

STATE OF THE UNIVERSITY

PRESIDENT GAYLE E HUTCHINSON ADDRESS

Good afternoon. Welcome back. Happy belated new year, and best wishes this spring semester.

I am grateful to each of you for all that you do to serve our students well, and for taking the time to be here today for my remarks concerning the state of the University. Before I begin, I wish to say how grateful we are to the Mechoopda, on whose ancestral lands this great University sits.

Chico State. We are one University, bound together by our common purpose to guide student success with academic rigor and quality service using principles of applied pedagogy, civic engagement, social justice, inclusive excellence, global perspectives, and sustainable practices. We do this to “prepare our [students] for rapidly changing social, cultural, and economic contexts and to [build] and advance innovations and solutions that address complex societal and climate challenges.”

My comments today are grounded in the values we share:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Transparency
- Respect
- Civility
- Diversity
- Inclusion

Together, we strive to advance our institutional mission, achieve our strategic priorities, and uphold our values through cross-disciplinary and cross-divisional collaborations and processes of shared governance. We have a strong history as a dynamic learning institution. Our work transforms lives, families, and communities. We are Chico State!

I begin by recognizing my colleagues who serve as campus leaders. Please stand and be recognized as I call your name. And, audience as tempting as it may be, please hold your applause until I have completed naming members of each group.

Our Cabinet:

- Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Debra Larson
- Vice President for Business and Finance Robbi Stivers
- Vice President for University Advancement Ahmad Boura
- Chief of Staff Brooke Banks
- And, joining us just 20 days ago, our newest member ... vice president for student affairs ... Dr. Milton Lang. Vice President Lang comes to us from UC Davis, where he served as the associate vice chancellor of student life, campus community, and retention services in the Office of the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. The important thing to know about him—he is a Chico State Grad, Class of 1993, in social work. He earned his master’s degree in education and doctorate in higher education administration from Washington State University. At UC Davis, Dr. Lang is recognized for the transformation of the Student Academic Success Center, his contribution to

the launch of the First-Year Aggie Connections, and his leadership as founding assistant vice chancellor of the campus' first academic retention centers—Native American, Chicano, Latinx, and African American. Welcome home, Dr. Lang!

In 18 months, we worked tirelessly together as an academic community hiring three new vice presidents. This was an arduous task, but an important one led by Dr. Chuck Zartman, chair of Executive Management Evaluation and Development Committee (EMEDC), the search committees, and Lori Miller. Will Dr. Zartman, members of EMEDC, Lori Miller, and members of all three search committees, please stand and be recognized? Thank you. You have led campus through an important selection process. Now, a new Cabinet is poised to lead. They are helping us advance our University mission. And together, with you, they will help shape the future of Chico State.

Of course, I wish to recognize Associated Student Government leadership--President Alisha Sharma and AS officers--for the good work they are doing.

In the spirit of shared governance, I recognize the Academic Senate Officers. This team is doing an exceptional job navigating Senate responsibilities and meeting regularly with me and Cabinet. Please stand and be recognized:

- Jed Wyrick, Chair
- Jeff Livingston, Vice Chair
- Tim Sistrunk, newly elected Secretary and parliamentarian. Tim replaces long-time Senator Joe Crofts. Joe is retiring with more than 43 years of service to our University. He served 27 years on the Academic Senate and for 25 of those years he was secretary and parliamentarian. Joe has shared his wit and encyclopedic knowledge of our campus, and we have enjoyed his colorful wardrobe.
- Betsy Boyd, past chair
- Chiara Ferrari, EPPC chair
- Jennifer Wilking, FASP chair
- Paula Selvester, statewide senator
- Rick Ford, statewide senator

I also acknowledge the collaborative efforts and contributions of the leaders and members of staff council, Campus Labor Council, and California Faculty Association. Let's give a warm thanks to:

- James Aird, Chair of Staff Council
- Elaina McReynolds, Campus Labor Council, Chief Steward of the Academic Professionals of California, Unit 4
- Tim Sistrunk, California Faculty Association President

Thank you.

Despite an often-challenging 2017, the fall semester was not without its triumphs at Chico State.

- Once again, Chico State was ranked in the top 10 Public Schools in the West by *U.S. News and World Report*, coming in at No. 8. Chico State has been in the top 10 for the last two decades—since the ranking debuted in 1998—ranking as high as third during that time.

