

President's Report
EKU Faculty Senate
February 2, 2009

I regret that I am missing my second straight meeting of the faculty senate. I am in Washington, DC, representing the University in the context of development work. That will be followed by more of the same later in the week in Dallas and Houston.

While the economic downturn has had some negative effect on certain categories of giving (mostly gifts of appreciated assets) we were able last year to finish our capital campaign more than a year early and did enjoy an increase of 16 percent in the number of donors. This bodes well for the future, indeed. It also shows, I think, the results of the nearly 50 alumni meetings we have attended over the past year.

I reported to the Board of Regents last week on a number of initiatives, including the status of the Business & Technology Building Phase II and the New Science Building Phase I. I expressed to the Board my deep conviction in the importance of the New Science Building to the academic relevance of Eastern and our ability to become a more significant actor in the STEM disciplines. I indicated to them my intention to direct certain one-time monies to that project in order to assure its completion. These will be funds that cannot be used for recurring expenses such as salaries, benefits, new lines, etc. I am sure that Senator Frisbie can expand on this issue if any of you have questions.

We are aggressively seeking to get as much economic stimulus funding for our projects as we can and will be sharing more information on this topic as it comes available.

As an aside, it was a personal honor and joy to have an opportunity to attend the inaugural festivities in Washington on January 19 and 20. Eastern's presence there was duly noted.

The size of the budgetary challenge facing us continues to grow. The basics of our plan for dealing with it, however, remain the same. We will protect our core instructional mission, deal with personnel reductions through attrition and address reallocations strategically. I appreciate the work the Financial Planning Council has already done and look forward to the Strategic Planning Council, to be chaired by Dr. Jo Ann Ewalt, beginning its work.

As I told the Board last week, I am convinced that those institutions that will flourish when the economy turns around will be those who use these difficult days to reinvent themselves and not simply hunker down and ride out the storm. I have a deep and abiding faith in our faculty and staff and know we will come out of this recession poised to take advantage of a new day. What we love about the "Essential Eastern" must, and will, be preserved.

My faith in our faculty and staff was strengthened by the spirit, cooperation, and hard work displayed in dealing with the ice storm of last week. The examples of sacrifice, dedication, and care for our students, colleagues, and persons in the larger community who were without electricity and heat were countless and truly reflective of the "Power of Maroon."