

Address To The Rotary Club of Louisville

Good afternoon!

And thank you very much for this opportunity to talk about Bellarmine University's Vision 2020 -- a plan that is already under way, and one that will be just as important and transformational for the regional city of Louisville as it will be for Bellarmine itself.

With this Vision, Bellarmine is on its way to becoming the Premier Independent Catholic University in the South – and therefore, the leading private university in this state and region.

And that means, with your help, that Louisville, KY, is going to have something it has never had before – a nationally pre-eminent private university of significant size and stature.

Over the next 15 years, Bellarmine will:

- Triple our enrollment, to about 8,000, with 4,000 each of undergraduate and graduate students.
- Double the number of buildings on campus, from about 30 to about 60.
- Create seven to 10 new graduate and professional schools strategically selected because this region needs them and students want them in order to compete in the new economy.
- Consider a move to Division I athletics, because the best-known schools tend to compete at that level.

This ambitious Vision for Bellarmine is real. We have a detailed operational plan, financial models, a Master Plan for developing the campus, marketing and fund-raising plans under way.

We are building on a strong, existing foundation and a recent record of extraordinary success. If you have not visited Bellarmine lately, there's a good chance it already has grown and improved beyond your imagining.

We consistently rank among the top colleges and universities in the nation in our category -- and also as one of the very best values -- in publications such as US News & World Report, Barron's and The Princeton Review.

We are a teaching and learning community that is centered on the liberal arts, and that stresses academic excellence and ethical awareness in everything we do.

Over and over again we hear from employers that Bellarmine graduates not only "know their stuff"-- they are also "good people." Our students develop the intellectual, moral, ethical and professional competencies for successful living, work, leadership and service to others.

A couple of other facts that surprise some Louisvillians: About 40 percent of the students we enroll now are from out of state and live on our increasingly residential campus. And our well known International Program offers study abroad in 48 countries on six continents. Over one-third of our juniors study abroad each year, one of the highest percentages in the country.

Important among our international programs is the partnership that we have between our Business students and the International Committee of the Downtown Rotary Club as they collaborate on a microlending project in the country of Belize.

Microfinance supports citizens of developing countries with entrepreneurial opportunities through business planning and small loan assistance while increasing confidence and reducing poverty by raising income levels.

The Bellarmine students and Downtown Louisville Rotary International Committee members determined that the microloans they distribute will be small amounts of no more than \$1,000. The loans will be disbursed to people who could start their own small business or increase the profitability of their current business with the money from the loan. The loans will be distributed in the Belmopán, Belize region and to individuals participating in environment-friendly projects (green projects).

During the team's trip to Belize in March, six Bellarmine students and members of Downtown Louisville Rotary Club worked to formalize the expressed support of Belmopán Rotary Club and began work to place the first loan to a deserving Belize individual by July 1, 2007.

This initial trip served as a foundation for continued development of the program and we thank the International Committee and the Rotary Club for joining us in this partnership.

VISION 2020, which I am outlining for you today, is already under way. You might have read the story in this morning's paper, or seen the TV coverage, about the Institute for Media, Culture and Ethics that we have just launched! We are moving toward a new graduate and professional School of Communication: Media, Culture and Ethics, and this is one of the new schools that was just an idea 18 months ago.

Is there a reason that Louisville does not deserve, or cannot have, a private university of significant size and with a national reputation for academic excellence? We don't think so.

Is there a reason that Louisville NEEDS a private university of significant size and with a national reputation for academic excellence? Absolutely; in fact, there are a lot of reasons.

All of our leaders know that higher education is critical to successful economic development and quality of life. We need more people with higher levels of education – not just for jobs, but for good jobs in the new economy. And NOT just for the money, but for civility, culture and quality of life.

We in Kentucky are very good at stating this repeatedly in all sorts of reports.

It was the subject of the Kentucky Higher Education Improvement Act of 1997.

The Brookings Institution's post-merger report on Louisville said human capital and quality-of-life challenges would be the main threats to our new regional city's ability to compete. Among 15 competing cities in the year 2000, we were second to last in percent of population over age 25 with a bachelor's degree.

The Progressive Policy Institute's Workforce Education Index ranked Louisville 37th out of 50 metro areas.

Richard Florida, the demographer and professor of public policy at George Mason University, ranked Louisville in the bottom 10 of 49 metro areas – lumped in with places like Buffalo and Grand Rapids – in attracting young, educated, motivated people, the so-called "creative class" that he and others believe will drive the nation's changing economy.

The Greater Louisville Project is tracking our performance in this area, and it warned in a recent report that even though Louisville made progress between 2000 and 2005 and climbed out of the bottom and into the middle in the percentage of adults with a bachelor's degree or higher, "overall education levels

for the Louisville Region's prime workforce still lag behind its top competitors by a large margin."

The Council on Postsecondary Education says that, for our state to overcome these deficiencies and reach at least the national average in educational attainment by the year 2020, we have to double the number of adults with bachelor's degrees over the next 14 years. That means that between now and 2020 we need to produce an additional 389,000 college graduates. And at the current production level, we will fall 211,000 college graduates short of that goal!

Just last week, the Kentucky Chamber of Commerce announced that it is creating a blue-ribbon committee to study how far we have come in this regard, and how far we still have to go to reach our goals.

The answer to all of this is that ALL of our universities, public and private, must attract, enroll and graduate a lot more students -- and this growth cannot be a zero-sum game.

