

State of the School Address
March 16, 2006
Philadelphia

Good afternoon. This is the first-ever State of the School Address, which is something [former Dean] Alan Kelly suggested I do. I really liked the suggestion because I like assessments and accountability and to look back and see progress, so I'll do this annually, and at the end of today you'll see a series of goals I will present again in the future. At that point, we'll see how much progress I've made. Clearly the name "State of the School" implies that I've magically observed all and am presenting it to you. And, in fact, this is of course only my perception of the State of the School at this time.

I see this as a two-way communication, and I would love to hear more from you. I've spent a lot of time learning more about the School in my new capacity than I already knew from the 32 years before this. It's been very interesting, and I look forward to continued feedback from all the groups at the School.

As I was organizing my thoughts, I realized they fell easily for me into the outline of a scientific paper. My "methods" are essentially what I've learned during the transition and a couple of actions I've already taken. I'll give you "results", then we'll have a "discussion" of my assessment of what this means to me and what I think we should do, which will merge quickly into a "future-studies" section or goals I already know I would like to accomplish in 2007.

"Methods" during Transition

The main thing I did during the transition was to meet with people to gather information. These groups of people fall into internal constituencies, professional colleagues—who are in a manner, ourselves, but also outside the School—and external constituencies.

Meeting with Internal Constituencies

I was fortunate to be able to spend two full months with Alan Kelly during the transition period after my appointment, which was a real gift. I talked to him in depth about everything, and he introduced me to many important people outside the School who otherwise I would not have met. I was also privileged to spend time with [former] Dean [Bob] Marshak, who is still very active in the School, extremely generous with his time and totally committed both to the School and the profession.

Another wonderful suggestion was that I meet with the entire faculty. I've met about 85 people out of our 130 or so to date. People keep saying this must be really exhausting or tiring, but it's truly not. It's been a pleasure.

I'm also trying to meet with groups of students. Meetings between student leaders and the Dean and administration occurred throughout Alan's tenure. I'm definitely continuing that, but I'm also trying to find different ways to connect with students, something as casual as a coffee hour. Even though our first one was scheduled at 8 a.m., about 30 students came. I'll continue those but will also try to find other groups of students, perhaps even going to Happy Hour occasionally. I told Ashra [Markowitz, assistant dean for student affairs,] she has to schedule someone to actually talk to me and then I'll go.

The other important category of people is, of course, staff. Our School is competently run by permanent staff and extremely talented professional colleagues. I've met with Hospital leaders as well as the Pennsylvania Animal Diagnostic Lab System, which includes many vital staff members. I also met with our business leaders throughout the School. And I spent some time with our new chief information officer, Ken McCardle, who I'll continue to meet with routinely. I wanted to make a special effort to spend time at New Bolton Center, both at the clinical areas and also the buildings.

In the arena of professional colleagues, I've been meeting with our alumni. It happened that the timing of my appointment was such that I was able to host four alumni receptions at the AAEP [American Association of Equine Practitioners], the Western States Conference and the Penn Annual Conference. Hosting these receptions gives you a different perspective. Two VMAS meetings have taken place since I was appointed. Many of you know I think the PVMA is a great organization that I was involved in the leadership. I have stepped down from the leadership, but I still participate the PVMA as Alan Kelly did; they're wonderful colleagues and many of them are generous with their time. The leadership now is all alums, so there's that overlap. They're quite varied. The current president, David Wolfgang, is at the Ag extension at Penn State and is a really strong ally of ours, as are most of them. So that's a nice relationship.

Consistent with my spending time at New Bolton Center, there are parts of our profession I truly hadn't experienced before. It's such a diverse profession that even if you are in it your whole life, you can't possibly do everything vets do. For example, I had no experience being a vet on a farm, other than field service as a student. I'm also going to spend some time visiting pork producers and other relevant professional activities. For example, I'm going to visit the Philadelphia Animal Care and Control Association, the animal shelter for the city; we have a number of exciting alliances with them, such as starting the shelter animal medicine program.

Meeting with External Constituencies

I've mentioned that Alan has been very generous in introducing me to people, and this certainly includes some of our major or potential donors—and the introductions were very welcome. It happened that the AAVMC had its deans' meeting in Naples, Florida, the third day I was in office. I was joking that I was in my office for two days in Philadelphia and on the third day I was having cocktails on the beach in Florida. It's gotten worse since then, but even more interesting. But it was great to meet the deans of all the veterinary schools in that setting.

