Good Morning… and Welcome… both to everyone in here in the Chapel… and to those viewing the webcast!!!

My thanks to the other speakers for joining us… and for their excellent comments.

We should also thank Marcia Naher and the other staff members who organized this event. They’ve done an outstanding job… as usual.

For my time with you today, I would like to talk about a message that has been appearing in the media for some time now.

I’m referring to the point of view … shared by a number of people across the country that … college is no longer worth the time,… or expense…. leading some to ask…”why bother with a college education?”

We should ALL be making the case… to everyone we know… that a college education is MORE than worth it… for many reasons…

Having fewer people attend and complete college … would send our nation in the wrong direction … for being able to participate in the world’s future… much less to help shape that future… which we know takes leaders.

My message today… is a Call to Learning…

• first… for understanding the critical role that higher education plays in our future… individually and collectively

• … and then… for students to complete college and for ALL of us… to continue Learning… throughout life
ONE purpose of an education is …of course… to prepare people for gainful employment.

I have said before… and it bears repeating… that our educational system is preparing people for:
- jobs that don’t yet exist,
- using technology that hasn’t been invented
- to solve complex problems we can’t even imagine today…or barely
so…. AND all of this is happening on a global stage

To quote from a recent article by Tomas Friedman,…we have… "a world where …more and more products are now… IMAGINED everywhere, …DESIGNED everywhere,… MANUFACTURED everywhere in global supply chains… and SOLD everywhere.”

What does that tell YOU about the need for higher education and continued learning??

The points I’ll be making today …are supported by data from NUMEROUS sources including the:
- National Research Center for Career and Technical Education
- National Center for Education Statistics
- Center on Education and the Workforce at Georgetown University
- US Department of Education
- Bureau of Labor and Statistics
- and others

IN THE INTEREST OF TIME… I won’t cite each reference along the way. But I am happy to provide the sources to anyone afterward.

Lets think now …about the WORKFORCE.

The FIRST POINT …from the sources I just mentioned …is that … people with more education are more likely to find a job

- In 1973, …72% of all jobs were available to H.S. grads
H.S. was all that most people needed for the workforce… to be able to support their families
- By 2007,… that figure dropped to 41%...and
- By 2018, …only 37% of all jobs (if that) will be available to people who do NOT have some college

THAT 37% of all jobs, unfortunately, will be the lower skilled, lower paying jobs …without much opportunity for advancement

To put it another way…
By 2018, at least 63% of all jobs in U.S. will REQUIRE some kind of postsecondary education

It is also true…. that the fastest growing job clusters for the future are in job areas with the highest concentration of college graduates.

What ARE some of the top job clusters for 2018?? They include careers in:
- healthcare
- management (business specialists, analytics professionals)
- STEM areas (science, technology, engineering and math)
- Education, esp. related to STEM and
- Careers in community and social services

ALL of these job clusters REQUIRE postsecondary education …and some more so than others.

So a college degree will become even more important in the future.

A SECOND POINT, …, is that ..
After people find a job…those with more education …will ALSO have more opportunities for employer-funded training and support for additional college

- The more educated a worker is, …the more likely he or she is to receive additional education from the employer
...all of which increases one’s value as an employee and one’s prospects for promotion

THE TAKE-AWAY HERE ...is that higher education is ALSO A GATEWAY to OTHER sources of additional education and professional training
  o >60% of which are provided by employers...not colleges and universities

The THIRD POINT is that ... In tough economic times, ...people in lower skilled jobs are more likely to be laid off.
  o The recession actually SHIFTED the workforce to more jobs requiring postsecondary education.
    ▪ Since 2007,... 8 Million+ jobs have been lost...many of them were lower skilled jobs ...and
    ▪ Many of those jobs are never coming back...They have been lost permanently due to:
      • AUTOMATION,
      • TECHNOLOGY,
      • INDUSTRY CONSOLIDATION, and
      • GLOBAL SOURCING.

THE PRESS... has been reporting that many college graduates can’t find jobs.