- Another tremendous fall success was Giving Day. Held on the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, this global day of giving provided a perfect opportunity to showcase the generous spirit in our community. With more than 2,100 gifts, Chico State generated more than \$251,000, plus \$46,000 of matching funds for a grand total of \$297,514. Chico State raised three times more money than Sacramento State, where they have been participating in Giving Day for five years! I would like to acknowledge the Giving Day team of Kristine Mazzei, Kate Post, Nicole Williams and Allen Lunde, and the Student Philanthropy Council. Creative Media and Technology did the heavy lift with graphics and video components. Nice work everyone! I am also proud to report that giving increased in the past year among all of our campus constituencies: faculty, staff and students. Thank you for your support.
- On the broader stage, Breanna Holbert, an agricultural education major at Chico State, was elected national president of the Future Farmers of America. Breanna received nationwide attention as the first female African American to serve in the position in the organization's 90-year history. We are proud of Breanna and know that she will achieve great things while in office.
- Our director of Facilities Management and Services introduced a new event to campus: the FMS Veterans Day 5K Hoorah Run/Walk. Michael Guzzi, a veteran himself, envisioned a route that would showcase a fall day on our beautiful campus, honor veterans, and generate financial support for student veterans at Chico State. A total of 186 people participated in the inaugural event, which raised nearly \$5,000. And, as a result, four student veterans were presented with scholarship awards at the FMS holiday lunch. Well done, Mike and team.
- Following a campus visit in October, Chico State's College of Business received a prestigious, full five-year reaccreditation from the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB). While fewer than 15 percent of all business schools in the world are accredited, the college has been fully accredited by AACSB since 1972. This prestigious recognition ensures the business college remains a competitive leader in the business world and makes our graduates highly sought after. The College of Business and the MBA program continuously shine on the national stage, being recognized by *Money* magazine, *Washington Monthly*, *CEO Magazine*, *EDUniversal*, *Princeton Review* and *The Financial Engineer*. *Money* again named Chico as one of the nation's "Best Colleges for Your Money."
- Another program undergoing an accreditation review is the School of Nursing. Two consultants from the Board of Registered Nursing (BRN) for the State of California conducted a site visit to the School of Nursing in November. The "Consultant's Approval Report" indicates that Chico State's School of Nursing indeed remains in compliance. The findings will be reported to the BRN Education/Licensing Committee on March 15 for the final recommendation of continued approval.
- Our sports teams dominated the competition this fall. The Chico State men's cross country team won its 16th consecutive CCAA title. The Chico State women's cross country team finished on the podium at the NCAA Championships for the third season in a row with a fourth-place finish. Our women's soccer team went unbeaten in its final eight matches and was selected to the NCAA Championship Tournament. Our volleyball team made a magical run through the CCAA Championship Tournament before falling in the tournament title match. Chico State cross country athlete Caton Avilla and volleyball player Bekah Boyle each earned CCAA Championship

Scholar Awards, presented to the athlete with the highest GPA in the Conference Championship field.

- In a once-in-a-lifetime Chico Experience, more than 1,000 people gathered on the Glenn Lawn to take part in a solar eclipse viewing party on August 21. A joint project between the Office of the Provost and Regional & Continuing Education, the event coincided with the first day of classes and brought together students, staff, and faculty. Nearly 300 pairs of glasses were ordered to safely view the eclipse; the Provost's office set up tables to share facts, answer questions, and loan out "eclipse-viewing cards" provided by the Gateway Science Museum. Nick Nelson, an assistant professor and a specialist in solar physics, was the de facto emcee, excitedly delivering the eclipse play by play. It was truly a campuswide event, and I was delighted to share it with all of you.
- Working in partnership with Butte College, the Butte County Office of Education, Chico Unified School District, and Advance North State, I am proud to introduce the Butte County Promise, a pledge to young people in our service region that we will work with area educators and industry leaders to do all we can to prepare them for success beyond high school. Following months of preparation, I signed a formal agreement on February 1. What is extraordinary about this Promise is that every segment of our educational community has come together to coordinate educational efforts—from pre-school through college—in ways that help our children prepare for civic life and know what they need to graduate from college with certifications, associate and baccalaureate degrees, and the advanced degrees needed for successful technical and professional careers-
- Finally, I would like to announce a significant achievement that aims to deepen our commitment to local tribal communities: the fall recruitment of a new director of tribal relations, Rachel McBride. Rachel joins Chico State from Four Winds of Indian Education, Inc., where she served as executive director. Here, she will represent the Office of the President and academic programs. Her primary responsibility will be to enhance, develop, and create progressive and enriched relationships between CSU, Chico and tribal communities. Welcome Rachel.