We hosted a meeting of the Overseers in January, and I also made an effort to meet with all the members of the Dean Search Committee because during the search process people hear things most of us will never learn about the School. I got a real perspective on the School from many people who were willing to spend time informing me. Also some Search Committee members were not from the School, and the outside members, everyone agreed, were very vital and interested. Faculty members from Engineering, Biology and Nursing immediately got very engaged with the School and had a perspective none of us can have. They're also contact points for future connections, and they increase our collaborations with those schools.

I've been meeting with the University leadership. There have been many opportunities to meet with both [President] Amy [Gutmann] and [Provost] Ron Daniels, and there are routine meetings of all the deans with one or both of them, which are extremely valuable.

And finally, extremely importantly, I've been to Harrisburg about half a dozen times, initially with Alan. More recently I've gone with the new lobbying or governmental relations group, which consists of Barry Stupine [the School's vice dean for administration and finance,

chief operating officer and executive director of the Ryan Hospital] and Joe Loeper. Barry has been a continuous, steady, and exciting influence in Harrisburg, and he is more than willing to continue serving in that capacity. Joe is the new lobbyist we have officially hired. He was a [Pennsylvania state] senator for years.

Actions during the Transition

There have been a number of new appointments. As I talked with the Search Committee and faculty, it became clear that a real need was felt for officially appointing an associate dean for research. Phil Scott had been playing that role throughout Alan's deanship and was willing to take it on officially. To my total pleasure, I was also able to appoint Kate Judge, who is our new assistant dean for development. Corrine Sweeney, as I think you all know, was appointed as the Hospital director and associate dean for New Bolton Center. Also, my new executive assistant is Cerie O'Toole, whom I stole from Clinical Studies-Philadelphia; her loss will be felt in that Department although I'm sure they'll get a great replacement [and they have- Judy Christianson].

“RESULTS”

The School's Strengths

Faculty and students

The list of what's great is really long. Clearly, the first thing is people. And, of course, people are the institution. They are absolutely vital, and inspirational. Without even knowing everybody, I know there is such a huge level of commitment and intellectual capital and energy. The single most important thing for me about this address is that I'd like continued input and I want to know I'm carrying out the interests of the institution.

The amazing thing to me about meeting with the faculty was that I thought I knew people, but I didn't really know them. When you spend an hour talking to someone about what they think the School should do, what they think about the profession and what they're involved with, that's very different from a casual conversation or doing business. I learned a tremendous amount about people I thought I knew well. I also met for the first time people who have worked here for years, but whose paths haven't previously crossed mine. Also, I met some wonderful people who are new. These are a creative and fascinating group of people, and I'm excited every time I meet with faculty.

Our students are also terrific. I became aware of a survey a couple of weeks ago to get information from students about why they came to Penn, to inform a display for the new building. One of the questions was “Why did you come to Penn?” Aside from the ones who said, “Well, because I got in,” which I thought was a nice honest answer, they overwhelmingly said two things. One was that the clinical caseload was terrific and they thought the clinics were the best they could possibly get. The other comment was they got a sense through talking to the students and the whole interview process that Penn was more student-centered and had a better teaching environment than other schools. I would not have guessed these would have been the responses, after having been a faculty member here for 30 years. That's an incredible tribute to the commitment people have here to education. Meeting with the staff, I knew they were professional and committed and smart and hard-working. What I was surprised by was that many of the staff went out of their way to find different times to meet with me and say they want to do more for the School because they care so much about its mission. This speaks to the value of what we all do, but also to the fact that we get more than people just working for a salary. We really have an

inspirational setting, and the fact that the mission of veterinary medicine is wonderful is great for all of us who work here.

Let's move on to some other issues that are also good. We have had incredible NIH [National Institutes of Health] grant funding results over the last year or so, far beyond what we would have expected in this incredibly difficult environment. Even in an average environment, funding is extremely difficult, so it's a real credit to everybody that they've achieved so much in this last year.

The clinical services in both Hospitals, from what I am hearing from outsiders, is obviously a huge strength. This reinforces what we think on the inside, but it's nice to hear it from the outside. Specific credit goes to New Bolton for its recovery. Its caseload is back up to where it was before the *Salmonella* outbreak—a real tribute to people's respect for that institution and to New Bolton's ability to communicate very well about that issue.

