



and athletic performance. She is the 14th Nebraska student athlete to win this award.

In keeping with our mission as a land-grant university, our faculty members are also responding to the economic needs of our citizens. We do not yet have the capacity to make it rain, but I know of no university that is making a greater effort to assist during this dry period. Our National Drought Mitigation Center monitors and gives advance notice of drought. Cooperative Extension has been particularly active with a website, <http://ianrhome.unl.edu/drought/>, that provides the latest information and resources on how to respond to dry conditions, and in association with Kansas State and Iowa State universities, we are delivering in-service training via satellite for extension educators to assist rural

families with the emotional and financial stresses of drought.

Two years ago we set a course to pursue a vision of this university for the year 2020 that would improve our reputation and would enhance our contributions to students and to the citizens of Nebraska. Notwithstanding the financial concerns, we are making substantial progress. As I have said before, progress is not a straight-line process. We have come too far so quickly that we cannot and should not falter regardless of the present budget circumstances.

Especially at this time, I deeply appreciate your continued support.



THE CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

A report to special friends and supporters of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

September 13, 2002

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The fall semester is under way, and at the beginning of each academic year, I present the State of the University address to the campus community. I am writing to you to share some of the statements from that address and additional details. We have much good news to report — and some challenges.

First, the good news. This fall, our university's enrollment increased by 224 students overall as we see the results of our improving recruitment efforts. UNL remains in the second tier of Best National Universities-Doctoral in the annual college rankings by *U.S. News & World Report*. This year's *U.S. News* rankings show we have made good progress in our freshman retention rate, our graduation rate and our reputational score. In addition, the percentage of alumni who make donations to the university rose from 23 percent to 26 percent, which is a substantially higher rate of giving than that of any of our peer institutions.

We continue to see increases in the amount of research funding from outside sources coming to our university. The amount of research and public service awards from federal and non-federal sources increased by 25 percent from June 2001 to June 2002. Through June 2002, UNL researchers had obtained a total of \$74.4 million in outside funding for specific projects.

In addition I am pleased to report that two major federally funded research centers, with awards totaling more than \$11 million, have been recommended for funding, and we are anticipating official award announcements in the next few weeks. These successful center proposals are a direct result of our initiatives

to increase external research funding to UNL.

More and more of our research efforts involve faculty from several disciplines. You may already know about the \$10 million center grant in virology, which drew upon expertise from Biological Sciences, Veterinary Medicine and the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Another example of collaborative research involves physicists, chemists and engineers.

As part of the Nebraska Research Initiative, we developed a team dedicated to materials research with important collaborations between the College of Engineering and the departments of physics and chemistry. This collaboration has resulted in the invention of a small, portable neutron detector for the detection of radiation, which we expect will play a very important role in homeland security as well as for peaceful uses. The materials group also developed, for the first time, a plastic magnet that has significant potential for the semiconductor industry.

Our campus' role in homeland security is growing in other ways as well. Mike Meagher's work with fermentation processes will play a significant role in homeland security and human health. His Biological Process Development Facility, soon to be reconstructed in Othmer Hall, is one of the few laboratories at a university that is GMP certified, meaning it follows the highest standards of quality that permits its vaccines and other products to be utilized for human testing. As an additional benefit, the undergraduate and graduate students who work in this facility have the competitive advantage of being trained in a GMP-certified facility.

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In the sciences or engineering, some of our other recent successes include:

■ The development, by a team led by Dean Sicking at the Midwest Roadside Safety Facility, of SAFER walls, impact-absorbing walls first used at this year's Indianapolis 500, that increase the chances a race car driver will survive a high-speed crash.

■ Allergen detection technologies developed by Steve Taylor and Susan Hefle that help the food industry identify "hidden" ingredients such as eggs, milk and peanuts in foods. These ingredients could cause life-threatening allergic reactions in susceptible people.

■ The continued development of patented buffalo grass cultivars with improved turf traits and drought-pest resistance by Terry Riordan and his team. These grasses are gaining popularity for golf courses and in some homeowner applications and may produce a new money crop for Nebraska.

We are also beginning to reap the benefits of our commitment to the Plant Science Initiative, again a project that has collaboration across disciplinary boundaries and across 27th Street. The scientists, led by Sally Mackenzie, in addition to developing new plant characteristics, are also creatively seeking ways to assure that Nebraska farmers benefit from these advances. The group has developed a new fresh market bean that is more easily digestible and offers higher yields. Tom Clemente has developed a new soybean that has elevated levels of oleic acid and very low levels of saturated fat. Martin Dickman is working to find ways to enhance the resistance of crops to disease and stress, an advance made more urgent by the recent drought.