State of the University Address

I've decided to call this annual spring gathering "the State of the University" address. Its purpose is for me to communicate directly with you about progress on selected University initiatives and challenges that impact our work as we join together to provide our students with a high-quality education and experience.

The relevance and quality of higher education continues to be called into question by legislators, businesses, and citizens. Yet, we know full well that the teaching, service, scholarship, and creative expression that our students find at Chico State advance our collective knowledge, and more importantly, transform student lives, the lives of their families, and the communities where they—and we—live and work. Public higher education is important to society. And, as my parents always drilled into me, education matters!

I echo the words of CSU Chancellor Timothy White, who in an address to the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce last fall described why public higher education matters: "It is about opportunity, prosperity, mobility and justice. It is about empowering Californians to be the best and most successful version of themselves ... so that California as a whole succeeds."

Ours is not an easy task in this time of reduced public support for higher education and rising costs of the instruction and services we provide. On January 10, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown released his state budget proposal. Unfortunately, the proposal suggests that the CSU receive funding far less than the amount requested by the Board of Trustees; the amount that is truly needed to fund CSU initiatives and operating costs associated with high quality education.

From now through April, the CSU—along with faculty and staff unions, associated student government, and student groups—will visit our legislative representatives and advocate for greater support.

The CSU's Advocacy Day will be March 7, when each campus sends a delegation to visit legislators. I'll be there with some of you. Chancellor White, along with a delegation from the Chancellor's Office, will lead the way.

Chancellor White argues that critical progress made on Graduation Initiative 2025 and other initiatives could be jeopardized: "CSU enrollment and student achievement have reached all-time highs as the university graduates an ever-greater number of students at a lower cost to California. This budget proposal could reverse any progress made in the last decade—diminishing student access, success, limiting degree attainment and depriving California's industries of skilled professionals. Additional investment in the CSU and public higher education is both warranted and necessary—providing a return on public investment many times over."

As with each annual budget cycle, requests will be considered and the Governor will release a revised budget proposal in May (known as the May Revise). At that time, we will learn whether or not the state will provide more support to the CSU for AY 18/19.

For those of us who have been in the CSU a while, state funding for the University occurs in starts and stops, and it is never enough. That said, let me be clear. We are always grateful for state support, which currently stands about half of what is needed. It is not nearly enough, though, to meet our student needs and rising costs. Nevertheless, we persist.

In my opinion, we must view systemwide fiscal constraints and limited campus resources as a time of opportunity to think deeply about who we are as an institution and where we aspire to take our students and ourselves.

The time has come to determine with earnest the strategic plan that will guide our efforts for the next 10 years. Although the current University strategic priorities were updated in 2016, it is important to realize that the document originated in 2006. Additionally, the University campus master plan was published in 2005. Both documents are out of date. Both need to be revised in order to set our direction both for the short and long term.

2006 was a long time ago. Let me give you a snapshot of what the world was like back then:

- George W. Bush was president.
- Blue-ray discs were made available to the public.
- *Time Magazine's* Person of the Year, was YOU—everyone who was a World Wide Web user.
- Construction began on the Freedom Tower for the new World Trade Center in New York City.
- Pluto was downgraded from a planet to a dwarf planet.

In terms of technology:

- Facebook went global and by the end of the year it had 12 million users; today, it has 1.59 billion users.
- Twitter was launched that year; today there are more than 500 million Tweets daily.
- Google bought YouTube and Explorer was still the dominant search engine.

And, yes, the great recession had not happened yet.

Technology advances in 2017 will give you a hint as to how different our world is today. For instance, artificial intelligence is becoming more able to engage in self-learning. Self-driving trucks will soon take to the highways. Google, Intel and other companies are working toward a practical quantum computer with unimaginable power. Brain implants could soon reverse paralysis associated with spinal cord injuries.