Alumni

We also have grateful and committed alums. By far the most common thing alums say to me is: "The education Penn gave me is a legacy I am grateful for more and more." They also go out of their way to say they feel their professional colleagues treat them differently in a good way because they went to Penn, and in some settings clients actively will seek out Penn veterinarians. This came from someone in the Boston area who said that they're equine clients seek out VMDs. We're seen as a very valuable and welcome partner for professional alliances in the community.

As I've mentioned, there's going to be a really exciting initiative that started with the PVMA [Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Association] that could change the way we do continuing education. They very much want to work with the University because we represent many of their speakers and they want our endorsement, so several people from the University and the PVMA will meet to brainstorm on how to do this.

Penn State clearly is also a very important ally. Probably the biggest single source of our students is Penn State, and both of us have problems getting people who will do non-pet veterinary medicine. Both Penn State and Penn Vet need more people who will become farm animal vets and remain in that field. A delegation is going up next week to brainstorm with them about ideas for increasing the pipeline into Penn State and then to us, and talk about what we need to do to make that happen. Even the beginnings of these conversations have been very valuable and very gratifying.

Harrisburg and Financial Management

We have excellent management, and this is reflected back to us, both in Harrisburg and at the University. We have a long track record of being responsible and clear in budgetary issues, and it's really valued. And it gives us a really firm foundation to move forward. In the University, not much more has to be said other than that in budget meetings we are very clear and very straightforward and we start with a history of being accountable. The experience in Harrisburg of attending the appropriations hearings was my first time and the process is this: The University gets about \$45 million in appropriations; we currently have \$39.2 million of that and we want \$42 million. You can see the overwhelming majority of what the University gets goes to the Veterinary School. The President goes, along with all the deans of schools that benefit. The presentation, which was given by Amy [Gutmann], went very well and then they asked questions. They said to us, "We only hear great things about the University of Pennsylvania," and then they asked questions about exactly what we will do with any increase, how many of our students come from the Commonwealth, how many of them stay in the Commonwealth—and we know all that.

They like that when we come to Harrisburg, we clearly feel like we need to defend every dollar of spending not only on our School but also the University. That's a legacy we're building on.

Beyond the School

We're in a truly remarkable environment in many ways, and I want to reach out more to the city and beyond the School. The urban setting, which we often apologize for, is a tremendous strength in a number of ways. If you're thinking about getting the public interested in why veterinary medicine is important for public health, here we are in the middle of a great metropolitan population area. And aside from that general issue, if veterinary medicine is going to step up and deal with urban animal problems—such as shelter animal medicine—we're clearly in a terrific place to do that. I like to say we really are Manhattan's veterinary school. Ithaca [NY, the home of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine] is a very long way away, and we are much easier to get to. A number of alliances are forming with different animal-interested groups in New York and, of course, many of our alums are also there.

The University is very supportive. When I was initially appointed, one thing Amy [Gutmann] said was, "I want you to harness the resources of this University for the Vet School." She also said, "I don't particularly want to hear that you want to be part of initiatives, I want Penn Vet to lead them." Both she and Ron [Daniels]—and also the Medical School Dean [Arthur Rubinstein] and associate dean for research [Glen Gaulton]—see the Vet School as a particularly unique and exciting component of the University's biomedical community. They're not just open to the idea of comparative studies; they understand that spontaneous diseases in animals represent a real opportunity to look at diseases in a way that's more valid as far as translating studies into practical applications that work. They increasingly understand that species differences aren't that important, and the genome sequence has been a help with that. Our alliances with the biomedical community are wonderful, specifically with the Med School. There's even openness to some level of cooperative strategic planning as we go forward. For example, a facility for large-animal experimental surgery at New Bolton Center is something the Medical School might be able to help us with and tremendously benefit from, and it is something we need to begin to collaborate on.

Agricultural community

The School continues to have the tremendous support it has historically had from the agricultural community throughout the Commonwealth. These are informed people who understand the world is changing. The modern farm is very different, and the modern veterinarian serving that farm is very different, and both the farm veterinarian and farmers have to figure out how to face challenges together; they're very interested in helping us do that. When I spent time on the dairy farms, what the dairy vets did was interesting and new to me, but I was more surprised by my conversations with the farmers. It's a real eye-opener. These are very savvy, active, successful people to have survived in today's environment, and I really look forward to future conversations with them. They say, "Are you going to get me a vet to replace this guy when he retires?" That's a huge challenge for everyone.

