

Tulane

Report of the President 2000

February 14, 2001

Scott S. Cowen



Dear Alumni, Faculty, Staff, Parents and Friends:

You've heard fairly consistent themes from me since being named president of Tulane University three years ago: about dreaming dreams, setting goals, reaching potential, aiming high.

And underneath it all ran the overarching theme of building on the university's legacy of academic quality.

Now, in the middle of my third year here, I am pleased to share with you some concrete programs that build on our plans and dreams for Tulane's future. In this special letter and its accompanying Web site, I want to share with you a glimpse into the truly exciting and creative work going on at Tulane as our planning efforts literally come to life.

The three programs I want to introduce you to in these pages are but a few examples of the dedicated people doing fascinating work at Tulane. I hope you'll also check out the Tulane University Report of the President 2000 online at <http://pres2000.tulane.edu>. There, you'll find even more examples of some of the university's most innovative and exciting programs and people, from the "wireless" campus to architectural restoration, from American civil rights to public health in Thailand.

VISION

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COMMITMENT

In his Tulane laboratory, Darwin Prockop and his team of researchers are exploring the boundaries of gene therapy. Their work holds implications for the eventual treatment of complex diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

We hear a lot in the media these days about genetic research and the promise it holds to provide eventual treatments for the world's incurable diseases. From cancer to autoimmune disorders, from Parkinson's to Alzheimer's, gene therapy seems to hold the keys to our future health.

For a number of years, Tulane's Health Sciences Center had been committed to establishing a Center for Gene Therapy. But in order to do it right, we wanted to make sure we had the right people in place.

The "right people" arrived at Tulane this past summer in the form of internationally renowned genetic researcher Darwin Prockop, who had been director of gene therapy at the MCP Hahnemann University School of Medicine in Philadelphia.

Dr. Prockop brought with him a number of key members of his research team, as well as several federal research grants. Their work in the past six months alone has been as exciting and promising as we had hoped, and bodes well for establishing Tulane's center as one of the world's premier gene therapy facilities. For example, Dr. Prockop is involved in clinical research trials on children who have osteogenesis imperfecta, a disorder that causes extremely brittle bones. He discovered the genetic defect that causes the disorder, and researchers at St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital in Memphis are using gene therapy developed from that discovery to treat the disease in five children.

Another discovery, which allows scientists to culture bone marrow stem cells rapidly, promises to advance eventual gene therapy treatments for other complex diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's.

CREATIVITY

Tulane's premier location, our talented scholars and our community partnerships are just some of the reasons the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is looking at the university as a possible site for one of 10 regional humanities centers to be established in the next few years.

In December 1999, Tulane earned a spot among 16 universities nationwide vying to run one of the regional centers. The NEH awarded Tulane \$50,000 in seed money to fund our efforts to develop an implementation plan for a center for the Deep South region, which includes Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee, Arkansas and Alabama. Our proposal for the five-year, \$5 million NEH grant is due on Aug. 1, 2001.

In the meantime, the seed money has been put to good use as our planning group, led by history professors Sylvia Frey and Lawrence Powell and supported by Tulane faculty members Rebecca Mark, Thomas Klingler and Lance Hill, has mapped out the vision for the center that highlights our ability to collaborate with other cultural institutions, support research on regional topics, document regional history, preserve cultural resources, develop K-12 learning opportunities, build college-level degree programs in regional studies and foster cultural tourism.

For example, Tulane has scheduled two conferences during this planning phase. The first, a UNESCO Transatlantic Slave Trade Conference, took place last August. The Tulane/Cambridge Atlantic World Conference on Civil Rights is slated for April 2001, and is entitled "Freedom Struggles in the Atlantic World." In addition to the conferences, committees on research, community outreach, education and preservation have been working out details for a center that can enrich regional studies.

The Regional Humanities Center (RHC) also sponsored a Woodrow Wilson Innovation Awards proposal submitted and won by Tulane graduate students to develop a cultural tourism program called "Egghead Tours." The tours will take participants on tours of New Orleans historic districts and neighborhoods. The program will debut this fall, with tours focusing on topics such as Storyville and the St. Charles Avenue streetcars.



Professors Larry Powell and Sylvia Frey find the rich setting of New Orleans the perfect place for studying the culture of the Deep South region. New Orleans' St. Louis Cemetery No. 1 will be one of the sites in which graduate students will lead cultural tours this fall.

INNOVATION



Monterrey, Mexico, is one of the many Latin American sites where the A. B. Freeman School of Business has active and successful programs.

P.S. Don't forget to check out our President's Report 2000 Web site at <http://pres2000.tulane.edu>. It has even more interesting programs and areas for you to explore. You can also read more about the university's strategic plan at <http://www.tulane.edu/~strplan/>.

"It's a small world" is an old cliché that rings all too true these days as rapid advances in communication and information technology bring nations and people in closer contact. Partnerships with international universities and organizations are a vital key toward a strong and relevant university. Through myriad programs in our graduate and professional schools, Tulane has forged successful partnerships with universities and businesses around the globe.

For example, the A. B. Freeman School of Business has emerged as perhaps the most active, involved U.S. business school in all of Latin America. In 1997, a Latin American business magazine ranked the school's executive education program in Santiago, Chile, as the sixth best program in Latin America. Freeman was the only U.S. business school to make the list.

That ranking is a reflection of the remarkable success Freeman has enjoyed since first embarking on a strategic effort to develop programs in Latin America, following on the school's successful Executive MBA programs in Asia. The school played a vital role in establishing certificate programs for Mexican managers at the Universidad Autonoma del Carmen in Ciudad del Carmen, Mexico, and at Universidad de Olmecca, in Villahermosa, Mexico. In 1997, in partnership with Universidad de Chile, the Freeman School initiated its Executive MBA program in Santiago, and in 1998, Freeman launched a Master of Management program in Guayaquil, Ecuador, in a partnership with Escuela Superior Politecnica Del Litoral.

The Freeman School also has developed innovative faculty development programs for its partner institutions, and has created a consortium for research on financial markets and business institutions in Latin America to promote scholarly research.

Programs such as these provide a cultural and scholarly exchange that enriches the lives of faculty and students both in the United States and Latin America.

People. Education. Research. Community. Resources. Leadership. Those are important elements of these and other programs as our strategic plans come to life. And it's still early in the process—look for more exciting developments from Tulane as we move forward in the 21st century.

Sincerely,

Scott S. Cowen
President