The more complete story... is that the recession increased UNemployment for ALL LEVELS of education,

    HOWEVER, ...unemployment for people with bachelors degrees has been around 5%, ...while the unemployment overall has been at the 8% to 9% level.

Without at least a bachelors degree... people’s chances of BEING UNemployed... are significantly higher.
My Fourth and final POINT regarding the workforce is that: People with more education... typically earn more.

HOW MUCH???

Based upon salary data from 2010:
Only 36% of those with a H.S. diploma (only) earned $35K or more annually...
For those with a bachelor’s degree, however, 69% earned $35K or more....a BIG difference!

What about LIFETIME EARNINGS:
The average lifetime earnings for someone:
- with a Bachelors degree is $3.4M
- THAT IS DOUBLE the average lifetime earnings for someone who has a H.S. diploma (but not a college degree)

Wouldn’t you agree ...that the additional $1.7 M is a sizable return ... on the time and money spent earning a bachelors degree?

So far,... I’ve talked about the importance of higher education for finding and keeping a job...esp. one that can provide financial security for you and your family.

That outcome is important,... but higher education ALSO has another VERY important purpose.... which is ...

To prepare people TO ENGAGE AND ENJOY... the world OUTSIDE their workplace... for their own fulfillment...to help their families ...and to serve their community...their country ...and beyond!

HIGHER EDUCATION enables us to:
- UNDERSTAND MORE
- SO we APPRECIATE MORE... AND hopefully
- Care MORE ...
- AND ...higher education prepares us TO DO MORE !
A liberal arts foundation … helps us APPRECIATE our OWN HUMANITY…and
  o The arts and sciences help us connect THAT understanding … with what we’re learning from science.

LITERACY in science and technology …is REQUIRED to maintain …even a general awareness …of what is happening in the world.

For example,…MASSIVE VOLUMES of scientific and business-related data …are being used to better understand… the interconnectedness among people and systems of the world.
  I ENCOURAGE YOU… to learn about a movement called BIG DATA. Just google BIG DATA…and prepare to be amazed!!!

As a teaser…I will tell you that… just during 2012, … 2.5 quintillion bytes of data about the world have been created…EVERY DAY of 2012…that is (2.5 x 10\(^{18}\)) That is an example of the BIG DATA available for analysis (from IBM What is big data? http://www.01.ibm.com/software/data/bigdata/)

IF … what I’ve presented so far …hasn’t convinced you that college is worth it…there is another BIT OF NEWS I would like to share… that I think you will appreciate…

  • To put it simply…there is much evidence to document that …people with more education… LIVE LONGER.

  • In fact, the disparity in lifespan among various groups is alarming.

  • If you would like more information on this, I can provide references. One article entitled Education: A Predictor of Longer Life recently appeared in the U.S. News and World Report …and that report refers to an article in the journal Health Affairs.

The data clearly show …that education has a PROFOUND impact on longevity and researchers recommend ENHANCING education for ALL age groups.
So now consider that …the value of education is NOT ONLY the impact it has on one’s opportunity to have choices IN life… BUT ALSO the impact education has upon the LENGTH of one’s life !!

This longevity research certainly brings NEW meaning to the phrase…*Education for Life*…

*We can be PROUD that …a commitment to providing Education for Life … is at the CORE of Park’s new strategic plan for the future.*

Once again…Park got it right …and will continue to get it right !!

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I would like to turn now… to some information about the status of America’s college-prepared workforce...

And also HIGHLIGHT three IMPERATIVES.

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- 7.4% of young people America…aged 16- 24… are NOT enrolled in high school and do NOT have a high school credential.

- Of those who DO graduate from high school,… 68% enroll in a two - or four-year college the next term…but unfortunately many don’t finish a degree

- How many people in the U.S. hold a college degree?
  - Just over one third of the U.S. population has a college degree, but that figure varies significantly by region of the country.
  - The NATION’S GOAL is to increase that 1/3+ to 60% of the population… within the next decade or so.