I mentioned that the Commonwealth's support is wonderful; we're extremely grateful. The appropriation was a 3 percent increase and better than we had hoped. We're still \$3 million below where we would have liked to have been, which would have kept us at an inflationary increase from several years ago, maybe 1998 or 2002. We need more money.

The combination of Barry [Stupine], Joe Loeper and me works like this: I go and talk about avian flu because whatever they already know about the Vet School—and they know a lot—avian flu absolutely stops people in their tracks and they say, "Tell me more." Lobbying, it

turns out, is education, and they really like and need the information. We're in terrific shape for avian flu. The Vet School itself isn't testing for transmission to people, but because of the investment the Commonwealth has made—which is quite visionary and effective—Penn State, the Vet School, the lab at Harrisburg, the USDA, the FBI, the [agricultural] producers and human public-health groups have worked together so that we have an effective control and detection strategy; when we had an outbreak in 2002, we shut down in two weeks for less than \$400,000. The same outbreak of virus in a nearby state, because horses don't tend to worry about state borders, at the same time cost \$120 million, and they had to declare a federal disaster. This is a very effective story to show not only are we in good shape, but it's thanks to the Commonwealth. Furthermore, what's the next disease we don't yet know about? How are we going to have a system to detect it, diagnose it and prevent it? Further investment is absolutely necessary.

Something we all say, which is that we're a leading veterinary school, is also in U.S. News and World Report, and there's no more authoritative source. At these national meetings, deans from other schools don't stand up in a meeting and acclaim Penn is the best, but I was surprised that in private conversations they'll say, "You need to be a national leader on this or the other issue," or "What is Penn going to do about that?" We're clearly seen as a very important school, and people are looking to us for leadership, which is a little daunting but very gratifying because if we do something effective, we may be able to help the whole profession.

Celebrations

I want to come to a close on this by talking about a number of upcoming celebratory events and opportunities: The Hill Pavilion will open in the Fall and it will be great. I want to highlight the library, which was largely funded by a gift from a grateful donor, who wished to remain anonymous. She wanted the library named in honor of her vet, Dr. Steve Atwood, so the Atwood Library will be named after him. It's a wonderful story to be able to tell to our alums to show the power of what veterinary medicine can do. In her bequest was another million dollars, and that is going to allow the wireless and wired technology of the building to be at a level that even Ken McCardle [the School's chief information officer] thinks is satisfactory, even state-of-the-art, which is obviously wonderful. It would have been sad for the building to go up and then have to retrofit it in some fashion.

More or less linked with the timing of the new building but coming later in the fall—something Alan Kelly is very excited about—is a symposium with broad appeal that will focus on issues of food production, food safety, and global implications of food production on the environment and on society. That will be late November.

Surprisingly, what I still think of as the "new hospital," the Ryan Hospital, is 25 years old, and a series of events will celebrate that. Wonderfully, one of those is the opening of Rosenthal Imaging and Treatment Center, which is one of the triumphs of Gail [Smith, professor of surgery, and chair, Department of Clinical Studies—Philadelphia]. [*applause*] He came to office wanting that to happen and it is going to happen. I'm going to lose my parking space, but I'm almost reconciled to the tradeoff.

In general, the Development group has been highly successful. The big achievement of several years, the Campaign goal, was set at \$100 million. I understand now, both from the chair of the campaign, Laurie Landeau, as well as from several other sources, they were really scared by that number and were fearful they wouldn't achieve it. In reality, we ran that right through the \$100-million goal and the campaign doesn't end until August, so everyone who gave, got people to give, everyone whose good work is the reason why people give deserve a lot of a credit. The University itself is also launching a new campaign we will be a part of, and the brand new

assistant dean for development [Kate Judge] will work with us all in setting those priorities and getting them completed quickly. We'll soar right through that goal as well. She wasn't that happy when I told her I thought a half billion was the right goal. She doesn't seem to have agreed to that yet.