Other centers of excellence are beginning to emerge. Through a \$4.5 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Mike Epstein and Ron Nelson in Teachers College are providing services for children that are high-risk for school failure. Their success could have

significant implications for our society and this university. Two professors in the Bureau of Sociological Research, Les Whitbeck and Dan Hoyt, have recently published the first installment of a long-term, one-of-a-kind study on runaway teenagers. This university has very real potential to be a leader in research relating to children and families.

Even with more research funding coming to UNL, as you know, such funding is earmarked for specific projects and cannot be used to supplant the operational costs associated with running the university.

This university faces some very serious financial challenges of a nature not seen since the 1930s. While the headlines have trumpeted budget shortfalls and program eliminations, the faculty, staff, administration and students of this university have, in more quiet ways, achieved a remarkable record of success during the past year nonetheless. Across the university we have made substantial enhancements to our programs.

We should all celebrate those invisible successes that we know occur daily in our classrooms and laboratories where students acquire new information and insights, where their set of opportunities are expanded, where they gain experience in critical thinking, or fashioning judgment, or appreciating difference, where they acquire the skills they will need for their professional careers or their personal lives. Whenever our students achieve a better understanding of the world around them or of themselves, we have succeeded in fulfilling our mission.

As you know, we are required to reduce UNL's budget by \$7.5 million during this fiscal year. In recommending budget reductions, which will be discussed for the next several weeks among members of the campus community, I have deliberately protected our undergraduate programs. This latest round of budget cuts — the third in one year — brings our total reduction to \$16.4 million. Even with



such uncertainties in state support, we remain focused on innovative teaching and research and excited about the prospects for high achievement in many academic areas.

We remain one of the 16 schools recognized nationally by the American Association of Colleges and Universities for innovative educational programming and one of only five research universities to be so recognized. That honor was not given without considerable focus on constant improvement of our undergraduate program.

Later this fall our Residential Learning Communities advising program will receive the Outstanding Institutional Advising Program Certificate of Merit from the National Academic Advising Association, and Jennifer Nelson, an academic adviser in the division of General Studies, will be recognized for Outstanding Individual Advising.

Other notable faculty achievements include:

■ Charlyne Berens was named one of three Journalism Teachers of the Year by the Freedom Forum of Arlington, Va.

■ Historian Peter Maslowski received the NU system's Outstanding Teaching and Instructional Creativity Award in recognition of his outstanding teaching.

■ English Professor and *Prairie Schooner* Editor Hilda Raz received the Outstanding Research and Creative Activity award, the NU system's highest accolade for scholarly work.

■ Biological Systems Engineering received the Universitywide Departmental Teaching Award, also conferred by the NU system.

■ Rumiko Handa, associate professor of architecture, received the Education Honor Award from the American Institute of Architecture Students.

Students have individually achieved national recognition in a variety of ways that reflect well on the quality of what we do.

■ Michael Leonard, a graduate student in theater design, received a coveted internship in

art direction from the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences.

■ Recent graduates Christopher David Brown, a biochemistry major, Lucas Adam Sabalka, a computer science and mathematics major, Ellen Veomett, a mathematics major, and Katie Wlaschin, a chemical engineering major, all received 2002 National Science Foundation Graduate Fellowships.

■ Renee Baack, a junior biochemistry major, was one of eight winners of a Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship from the American Society of Plant Biologists.

■ David Bradley, a graduate student in architectural engineering, received the 2002 Acoustical Society of America's Graduate Fellowship.

■ Architectural engineering student Erica Bowden received the Martin Hirschorn IAC Prize from the Institute of Noise Control Engineering for her contributions to the field.

■ Our Army ROTC unit was judged in the top 15 percent of Cadet Commands out of 270 units nationwide, and Angela Weber, an Air Force ROTC Cadet, was one of four cadets in the nation to receive the W. Randolph Lovelace Memorial Award for outstanding senior cadets.

■ Our journalism students continued to perform well in the Hearst Competition, with Amanda McGill finishing fourth out of 38 entries in television news and Matthew Hansen one of five runners-up in the news-editorial championship.

■ The Law College National Moot Court won its regional competition for the sixth time in eight years.

■ We continue to lead the nation in Academic All Americans, both in football and in all sports.

■ Nancy Metcalf, who led our volleyball team to the Final Four, received the NCAA Top VIII award, which means of all student athletes in the country, in all divisions and all sports, she was among the top eight recognized for her achievements in academics, community service