Intellectual discourse will gain momentum as we debate the ethics and altruism of these and other scientific advances. The world will continue to experience significant impacts to the environment related to climate change, especially natural disaster, loss of biodiversity, and worldwide shortages of food and drinkable water.

As global connectivity deepens, we will find comfort and strength in cross-cultural solution-building for the challenges facing humanity and, truly, all life on the planet. But, with that connectivity comes social and environmental injustices that we must improve our abilities to combat—challenges like human trafficking, cyberterrorism, and climate change.

A rapidly changing world is the new normal; it is the age of knowledge and innovation. Ten years from now, in a gathering like this where we discuss the next strategic plan for Chico State, we will be highlighting advances and challenges that we have not yet imagined. It is time to create a nimble and contemporary Chico State so that we remain always on the leading-edge of higher education and innovation. Let us begin to explore the possibilities.

As your president, this is my clarion call to action!

I ask for your help in setting priorities that will place our beloved University on a path for the future. As we begin strategic planning this spring, we have every reason to be positive and confident.

Our mission remains: a life-changing education that is accessible and affordable. One that challenges our students with academic rigor to prepare them for the workforce, and instills a sense of community and service. When they depart with diplomas in hand, we want our graduates prepared not only for the workforce, but as global citizens as well.

Together, we will lead the campus in recognizing strengths, cultivating wisdom and validity of purpose, envisioning the future, and ensuring the means to get there.

Together, we will consider where to invest our resources to achieve our vision and priorities for the future.

How shall we begin? I'm so glad you asked!

We will begin by using the interactive WASC accreditation process along with other works of reflection, assessment, and planning that have been completed by our campus community over the last five years.

They will be examined and used in rethinking our University strategic priorities and shaping our new strategic plan.

The next strategic plan will be different from previous ones because we will finally move from concept to action, and we will measure action in ways that hold us accountable!

We have been dreaming of this moment for years. We have had the will all along to change our culture into one where decision-making is evidence-based, but I don't think we have had the know-how and will to do the heavy lifting until now. And, to begin this heavy lifting, we will leverage the WASC process to help us.

What are these works of reflection, assessment, and planning to which I refer? Let me explain.

In academic year 13/14, members of campus turned out by the hundreds for conversations about "creating new possibilities." Over the course of a two-year process, which began with "possibilities conversations" and concluded with "action conversations" in spring 2015, nearly 100 sessions were conducted with over 600 faculty, staff, administrators, and students participating. A leadership team collected all of the information and posted it to a page online titled, "Creating New Possibilities." The documents show that three overarching themes emerged:

1. Prepare students for success in a diverse and rapidly changing world.
2. Build an academic community focused on our collective well-being and success.
3. Cultivate the Chico Experience.

The themes align with the current University strategic plan. Many of the actions listed have been completed; many have not.

As I read through the documents, I identified several important points to bring to your attention.

1. When a "call to participate" in an important initiative is made to campus, you respond by getting involved. This is a character strength of this institution. We are the coalition of the willing! We are Chico State!
2. Campus rallied behind the drive to move this institution from concept to action.
3. And, understand fully, it is time now for us to move from action to accountability, especially if we are to take Chico State to the next level.

Other works include: the campus climate survey (2016), where we identified our strengths in more than 679 completed surveys; the Academic Plan (2015); Graduation Initiative (initial plan 2010); and my Listening Tour report (2017).

The WASC reaccreditation process began last fall and will ramp up this spring, culminating in a WASC site visit in March 2019. That may sound like a long way away, but trust me—it is not!

As most of you are aware, the WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) is our accrediting body. We emerged from our last WASC review in 2009 with high marks, and a short list of improvements to make. I have no doubt that we will earn high marks again after completing this accreditation review.

Over the course of the fall semester, the WASC steering committee engaged people from across campus, asking them to think about how Chico State has improved its practices over the past 10 years. This exercise was in direct response to the WASC standards and criteria for review (CFRs). The WASC steering committee is under the leadership of Interim Vice Provost for Academic Programs Bill Loker and WASC accreditation liaison officer Ben Juliano, and with guidance from Provost Debra Larson.

This semester, all of you will be invited to review a draft of the institutional report and provide feedback, thereby helping us finalize the report before the WASC deadline of September 25, 2018.