Our public, state universities cannot do this work by themselves.

Private universities cannot do it by themselves, either.

It takes both. Public AND private universities both must grow -- in a mutually supportive, mutually beneficial, non-threatening relationship of collaboration and positive competition.

And if you take a look around, one of the first things you see is that this relationship exists in the cities and states that rank ahead of us -- but it has been absent here.

Indiana has Indiana University AND the University of Notre Dame; Tennessee has the University of Tennessee AND Vanderbilt University; Ohio has Ohio State

AND Case Western Reserve University; North Carolina has the University of North Carolina AND Duke University; Illinois has the University of Illinois AND the University of Chicago; Missouri has the University of Missouri AND Washington University; Georgia has the University of Georgia AND Emory University.

And the list goes on.

Bellarmino can and must be for Louisville what Vanderbilt is for Nashville, what Emory is for Atlanta, and so on – a pre-eminent private university that not only strengthens the local economy immediately and in the future, but also attracts talent, is a haven for innovation and creativity, and improves community, culture and quality of life for the whole region.

Today, Bellarmine University is in a position to complete that equation here – by becoming the Premier Independent Catholic University in the South, and thereby the leading private university in this state and region.

Envision this Bellarmine University, 15 years from today:

- We will have strengthened our liberal arts core and tripled our undergraduate enrollment to 4,000 students.
- We will have increased our graduate and professional schools from 5 to 10 or 12– adding a Graduate School; a Graduate School of Business; a School of Communications, Media & Culture; a School of Pharmacy, a School of Hotel, Food and Beverage Industry Management. Then a School of Law, a School of Architecture, a School of Veterinary Medicine. We will have tripled our graduate school enrollment to about 4,000.
- Our Carnegie Classification will have grown from a Masters I University to Doctoral/Research University – Intensive. That means we will be awarding at least 10 doctoral degrees per year across three or more disciplines, or at least 20 doctoral degrees per year overall.

- Our total enrollment, undergraduate and graduate, will have grown from 2,500 now, to 8,000 by 2020.
- We will have doubled our facilities, from 30 to 60, in 15 years.
- We have a beautiful 135-acre campus on both sides of Newburg Road, and a Master Plan showing how we can develop that campus beautifully and well to accommodate all of this growth.
- In 15 years our campus will have a new tone and architectural style, with facilities and landscaping that become a part of our brand and image, based on the beautiful hill towns and monasteries of Tuscany, the home of our namesake, St. Robert Bellarmine.
 - Imagine Bellarmine's campus as one of the most beautiful and distinctive locations in Louisville – to match the significance and spirit of the place!
 - Imagine a campus with arches, cloisters, human scale towers, water features, gardens and art!
- In athletics, we will be highly competitive in NCAA Division II, and we will compete for national championships in several sports. And, because this new vision will put us in the company of peer institutions that are NCAA Division I, we also will study moving Bellarmine to NCAA Division I. (Think of the great in-city rivalry that exists up the river between The Cincinnati Bearcats and the Xavier Musketeers.)

Who, besides Bellarmine University, will benefit as we realize this vision?

Existing corporations in Louisville and the region will benefit immediately and increasingly as this vision is realized – and so will their employees, and their employees' families.

The economic impact of private universities is significant. Nationwide, they employ three-quarters of a million people and had estimated revenues in 2001 of \$120 billion -- dollars with a cumulative economic impact of nearly \$300 billion.

Notre Dame's economic impact on the South Bend area is \$833M. Duke's impact on its service area is \$3.2 B. Vanderbilt's impact for Nashville and middle Tennessee is \$3.7 B. And Emory's impact on Atlanta is estimated at \$5.7 B.

Add to that the production of more and more graduate and professional degrees to spur further economic development, sustain vital communities and provide professional services.

Bellarmino's ascendancy will also benefit the public university sector, creating a more competitive, productive and stimulating higher education environment throughout the region.

Private universities need public universities to grow and succeed because we want to send our undergraduates to competitive graduate schools, and because we need to hire faculty from their graduate ranks, among others.

Public universities need private universities to grow and succeed because private universities, who depend on private money in order to operate, must be responsive, innovative, experimental, resilient and open to change – and thus can move to markets and to matters of high academic quality with greater facility, ease and speed. This serves to create a truly competitive environment that stimulates greater productivity among the public sector universities.

And when both public AND private universities grow and succeed, a community becomes more attractive to the so-called “creative class” – it becomes a magnet for invention, technology, human capital, diversity and innovation.

I have charged the Bellarmine University community to take this bold new vision and, with focus, intensity, resolve, passion and commitment, to imagine it, to believe it and, working together, to create Bellarmine as the Premier Independent Catholic University in the South, and thereby the leading private university in this state and region.

I now ask YOU to imagine what the realization of this vision would mean to Louisville and Kentucky, to believe that we can do this – as evidenced by our growth and success over the past 15 years – and to help us create this historic transformation, for this and future generations.

It is time for the private higher educational institutions in Kentucky to step up, to create competitive and distinctive edges with each other and with the public university system in the state. The former paradigms simply do not suffice. If we all maintain the status quo and do not feel compelled to achieve better results, we will not accomplish what we hear asked of us in conversations with the leadership of the city and the state. We believe Bellarmine's time is now, and we believe our Vision 2020 is absolutely necessary for the economic success of the city and the state. We ask you to support us in meeting this challenge.

Thank you! Are there questions?