I would really like to acknowledge the incredible efforts of our Development team—which from the time Mark Stuart [former assistant dean for development, alumni relations and communication] left to when we were able to appoint Kate—kept development on track and put on overseers' meetings and all kinds of functions, and planned several events. Gail Luciani [director of communication] is here and I'd like to mention the others—Dori Myers [major gifts officer], Elana Beck-Arons [director of development for the Ryan Veterinary Hospital], Susan Finkelstein [assistant director of communication], Jane Simone [director of development for New Bolton Center] and Jennifer Rench [communication specialist] at New Bolton; I would like to give them a hand. *[applause]*

Challenges the School Faces

Moving on to the “what's not great” area, this is a much smaller category, but they're fairly serious issues. The New Bolton facilities are profoundly outdated. I realized that when I was a student going through the facilities almost 30 years ago—they were 15 years old then—so you can do a little math and see they are near 50 now. Not only are they old, they are fairly shabby and very badly deteriorated. Old Vet [Building] is old too, but in many ways it's really beautiful. New Bolton Center was also designed at a time when the bio-security threats we have now weren't even imagined; we clearly have already suffered from that and we need to change.

In the city, we also have major problems. We're cramped in the clinical areas; we're cramped and sometimes outdated in the laboratory areas. Also, obviously the classrooms are a problem area. The classrooms, to a large extent, will be fixed by the Hill Pavilion, but the lab space will still be a great need. We still have much more work to do. And there will not be an impact on the areas where we provide clinical service, so the Philadelphia campus is still a problem.

A very serious issue is that NIH will hold its funding flat. There doesn't seem to be a will to do anything different from that in the government, and given increasing costs and existing commitments that actually translates into a decrease in funding new grants, which is very concerning. In spite of our enormous success, for us to continue to buck the trend we need really miraculous levels of achievement. We need to seek completely new sources of funding. And we're going to have several difficulties with our budget. From my having been here a while, I know that we always have trouble with the budget, and there are some specific things this year. I've mentioned many strategies to get around these, and we have very sound management. We will be able to give raises, which is really wonderful news.

Other changes

We have a number of issues that are neither great nor terrible. They're just big changes that are challenging, and change can be very painful, but in some ways it may also bring in a new era. One of the most obvious is that both the clinical chairs are going to step down. Gail [Smith, Philadelphia] decided to step down July 1, and David Nunamaker [New Bolton Center] chose June 30. As I acknowledged in my e-mail, this ends our era of orthopaedic leadership, which has actually been tremendously successful on both campuses, and I want to take advantage of this occasion to applaud Gail, who is here, again for his work. Clearly, we will have more celebratory

events for Gail's time of leadership, probably linked with Ryan but also others, and also for David's leadership.

Meanwhile, we've got to get going. The Department of Clinical Studies at Philadelphia very quickly identified James Serpell [Marie A. Moore Associate Professor of Humane Ethics] as interim chair [beginning July 1], and I'm delighted about that. We need to get moving at New Bolton about soliciting nominations for interim chair, and we also need searches at both Departments [Gary Althouse, Professor of Swine Medicine and Chief of the Section of Reproduction was approached and will begin July 1]. It isn't possible to overstate how important the leadership of these Departments is to the mission of the School and its future. Both departments are world-renowned; I expect a lot of interest and I hope the searches are very exciting and successful. At the University level, there is also interest in doing this and also the possibility of providing some resources to help, which is a new kind of commitment the University has announced.

Another challenge is the continuously changing face of informational technology; in some cases we have invested in informational technology only to find out we have made the wrong choice or it's now outdated. In other cases, we haven't done anything, so we need to start from the ground up. It's wonderful to have Ken McCardle here. He made a very nice presentation to the [department] chairs about what he thinks is possible and how much money he thinks it's going to cost. I'm going to have him re-present that at the faculty meeting—it's very eye-opening. We can feel comfortable that when Ken makes a decision there is every reason to have confidence he'll make a decision that is informed. The executive committee of the chairs and the hospital directors meet with him regularly. They seem to have great communications and I'm also meeting with him. The two priorities—both huge—are instructional technology, which we've never been particularly ahead on, and the electronic medical record [system], where we have a lot of work to do on both campuses. They're exciting, and we need to move forward, but it's a challenge.

Comparative medical approaches

Awareness is increasing about the difficulty of using laboratory studies to have real-world impact. This is a great opportunity for us because people are beginning to understand that comparative medical approaches—looking at animals that are spontaneously ill—may lead to more efficient, more cost-effective and generally a greater positive health impact on the public. And seeing from not only our colleagues at the Medical School and some other collaborations, but more broadly from an industry perspective, it's a real opportunity for this School—which has had enormous traditional strength in the ability to do studies on companion animal species and also on animals that are spontaneously ill—to be able to take advantage of that and lead the profession and show the way.