The intent behind an accreditation review is to examine institutional effectiveness and accountability and to determine if the University engages in a genuine process of continuous improvement. We take advantage of the accreditation review by using its evaluation criteria to collect evidence that substantiates our strengths and identifies our weaknesses. The WASC review process helps us answer questions like:

- Do we serve students to the best of our ability and prepare them for success after they leave us?
- What do we aspire to achieve in the next 10 years?

Many of you have been through a WASC review before. For many others, this will be your first one. From my own WASC experiences, I have appreciated the faculty, staff, and students who embraced the task as an opportunity for institutional engagement, renewal, and improvement. I also have witnessed people who behaved as though the process was nothing more than an exercise in compliance, an administrative box to check in the world of busy work. In other words, there are always those who view WASC as a colossal waste of time.

I hope you will embrace the task at hand, and I encourage those with a negative view to shed their cynicism and join us in shaping the future of this great University. I encourage all of you to use the inclusive process implemented by your peers and administrative colleagues to think critically about how well we help students learn and prepare for the future, and to think deeply about where we shall invest our resources as a campus over the next 10 years. We will leverage the WASC process for strategic thinking and planning. Again, this is my clarion call for action.

WASC with me!

At this time, I would like to recognize a colleague who has played a critical role in both our preparation for WASC and the Graduation Initiative 2025, while continuing to perform his other administrative duties. I would like to thank Dr. Bill Loker for his commitment and dedication to Chico State and the success of our students.

Bill stepped up last June from his longstanding position of dean of undergraduate education to lead and coordinate curriculum, assessment, program reviews, accreditation, student success, Graduation Initiative 2025, CSU compliance, and more, as the interim vice provost for academic programs. He provided leadership, oversight, direction, and advocacy for undergraduate, graduate, and international education, as well as institutional research and faculty development.

And, Bill shouldered much of the responsibility for sifting through data to prepare the first draft of our WASC institutional report. Bill joined Chico State as a faculty member in 1996 and will be returning to the faculty in anthropology in fall 2018. Bill, we are forever grateful for your countless contributions. Thank you.

In addition, I would like to recognize the entire WASC team for the work they have done so far. Team members would you please stand. Thank you.

Preparation for WASC has been and will continue to be a demanding effort, as there is much to be done in a short period of time. As we make reaccreditation a priority, I ask for your participation and your understanding, as other projects may be forced to yield the spotlight to WASC.

Prioritization is a key theme on campus this spring as we reimagine our strategic priorities for the future and developing a campus physical master plan.

This brings us to a difficult topic of discussion. No one particularly enjoys talking about budget shortfalls. Unfortunately, this is a reality for the CSU in 2018. This is a reality for Chico State.

I have pledged to you that I will be honest, transparent, and collaborative. I am here to describe our budget situation as I understand it, and it is important for you to be informed.

I strongly believe that together we will make the best decisions to continue to move our University forward and maintain the high-quality education and experience that we provide our students.

We will continue to focus on academic excellence. We will enhance our accountability. And, we will expand our resourcefulness.

Let's begin with context. Last fall, the CSU Board of Trustees asked for roughly a \$283 million increase, with a 1% enrollment growth. This translates to a 1 ½% increase in the overall system budget.

- \$75 million would go to fund the Graduation Initiative.
- \$122 million would cover the cost of compensation increases.
- Approximately \$40 million would be used to support a 1% enrollment growth thereby serving an additional 3,600 students systemwide.
- Roughly, \$15 million would be allocated for infrastructure improvements systemwide.
- The remaining \$30.8 million would be applied to the mandatory cost increases, which include benefits, retirement, minimum wage increases, and maintenance on new facilities.

I will tell you that from my estimation these amounts do not cover the entirety of mandatory cost increases that all campuses have seen over the last several years. For instance, at Chico State we have spent more than \$4 million from our own general fund to supplement the rising cost of benefits.

As you can see from this slide, the Governor's proposed budget of \$92 million, plus approximately \$20 million from a 1% enrollment growth, would leave the CSU with a budget gap of \$171 million.

We remain hopeful that the CSU will have a successful advocacy season this spring that will result with the governor allocating more funding to the CSU in the May Revise. If the governor's allocation to the CSU in the May Revise remains constant at \$92 million, the CSU Board of Trustees will be faced with the difficult decision of raising student tuition.

