UK Campus Emerging from the 19th Century
President Eli Capilouto
January 13, 2013

More than one year ago, I stood before our campus community for the first time, acknowledging the challenges associated with preparing students for a 21st century world using 19th century facilities.

But in the midst of more than $1 billion in construction needs and daunting economic challenges, those who support this institution -- from faculty, staff and students to alumni and friends across the Commonwealth and globe -- continued to see opportunity. They saw our promise -- the Kentucky Promise that for nearly 150 years has pushed us to educate generations of innovators, leaders and citizens, and bring forward the new ideas that can rise to meet our intertwined economic, social and health challenges.

This week, emboldened by their support and in partnership with our Governor and legislative leaders, we unveiled a new approach to old challenges through a plan to self-finance three critically needed facilities on our campus that will underscore our commitment to putting students first in everything we do.

The three structures embody our shared vision for our campus -- to create a dynamic learning environment and a vibrant college experience for our students through facilities that empower our faculty and staff:

- **A $65 million renovation and expansion of the Gatton College of Business and Economics.** Using mostly private dollars from committed donors, we will redesign and expand classrooms in the third-most-used classroom building on campus; educate more students; and better serve our business community with a new, high-tech conference center, auditorium and Master of Business Administration (MBA) center.

- **A new $100 million, 263,000-square-foot Academic Science Building, funded in large measure by revenues associated with our successful athletics program and private fundraising.** Our current Chemistry/Physics Building is the second-most-used educational facility on campus, and it has outdated space for both learning and research. A new technology-infused building will help us prepare our students for success in college and in life and will provide our exemplary faculty the space necessary to solve the issues of our day.

- **A $110 million renovation of Nutter Football Training Facility and Commonwealth Stadium, constructed in 1973.** Our renovated training facility will allow us to compete for the best student athletes and keep them healthy and physically sound to compete. Our stadium will meet the demand for an enhanced fan experience with the addition of modern suites and club seating. A multi-purpose recruiting room opens new venues for student recruiting and other university functions. All these improvements will be financed by revenues generated from the new Commonwealth. A waiting list for suites already exists.

Football is the primary financial driver for 22 sports at UK and is one of the most important
reasons we have one of the few financially self-sufficient athletic programs in the country, one that gives millions each year to the institution's academic needs.

These three buildings represent a $275 million investment in our future -- $275 million that we are financing ourselves, while we also maintain our previously announced commitment to holding tuition increases to no more than 3 percent next year.

In partnership with our elected leaders, we are embarking upon a strategic, but bold approach to the challenge of creating more affordable access to a 21st century education for more young Kentuckians.

In a recent column, Thomas Friedman of The New York Times wrote that our country faces three major challenges: dealing with the merger of globalization and the information technology revolution; finding answers to our huge debt challenges, fueled largely by health care and entitlement costs; and discovering and harnessing energy sources that will grow the world economy without further threatening the environment.

Education -- particularly the type of education found in major research institutions -- is at the heart of solutions to each of those challenges. All across our campus there are examples of how we are engaged in finding those solutions.

We have refined a core curriculum that requires students to work collaboratively across disciplines to prepare for a 21st century workforce.

Through our growing health care system in partnership with communities across the state, we are treating many of the most advanced diseases with high-tech care. Through research and outreach we work to prevent the most serious of illnesses from developing in the first place.

And in our Center for Applied Energy Research, our scientists are working across the globe on sustainable approaches to long-term energy needs.

We don't lack for the talent to solve the seemingly intractable challenges confronting our Commonwealth, country and world. Where we must improve is creating facilities as good as our people -- facilities with the high-tech learning and collaborative research space that enable our people to dream about what might be and tap into their limitless potential to make those dreams reality.

Building that space requires finding the right balance between huge needs and clear financial constraints. In stepping forward to strongly support our plan to self-finance three critical facilities, our elected leaders extend to us the opportunity to make a down-payment on the future of UK and of our state.

In thinking creatively, in planning boldly and in acting strategically, the Governor and legislative leaders have stepped forward with confidence in us to meet the Kentucky Promise of a better tomorrow through education, discovery, commerce and service.