **Health care.** With the successful implementation of the Southwestern Ontario Medical Education Network under Raphael Chung in our beautiful new Toldo building, the University has taken the first important step in establishing medical education in the region and this fact alone has already made a major difference in enticing young physicians to come to Windsor and Essex County. This is only the tip of the iceberg as we develop our own brand of medical education over the next few decades, with great synergy among many community partners and institutions.
5. **The profile and reputation of the City.** The North Star study underlined how closely related are the profile and the reputation of the University and the City. We have successfully recruited some 300 faculty in the past few years with outstanding success. However, one of the major challenges has been trying to get them to consider Windsor in the first place, because they either know nothing about it or have slightly negative perceptions. That's why it is so important to support the Mayor in his efforts to promote Windsor. Conversely, if we can improve the profile and reputation of the University of Windsor, it will greatly help the City to attract more visitors, more investment and more national interest. There is so much obvious synergy here that I have even offered to put some of our own promotional resources into a pool to jointly promote both the City and the University together.
6. **The need for a more diverse regional economy.** I'm going to say a bit more about this in a moment, but the short version is that we live in a knowledge-based economy, the keys to which are a highly educated workforce; research and innovation; and the development of clusters of regional strength. The University must be the linchpin to all of these in any modern community.
7. **Diversity.** There have been a lot of studies to show that the most prosperous and successful communities are those that thrive on their diversity – diversity of ethnic background, diversity of lifestyle, diversity of interests. With its strong international focus and the broad range of its disciplines and interests, the University is again the central agency to help Windsor capitalize on its own diversity, which I understand to rank in the top five among Canadian cities.
8. **Tourism.** This is Windsor's second most important industry and, again, the University is a key player, with its strong support for the arts, its hosting of major track meets, games for the disabled, many other sports and recreation events and, most notably, the Junior Pan-American Games a year from this summer.
9. **Windsor as a place to invest.** Perceptions of this are directly related to the profile and reputation of the University and it is in all of our interests that we really do something about this.
10. **Quality of life in our community.** The University is clearly a major player here, whether it is promoting and supporting a wide range of interests and activities or actively working to help us overcome such negatives as environmental pollution or social problems in our community.

### **Why an investment in the University of Windsor is an investment in our community**

Just before Christmas, I attended an international conference in Montreal that focussed on economic "clusters", the concept developed by renowned Harvard economist Michael Porter, the man who not much more than a decade ago predicted dire economic consequences for Canada if it did not turn its economic policies around very quickly. It can be argued that he, more than any other individual, spurred the Federal Government's tough but ultimately successful efforts to counteract the growth of the national debt and, just as importantly, its major investments in university research and innovation.

At the Montreal conference, Porter was addressing his own concept of “clusters”, where private companies, universities, colleges and local governments collaborate to establish key economic engines for geographic regions. A prime example is Boston health sciences. The main point was to emphasize the importance of regional, as opposed to national, economies. Indeed, two-thirds of employment in modern western countries comes from local, rather than national clusters. Porter also made it clear that all clusters matter, not just the high tech ones, and that the more clusters, the better, for any given region.

Porter said that the old model was government driven economic development whereas the new one is collaborative, involving all levels of government, educational institutions, research institutions and the private sector. He showed a direct relationship between how collaborative universities are with the private sector in various countries and the respective economies.

What was even more impressive than Porter’s rhetoric was the obvious impact his approach has had all across Canada and in so many of the world communities represented at the conference. In community after community, we heard how post-secondary institutions had worked closely with local industry and local government to develop knowledge based industry, knowledge based investment and knowledge based jobs.

A particularly interesting example, for me, was the one of Montreal, my original hometown, where Mayor Gerald Tremblay, a former Minister of Economic Development in the Bourassa Government and holder of an MBA from Harvard, is in the process of developing 13 economic clusters for the City in close collaboration with its four major universities.

St. Clair President Strasser and I met with Mayor Eddie Francis just before Christmas and were delighted to learn more about the top priority our new Mayor gives to investment in the knowledge-based industries that will define the future of our region. Over the past two years, we have collaborated with St. Clair in hosting an ongoing series of Innovation Summits and I am confident that we can work closely with the Mayor and other community leaders to really make a difference to our collective futures. The efforts of Dr. Strasser, Ed Bernard, Peter Frise and others to spawn the Automotive Innovation Institute is only one promising such outcome.

In the past, the City of Windsor and Essex County have been very supportive of their local university and, I would argue strongly, it has paid off away beyond that investment. Today’s University of Windsor boasts some 16,000 students across an incredible array of disciplines. A little over half come from the region and that is reason enough to support your University, especially given that every survey demonstrates two things very clearly – that university graduates are much more apt to be fully employed (97% of Windsor graduates over the past few years have found full-time employment within months of graduation) and make far more money than those with less education and also that world economies are tied directly to the educational level of their citizens.

The justification for investing in universities goes well beyond the development of a productive workforce, however. Our whole concept of Canada and the democracy we try to make work is dependent upon well educated citizens who can think for themselves, seek a high quality of life and are able to work effectively in democratic and participatory forms of government.

Knowledge is power in the new society and Canada is in the forefront of academic research across a great range of fields. We have not been as effective in turning that research into commercial products and, therefore, Canadian jobs, but we are getting better. We are building a strong research culture with outstanding professors and graduate students. We are leaders in applied research in many fields, not just the obvious ones of automotive or plastics but in psychology,

sociology, history, political science and even philosophy in teaching people informal logic.

The direct economic impact of the University of Windsor on our community is enormous – current estimates are \$540 million or more than half a billion dollars! And that does not even include the \$500 million ADRC! It's hard to imagine this community without its University – think how different it would be!