- MANY COUNTRIES around the world are ALSO FOCUSING on ways to increase their number of college-prepared citizens …so this is a global concern...that is part of a global race for talent.
Currently... the U.S. ranks about 12th in the world in the % of its population with a college degree.

Is the U.S. on pace to develop the college-prepared workforce needed in the future?? NO....at least NOT YET

- The U.S. is currently **under** producing college degrees/certificates by 300,000 **each year**
- And the projection is... that by 2018,... the U.S. will need **3 Million MORE college-prepared workers** than will be available.

ONE Imperative, therefore ... is to **INCREASE ACCESS** to higher education in the U.S.

AND THAT ACCESS ...**must be inclusive of all groups**... regardless of income, ...ethnicity, ...time-constraints due to work and family... or where students live

IF students:
- can’t afford college
- can’t arrange their schedule to attend class ...or
- don’t find a learning environment **that works for them** .....then **access didn’t happen**.

Higher Education **MUST deliver on three core initiatives**.

Which are ...making college affordable, ...flexible..and inclusive.

We know ...that **AFFORDABILITY is a PROBLEM**

In the early **2000s**, ...relatively few colleges and universities cost over $40/yr, ...TODAY... over 300 colleges/universities in the U.S. cost $50K or more/yr
o Sadly, student loan debt now exceeds even credit card debt

o With the tough economy… many students have defaulted on their school loans…a huge problem…
  o (that has been) exacerbated by the tactics of many FOR-
    PROFIT universities

o One recent study… revealed that ONLY 5% of the students…
  in 200 of the country’s top, non-profit colleges/universities …come from families in the bottom quarter of household incomes.
  o That approach misses many talented people.

o Currently, 31% of Park students receive Pell funding, which is need-
  based support …and 74% of Park students receive some form of financial aid.

o The national average …for the annual cost of private higher education… is $28,500, but Park is far, far below that average …by over $10,000.

o IN FACT….the U.S. News and World Report ranks Park as the 7th
  most affordable private college/university in the country !!!

o And Park also provides quality education, which I’ll address in a few minutes…so the result is that Park is a BEST VALUE.

o The website Parents and Colleges.com… represents parents across the country who,… after researching cost and quality of higher education, ranked Park University the #1 school in the country for BEST VALUE in private higher education (among schools not affiliated with religious institutions).

o Park PROVES that you don’t have to spend a fortune to obtain a great education!

What do I mean by …FLEXABILITY
• The majority of the workforce for 2018 is already beyond compulsory education age...so we need to help more working adults complete college... as well as recent H.S. graduates

• We CAN do more for the estimated 40 million working adults who have some college... but no college degree... many of whom are in the military or are veterans...

• Working adults ...as well as other students... need programs that are offered... at the times,... term lengths,... locations... and in the delivery formats that best fit their life situation.

• PROUDLY...and for many decades,... Park has been providing EXACTLY THAT kind of INNOVATIVE, PROGRAM FLEXIBILITY
  o So students have options

• AND... Park has also been receiving awards... for the system... the University has in place to support that program flexibility

• For example... The Association of Continuing Higher Education selected Park for TWO Exceptional Program Awards for 2012
  o One for Park’s online learning operation and another award for our distance campus center operation

• Park’s faculty members are highly experienced in teaching college students of all ages

• And Park’s staff members understand what they need to do to help people of all ages.

• ANY organization’s success ...ALWAYS comes down to its people... and Park has THE BEST PEOPLE
  o All of whom are very much appreciated !!!

What about INCLUSIVENESS

  o Inclusiveness is about HAVING a learning environment that welcomes and supports... EVERYONE.
Students, faculty and staff members ALL contribute to a person’s sense of community and belonging. At Park,… that caring comes naturally.

How do you know …if your school provides an inclusive environment? Just look at who is there… and who stays.

Park is PROUD …that 48% of our student population across the country… represents ethnic groups that are underrepresented in higher education.

Furthermore, two national journals rank Park in the top 100 of ALL schools nationally…for the number of degrees Park confers upon students in those ethnic groups

We’re PROUD that Military Times EDGE has ranked Park the #1 …most popular …non-profit, masters’ level institution in the country …for service members using tuition assistance.

