

## **PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS**

**March 5, 2009**

**Lankford Ballroom**

**4:00 p.m.**

Good afternoon. Thank you all for being here this afternoon, on the anniversary of our Founders Day. Today we are 170 years old.

Happy Birthday Longwood!

I am going to retire from the Presidency of Longwood University.

While this is a formal announcement of my impending retirement— it really is just a reiteration of an announcement made two years ago, when the Board extended my contract. As you may know, this is my 13th year as your president of Longwood University, and the time is coming for Raymond and me to move on and do something else with our lives.

You know they say that all good things must come to an end. But... they also say, “it ain’t over ‘til it’s over.” And even though we are a university and we appreciate good grammar, I’m here today to tell you that my work is not yet done, that **IT AIN’T OVER YET!**

Over the next 16 months, I will continue to be a very active president.

And, though I do profess an affinity for ducks, I do not want to hear the

term, “Lame Duck.” So strike that from your vocabulary—I have plenty of work to do before I am done.

As I look forward to my actual retirement date from the Presidency, June 30, 2010, I know Longwood will be in a good place.

So...here are my plans for the next 16 months and beyond. As I said, I still have plenty of work to do before I go to my great unknown...

### **Number 1: The Budget Crisis**

Now let’s talk budget. The fiscal crisis facing Virginia is a reflection of the national and global economy as a whole. The ripple effect is having an impact on both the private and public sector, including higher education and Longwood University. We have all been affected by rising energy costs, diminished returns on investments, increased unemployment, and the need to do more with less.

Since October 2007, with the Governor’s new proposed 2010 reductions, Longwood’s budget would have been cut 22 percent, a reduction of nearly six million dollars in total.

The good news we received when the General Assembly released the budget is that Longwood has been given \$3.1 million in stimulus money,

\$192,000 in financial aid, and we have retained the money (\$240,000) for the Nursing Program. This will mean a reconsideration of some of our cuts, but certainly not all. We must remember that the stimulus is only available for two years. We will continue to work with the Faculty/Staff Task Force on the budget cuts.

Let me assure you that Longwood will weather this storm just as we have similar situations in the past. We are survivors.

### **Number 2: Governmental Relations**

Hand-in-hand with the budget is our relationship with Richmond and our legislators. Rest assured that Brenda Atkins and I will continue to lobby on behalf of Longwood University. We shall continue to camp out in the capital and make our presence known during the legislative sessions and whenever else we can. And we shall continue our tradition of baking fresh cookies for our friends in the legislative staff. The cookies are a big hit!

### **Number 3: Capital Construction:**

We currently have over \$300 million in capital construction projects underway and I am looking forward to seeing those projects to completion. We have already completed \$292 million. This includes:

--a new home for Communication Studies and Theatre, a beautiful facility that will be occupied by May 2009

--Art building, which will begin construction this summer on the new addition, before renovating the existing building

--We are renovating Blackwell Hall and it will be returned to one of its original purposes—a great place for conferences and meetings

--Jarman Hall renovation, which will begin next fall

--Main Tabb - Athletics

--Our new heating plant is shaping up nicely and will be ready next winter

--We have a new storm management and waste water treatment project that will be an attractive and environmentally sensitive addition to our campus while supporting our sustainability initiatives.

#### **Number 4: The Campaign**

As you may know, we are working on the private phase of a comprehensive campaign:

“Change Lives—Transform Communities” The Campaign for Longwood University.

This is the second campaign under my presidency, and I plan to work very hard to help us reach our goal like we did for the last campaign. This is an ambitious \$65 million campaign and I am glad to say we are almost a third of the way there; we have now raised more than \$18 million. When I step down from the Presidency, I will remain part-time to complete the silent phase. Imagine when we go public...the noisy phase! We shall raise the roof!

#### **Number 5: Funding and Implementing the new Nursing program**

This is exciting. Our new BSN nursing program will welcome its first students next fall. Jean Sorrell Jones who has been joined by Kristin Windon, the assistant project director, are both working hard with Bob Chonko to recruit that first class of Longwood nurses. We are actively recruiting a program director.

The mission of our BSN program is very compatible with the Longwood Mission. The nursing program is designed to promote excellence in nursing education and clinical competency; to promote the development

of citizen leaders in the nursing profession; to foster partnerships to enhance health care and health care education in the region; to be one component of the solution to the nursing shortage; and to improve the health of local communities.

You may recall that Longwood's quest for a nursing program began with a major grant from the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Education project to fund start-up costs. The Governor then included additional funds in his budget to support the nursing program.

Well, we have started—we are on our way. And now we need more funding to promote and implement the program. I will be working with our advancement office to seek those additional funds.

### **Number 6: Division One Conference Affiliation**

The biggest challenge our Lancers face is not on the court or on the field. They are doing quite well in that regard. Our long-range D-I goal is to secure conference affiliation. As an independent, we compete at the whims of the NCAA—traveling all over the country and playing teams that we may never see again. When we join a conference, we will be able to develop some rivalries and compete for the Big Dance, whatever the sport may be. Conference affiliation is a win-win for both Longwood and the NCAA.

I will be working closely with Troy Austin, Provost McWee and our coaches to seek membership in a conference that will allow our players to compete at the level they deserve.

### **Number 7: SACS Process Review**

Our review by SACS, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, is due in 2013, so it's not too early for us to begin preparation. Although I will not be president in 2013, now is the time for us to review our compliance with accreditation standards and to ensure that we meet all SACS requirements.

### **Number 8: Presidential Transition**

The presidential transition process is already under way. It is critical that this process be both methodical and professional and the Rector will share with you in a few minutes how this will be accomplished. I am sure that the Board will be fully engaged in hiring a new president who shares the values, mission and vision of Longwood University.

### **On a Personal Note**

So, there you have it. That's my "To-Do" list.

And after that?

Raymond and I have purchased a home in Chapel Hill, North Carolina and we shall be moving there for the next phase of our lives.

But remember, we will always be Lancers and we will not be rooting for the Tarheels!

Besides assisting University Advancement, I hope to be a volunteer in the K-12 school system in Chapel Hill. I also hope to be a docent for the North Carolina Museum of Arts as art has always been close to my heart. And I think I have been trained well by Johnson Bowles and the LCVA staff.

Raymond, of course, will continue his active research and publication agenda.

Finally, let me address the most important reason why Raymond and I are moving on.

**(HOLD UP PHOTO OF LEVI)**

This is our grandson Levi Joseph who lives in Florida. He is a real cutie and we will be spending more “quality” time with him and his parents. Raymond and I will be happy to pursue the role of doting grandparents--it’s not just a job, it’s an adventure!

And now, I would like to introduce our Rector, Marge Connelly, who has a few comments.