What about our own campus resources? The information that I share today is information that I have been sharing with the Academic Senate Executive Committee and the University Budget Committee, all in the spirit of transparency. If you haven't attended a University Budget Committee meeting, I encourage you to do so. You can also stay apprised by reading material on the UBC website, which is linked from the Academic Senate homepage.

Of the state funds, the General Operating Fund is comprised of state support, tuition and fees, student health fee, MBA fee, student learning fee and consolidated course fee. A much smaller portion of the budget is made up of self-support, i.e. housing, regional and continuing education, and parking, as well as other smaller funds such as the IRA and Lottery. On the auxiliary side of the house, we have Associated Students, Research Foundation, and University Foundation.

The auxiliaries provide essential supplemental support to our academic programs, such as donor-assisted capital projects (ECC Labs), grants and contracts that fund equipment and research opportunities for our students and faculty, and community partnerships for our students. Expenditures for auxiliary budgets also may be found online. The focus today, however, will be expenditures associated with the general operating fund.

The total general operating fund for Chico State is approximately \$223 million. Again, the general operating fund is comprised of state support, tuition, and fees. This may sound like a lot of money until you remember that nearly 2,000 faculty and staff are providing a high-quality education and educational experience for nearly 18,000 students. To place this in context, the California State University serves nearly 500,000 students a year producing 110,000 graduates annually. The operating budget for the CSU is roughly \$5.4 billion. And, the CSU provides much of the workforce for California.

Back to Chico State. Of the \$223 million general operating fund, about \$43 million supports centrally managed activity which I will explain in a moment. And, \$180 million, or the majority of the funding is distributed to divisions in support of their responsibilities and services, all of which is focused on the mission of this institution: providing students with the best education possible in order to prepare them for lifelong learning, engaged civic life, and careers in global communities. In other words, student success.

Most of the centrally managed funds (\$25 million) is financial aid provided to our students in need. \$6.1 million of the \$43 million is restricted student fees, meaning it is money collected from students for a specific purpose. The remaining \$11.9 million covers the institution's operating costs, such as utilities, insurance, and enterprise systems.

Finally, the majority of the budget goes toward division allocations. And, the majority of this money, approximately \$129 million, is allocated to Academic Affairs in support of instruction, scholarship, creative expression, and service. The remaining \$51 million is split between the other divisions with the President's Office and Advancement receiving the smallest amount of support.

I've listed on this slide the primary responsibilities of each division. Frankly, we provide students and the campus as a whole with a lot of service on a very modest budget. And, approximately 90% of our general operating fund is employee compensation and benefits.

Unfortunately, \$223 million is not covering all of our expenditures, and campus has been engaged in deficit spending, which means spending down our campus reserves, for the past three years.

We've come to rely on spending our reserves, and this practice is not sustainable. The well is going dry. Reserves are needed to cover unexpected challenges to institutional operations, and not sustain existing ones.

The CSU Reserve Policy recommends holding enough funds to cover six months of operating costs, which is derived from the prudent reserve ratios suggested by the National Association of College and University Business Officers, a nationally recognized organization focused on financial administration in higher education.

At Chico State, we now have less than three months of operating expenses in reserve. I was aware of this challenge when I took office in summer of 2016. As you can see, in one year's time, we have reduced reserve spending significantly. We must continue this trajectory. Once we end the practice of spending down reserves, we must begin to find ways to replenish them.

I share this campus budget overview with you today to keep you informed and ask for your involvement as we move Chico State into the next chapter of its extraordinary journey. I truly believe that with challenge comes opportunity. Join me and your colleagues through strategic planning and the WASC reaccreditation process to identify our signature strengths, prioritize the investment of our resources, and think outside of the box when it comes to securing new resources to help us advance the noble work that we do in preparing students for the future.

For instance, 2016/17 was our best fundraising year on record. The total amount of money raised in 16/17 was \$14.8 million. The largest gift was \$2 million, and the smallest gift was one dollar. Alumni and friends comprise our biggest donor categories, followed by parents, students, outside organizations, and faculty and staff. These gifts are going to support student scholarships, public services, academic programs, building and facilities, and faculty endowments. Our advancement directors, advancement staff, deans, chairs, students, and Cabinet are developing a strong culture of philanthropy here at Chico State. Be sure to explore how you might help.