We’re PROUD… that Park is repeatedly listed …by GetEducated.com as a Military Friendly School...

And we’re also proud …that our international student population… has grown to over 650 students from 100 countries. This fall semester, 157 NEW international students are beginning their studies at Park.

Park’s leadership for embracing diversity and being inclusive… shouldn’t surprise anyone,… Park has been doing that since 1875, because… being INCLUSIVE was a THE reason for Park’s founding 137 years ago.

The first 17 Park students in 1875 included two Native Americans…and
Three of the first four students who graduated from Park in 1879… were women.
The second IMPERATIVE we face is to increase COLLEGE COMPLETION...

Nationally …only about half of those who begin a bachelor’s degree finish within six years. We at Park also struggle with getting people across the finish line.

- So many Park students are working adults…who have so many other responsibilities on their shoulders besides school…that it just takes longer…

BUT they work hard…and many eventually graduate … …from this campus and from Park’s 39 other campus centers around the country.

- Park is dedicated to DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE to help people cross the finish line …
  - so if you as students …are having difficulties …PLEASE reach out to your professors or to staff members. They are here to help you …

- Park is ALSO committed to helping you AFTER you graduate….by serving your ongoing educational needs throughout your career….AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

The THIRD Imperative is increasing QUALITY in HIGHER EDUCATION

- Universities all over the world are advancing the QUALITY of their higher education and they are emphasizing a more global approach.

- Most U.S. colleges and universities are on a similar track, but there is much to do…much to do…especially regarding globalization…which is critical…
  - because we MUST prepare students for a global workforce… and to deal with the global issues… that are already impacting their communities
Another recent quote from Thomas Friedman is that…”for more and more jobs,… AVERAGE IS OVER. Thanks to the merger of,… and advances in,… globalization and the information technology revolution, …
  o every boss now has cheaper, easier access… to more above-average software, …automation,… robotics, cheap labor… and cheap genius than ever before.”

So when you’re tired and are wondering about going to class…remember…AVERAGE IS OVER

WHAT you know is important!

And what will most likely distinguish you… is your ability to work with others in a respectful,… civil,… productive manner
  o The ability to work with others…is absolutely CRITICAL for your success.

You should be confident about your future… because you are attending a College of Distinction

This summer,… Park was selected as a College of Distinction by a national college guide (of that same name). …

  o This means that Park is now one of only about 200 institutions …out of the 4,400+ colleges and universities in the country …to be a College of Distinction.

That ranking was based upon an external evaluation which concluded that Park has:
  o engaged students,
  o outstanding teaching,
  o a vibrant campus environment and
  o successful outcomes.

Also this summer, Park launched a new, five-year strategic plan entitled Park’s Promise…
That plan commits the University to **serving those who serve their community and country** …and to **providing quality education for life**.

The plan also makes clear that Park will accomplish this by offering **accessible,** **personalized,** **future-focused** programs…that are **globally relevant**.

*Park’s Promise*… is a promise of excellence and service …**FIRST** of all to students… and also for faculty and staff members.

Ultimately, it is a **PROMISE** of excellence and service for **our communities and country**….as well as our global village.

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**I would like to end my comments with a Call to Action for students**

**My challenge …is that you:**
- Think carefully about the information I’ve shared this morning …and
- **continue learning about what higher education has to offer**…
- so you…**BOTH** …
  - **UNDERSTAND** the opportunity you have at Park **AND**
  - **take full advantage** of your Park education…**now and long after graduation**…**as proud, successful alumni**.
- So many other people in this country…and in countries all over the world…would **LOVE** to be sitting where you are…attending college.

We know you have it in you …**to help build** the creative,…caring workforce …**and global citizenry** …that our world needs!

Our job at Park… **is to help YOU** **realize that greatness**…and so **we will**!

Thank you all …for what you do.  I wish everyone …all the best for the new academic year.  **GO PIRATES!!!**