Another challenge is that people think they know what veterinarians do and they think what veterinarians do is great, so that part's good. But they think vets only take care of pet animals and in fact, the opportunities to have a huge impact on public health, working with farm animals, working with lab animals, doing bio-medical research—this isn't part of the general consciousness and it affects who applies to veterinary school. We have an opportunity to work with other schools, and a master's of public health [degree program] is a reality on this campus. A joint degree of veterinary medicine and public health is a very attractive possibility, and other kinds of joint cooperative programs across the University are real possibilities we can offer as well as marketing ourselves differently. We've begun reaching out to local high schools with particular reasons to be good sources of students for us. We need to really get people at the middle-school and high-school levels and let them know how broad veterinary medicine is.

For reasons that aren't the result of marketing, there already seems to be somewhat of a shift in the applicant pool: More people interested in public health, infectious disease and biomedical research, which is wonderful. I'd like to add farm animals to that as well. A huge challenge is recruiting and retaining great brains into our environment, faculty, students and staff. It's wonderful that veterinarians are so valuable and can command high salaries outside academia but terrible for us in academics as far as retaining them. And that is a challenge most of us are facing as the value of specialization in veterinarians is rising.

Societal issues

We need to address a couple of broad societal issues. One is the sense of where animals belong in society, and the legal status of animals is changing. We saw after [Hurricane] Katrina—not just in our community and in animal-interested groups, but across the United States—the outrage about animals being ignored. [Deputy Assistant Dean] Chuck Newton is on a disaster preparedness group here in Philadelphia. He was included as a representative of the School and of veterinary interests. He saw in some of the committees he is on that animals were automatically included. In fact, a leader from these groups said we have to include pets or animals in our next census. That's a level of public commitment that wasn't here five years ago, but it's clearly here now. And it could signal an increase in public awareness and willingness to spend on other animal issues, and we need to be aware of that.

The flip-side is that the legal status of animals is still in doubt: they're somewhere between a rock and a human being, but it's not clear where that is. How that's decided is going to affect how veterinarians practice. Dean [Michael] Fitts of the Law School and I are going to meet. Adrian Morrison [professor of behavioral neuroscience] has been in contact with an animal-law group at the Law School, and more exchange between the schools and these groups would be great. They need more science from people who really know animals, and we certainly need more law education.

Finally, the importance of emerging infectious diseases is a real opportunity to increase public awareness. Clearly, veterinarians see these diseases first because the diseases affect animals first. We need to be included at every level: treatment, prevention, monitoring and planning regulations, public policy, thinking about food safety, environmental impact and agricultural issues, all of which are tied in—and, again, we need more vets who actually want to do that with their lives.

Educating the Public

The main thing we need is a united message for our school and our profession. We need to have a great message we can all get behind, something that encompasses what we do. The way I'm going about crafting this is through the planning for the faculty retreat. We're going to have a number of groups involved in functions and programs that cross the whole School and that draw the School together. One example is a cluster of groups that study genes and development: Stem cell, germ cell, medical genetics and gene therapy are all things that we've led in, and they're all related, but we haven't pulled them all together. That's an example of a School-wide program. A number of those will be in place by the faculty meeting in April, but the point is to be very inclusive. In fact, I hope that by April everyone has already been contacted and included in one or more of those groups. The process will clearly include more than faculty as we go into the June 16 retreat and will continue as we look to actually further refine our plans and figure out what we want to do in detail with initiatives we will talk about on June 16. But one of the best points for me in having this retreat is so we can pull together and craft a united message.

We have many people very interested in helping us once we figure this out in publicizing our message. Not only do we have our own professional communicators in Gail Luciani and her group, but we have others very eager to help us, and we'll be able to get the word out as to what Penn Vet is. Then, finally, of course, we need to act through many of these alliances and work together to move our programs forward and communicate to our constituencies, the Commonwealth, the overseers and other friends of the School what we want to do and why.