I also encourage us to search for more grants and contracts that will complement the work we do and advance the University mission. Grants and contracts bring resources that support student learning, academic programs, as well as undergraduate, graduate, and faculty research.

Let me add that this spring, we will examine student fees, especially health, athletics, and the student learning fee, through a process of alternative consultation. Information about this will be forthcoming.

And, Cabinet and I have begun exploring ways to secure resources through public—private and public—public partnerships that align with our values and advance our mission.

State support, tuition and fees are valuable resources, but they are not enough to sustain our mission. There are other valuable resources out there waiting to be tapped. Help us find them.

Chico State has weathered many a fiscal storm. This time will be no different. We will emerge from this storm stronger than we did from the last. So, let me finish on a lighter note and turn our attention to some exciting activities and events that we can enjoy together this spring.

Let's begin with tonight's conversation with author Mary Roach, the President's Lecture Series speaker. Ms. Roach is the author of the *New York Times* bestsellers *Gulp: Adventures on the Alimentary Canal*; *Packing for Mars: The Curious Science of Life in the Void*; *Stiff: the Curious Lives of Human Cadavers*;

Bonk: The Curious Coupling of Science and Sex, and *Spook: Science Tackles the Afterlife*. Her 2009 TED talk made the organization's 2011 20 Most-Watched-to-Date List. She takes a humorous approach to scientific questions many of us may ponder but are far too intimidated to ask. I'm really looking forward to the talk-show style conversation we will have with Ms. Roach tonight. Tickets are still available ... I hope to see you there!

Be on the lookout for the 32nd annual Student Research Competition that will be held March 7 in Colusa Hall. Titled "Shoot for the Moon," the competition features undergraduate and graduate students at all stages of their research—from design proposal to completed work and for creative work that deviates from the traditional research approach. Winners of the Chico State competition regularly go on to take top honors competing against students from all 23 Cal State campuses at the prestigious Statewide Student Research Competition. I urge faculty mentors to encourage their students to participate (the application deadline is March 1), and I hope many of you will attend to learn about the amazing work being done by our students.

In March, we will celebrate nine Distinguished Alumni who will visit campus to share stories of their successes with students, faculty and staff. In addition to classroom visits, the activities on March 9 will culminate in a celebratory dinner and comments from each alum.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. To mark the occasion, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion has planned several events during the week of April 2–6. Watch announcements for more information on a teach-in, film screening, march, and community-building celebration. And, remember, February is Black History month. Check the list of Black History Month events with the office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Physics Nobel Laureate William Phillips will visit the Chico State physics department on April 9–11, as part of the Science Lecture Series organized by the College of Natural Sciences and funded by a Special Endowment Award. Dr. Hyewon Pechkis and Dr. Joseph Pechkis, two of our most recent faculty hires, previously worked with Dr. Phillips. Dr. Phillips' lab provided some high-quality equipment to launch an ultra-cold laboratory at Chico State. Dr. Phillips will make a public presentation on April 9.

Now here's something we have been anticipating for a very long time ... in April we will finally unveil the Wildcat statue in its new home outside the Bell Memorial Union. This cross-campus collaborative project has been in the works for about six years. The installation will take place on April 16, followed by a reception on April 19, just in time for hundreds of graduate photos in May!

And finally, I'm excited to reveal a first look at the plans for the new physical science building. This summer, Siskiyou Hall will be demolished. In its place, we will build an inviting, efficient, and beautifully modern building. The new physical sciences building will sit at a major crossroads on campus and will create a hub for the next generation of scientists and innovators. It will feature a hands-on-lab for future teachers to test newly acquired skills with K-12 students, interior and exterior windows in all labs and classrooms to display science in action for visitors in hallways, lobbies, and the surrounding area. Also planned are areas for students to display their work, including digital displays and nooks for posters and objects. The building is designed for LEED Silver with the stretch goal of Gold.

In closing, Cal State Student Association (CSSA) President Maggie White summed it up best at the last CSU Board of Trustees meeting when she said, "When we fight among ourselves for limited resources –

the box contains us. [This is a] call for [campus communities] to be bold and let empathy and insight lead the way.”

It is time for Chico State to be bold and find solutions to our resource challenges. It is time to reimagine ourselves and unleash our potential. It is time for us to invest in our future. This is my clarion call to action. Together, we will transform tomorrow!!

Thank you.