### **Believing in Ourselves – the key to the new Windsor**

The only constant these days is change and we have no intention of resting on our laurels. We live in a very dynamic and competitive age and will need ambitious plans to meet the major challenges we face.

Last November, the Senate and the Board each unanimously approved our new strategic plan for the next five years, titled *To Greater Heights*. This is a very ambitious plan, one that imagines Windsor as the most learner-centred university in Canada, one that focuses less on its inputs (entering averages) than on what it produces. The plan envisions each individual academic programme defining very clearly the attributes that every one of its graduates must have and how these can be measured and promoted.

It builds on the success of the *Best of Both Worlds* in continuing to promote research excellence and support, our research pinnacles, international recruitment and a very strong new thrust for graduate programmes. It envisions a University only slightly larger than today's 16,000 students, but with a much stronger representation of graduate programmes at the Masters and Doctoral levels than is currently the case.

Perhaps most of all, it strives to raise the profile and reputation of the University of Windsor, locally, nationally and internationally, to the levels that we deserve. We want increasingly to be seen as the University of Tomorrow, an innovative institution that attracts huge interest among students and faculty alike.

The challenge of realizing this plan will be enormous, not only for the cultural changes it represents, but because of the dire financial circumstances Ontario universities are facing at this time. With one of the lowest per capita grants in North America, growing student/faculty ratios, annual increases well below inflation and huge problems of deferred maintenance, our ability to maintain, let alone improve, quality is in serious jeopardy. In this context, investment from all levels of government and from the private sector becomes more important than ever, especially for the University of Windsor. This challenge is well represented in our new strategic plan, notably in the section on needed resources which is printed on pages that are, appropriately, dark red!

Notwithstanding our huge funding challenges, I am confident in this plan and in the University that it will steer over the next five years. I am optimistic that the next President will inherit a thriving institution, one that is much better known and more respected than is the current version.

But I want to underline to the assembly here this morning how important it is that everyone of us believe in this plan and work to make it effective. As I have said many times, this cannot just be my plan, it must be our plan, ours in the University and ours in the community. Whether talking about the City or the University and their respective profiles and reputations, we, too often, tend to be defensive, to be apologetic and even to disparage ourselves. There's a reaction in some parts of this City and on parts of this campus that I decry and I want to appeal publicly here today to everyone to stamp it out. It's that tendency, when things don't go the way we hoped, to shrug our shoulders and say "well, what did you expect? It's Windsor!"

I want you to help me change that. It's like the message I am increasingly giving to our students – if you find things at the University of Windsor that you really like, please speak up about them – indeed, shout them from the rooftops (or over the internet if that's your preferred means of communication). And, if there are things you do not like, then speak up about those too and help me find ways to improve them so that they soon become part of the first category.

Before I get any more exercised about our poor showing on reputational surveys, I want to look at home first. If we don't believe in what we are doing, if we are not proud of our achievements, if we do not take every opportunity to broadcast them, we only have ourselves to blame. I'm not interested in blaming, especially because there is so much positive going on around here. I want to shout about it, I want to be proud of it and I want to never stop trying to make it even better.

I really mean this message. Enhancing our profile and reputation, my number one goal for the next five years, starts right here. It means boasting about what we do well and doing something about what we don't. It means praising all the good things about Windsor and working to improve those that fall short. It means that we value the efforts of our politicians, that we respect the ways that they try to deal with huge challenges and that we encourage them to do better. It means that we never badmouth our local institutions, politicians, media or community leaders. It means that we neither whine about our concerns nor sweep them under the carpet. It means we face our challenges head on, together, with passion, with confidence, fortitude, determination and, ultimately therefore, with success.

Ladies and gentlemen, this University will continue to do some great things and will achieve even more in the years ahead than it already has. But our profile and reputation will improve less because of any specific achievements and much more because every time someone comes into contact with someone from Windsor, all they will hear is pride, confidence and love for the community. It really is very simple and yet it seems so hard to achieve.

Please do not misunderstand me. I'm not talking about some pollyannaish, rose-coloured glasses approach to the world. This is a university, not a political party and not a cult – it is an institution that is about the search for the truth, about academic freedom and about respect for those whose values and views are very different from our own. This means a high level of debate and much disagreement as to priorities and directions.

But dissent, debate and controversy can take place in an open climate of respect, high standards and high tolerance for difference. These are the hallmark of a first-class university and they are the keys to a first-class democratic society. Windsor has a tremendous opportunity to make its mark, in part because others don't yet have very high expectations for us, in part because we are small enough to work together to really make a difference, and mainly because we have a great community and an unusual ability to get our leaders working together for the long-term common good.

I hope that you, like me, feel privileged to be living in this society, in this community and on this campus. Profile and reputation start inside our own heads and until we really believe in ourselves and hold the highest standards for our achievement, we will always fall short. Yes, we reach for greater heights and, yes, we have the best of both worlds.

I would like to finish with my favourite current analogy, that of the Lancers football team, led by Coach Mike Morencie. In my first year, here, the Lancers were 0 and 8. Their record since then has been 1-7, 2-6, 3-5 and, this year 4-4, with a 1-1 playoff record and, of course, the greatest present of all, beating Western twice! That's progress and, increasingly, it means that Coach Morencie doesn't have to beat down the bushes trying to recruit players because, suddenly, they all want to play for such an up-and-coming programme. That's what we want for the University as a whole and, with your confidence, support, and pride, that's what we are going to achieve over the next five years!

Past achievement, investment for the future and pride always. Thank you for listening and I look forward to your questions and comments in response.

Ross Paul