One of the major things we need to do is to broaden public perception. Much of what I have talked about is having people understand what veterinarians do in a broad sense. It's sometimes a bit disappointing the number of times people say, "I had no idea veterinarians did that," "I had no idea they went to school for four years" (which frustrates the students), "I had no idea you learned all these skills." We really want them to understand everything we do, how broad our training is and how useful we are. We have said we work on many species but there is only one medicine and one way to approach biology. That's our historic strength and we continue to be wonderful at it, but need to continue to build on it. The broader area of the relationship between animals and people and society I summarize as the "healing connection"—in all those areas of global impact, and urban impact and public health issues I would love for us to have new programs that highlight those along the lines of the shelter animal medicine program. Even dealing with public concern over farm animal welfare: if we can inject more science into that thinking, this would be a wonderful place for veterinary medicine to step up. We have a great deal of outreach and alliances, and we're going to have much help in getting this done.

Most of what I've talked about is really moving toward having a message and a series of proposals and initiatives or priorities we are unified around. Then we need to align the academic planning with the resource planning, which is the development planning of the capital campaign, the timing of which is excellent for this. Also we need other ways to reach out and identify resources, the Commonwealth, grant obtaining, alliances and all kinds of collaborative work. Regardless of that, which is a plan under construction, I think we'll have a first draft by June 16.

Near-Term Goals

It's perfectly clear I absolutely have to do a number of things. One involves the Widener facilities; a great plan was put together with tremendous consensus across that community. They know what they need and how to get it done, and I need to get them the resources to do that. If we don't have that facility, it's not really a veterinary school, so that's absolutely vital. Related to this are the student facilities for the labs in Rosenthal [Building], which are inadequate and outdated. It would be great if we also could renovate the whole student lounge area after the new building is opened. I will remake the commitment that, if we are going to even consider increasing class size, we need to update these facilities first. If we do increase class size, I would want to do it with every effort made to ensure the increase was entirely in these new public health and global medicine areas and service to biomedical research and society. We don't yet have a plan for how we want to move forward with the city school facilities or those at New Bolton beyond Widener. The University has great resources as far as doing this kind of planning. They're smart, they're fun to work with and they come up with really good plans informed by the academic community.

I'd like to see us lead the University in at least two ventures. The President has an initiative intended to cross multiple schools, the PIK professorships, which stands for Penn Integrates Knowledge. Penn Vet has been able to quickly identify one of our strengths as stem cell research and has made a proposal that the University is backing. In this initiative, if someone

is recruited for two or more schools, the University will pay half his or her salary forever. This is obviously an incentive we want to take advantage of. Richard Behringer, who was here a couple of weeks ago, is our identified candidate for that program, and there's a lot of enthusiasm for him being recruited here. We will actually have captured one of the first PIK professorships if that happens—and it comes together with a universal acknowledgement across the University that the Vet School was the University's leader in this area. I'd like to have another, and you can probably tell it's something in the area of public health or infectious disease. This would seem like an obvious area for us to step up, and thinking about emerging infectious diseases would be an perfect place for us to take the lead.

Finally, I'd love to have a plan for recruiting diverse applicants, people with diverse aspirations but also more diverse origins. The two things tend to go together. We've been able to do some studies on why some people come to vet school or why they don't even think about it. For under-represented minorities, it's often a lack of awareness that veterinary medicine serves the public, and there's much interest in giving back to society. That's something we can move forward with, and I have begun conversations for doing that.

Long-Term Goals

Beyond 2007, I'd love to have a laboratory in some function sited at New Bolton that serves the region or the nation. We have the intellectual resources and the potential, given all the societal conditions to possibly do that. I wouldn't mind if we had two, if that's not too greedy. Perhaps initiated by the symposium Alan [Kelly] is very interested in, I'd like to have a master's in public health or at least a program to promote veterinary training that produces an expert in global public health. As far as we can tell, that would be unique among the veterinary schools. Many have a master's in public health, but no one has this global focus. Intramural Programs are a priority for Penn and it could be a very exciting initiative.

Finally, something that underpins the ability of veterinarians to do any kind of public health work, from biomedical research to being a farm vet, is debt relief when they leave. It's very helpful to have scholarships support them when they come in the door, but we also need to have debt relief for people who go into these underserved areas. The AVMA has supported the National Veterinary Medical Services Act, which serves that purpose [<http://www.avma.org>]. It was passed last year by Congress, so it's a federal initiative. It's exactly what should be happening for public service and it's funded for half a million dollars—which you know half a dozen of our students would use up immediately—so the campaign is to increase the funding. There is also a national initiative [Veterinary Workforce Expansion Act] we may certainly be in a position to benefit from, which I was helping to lobby for earlier this week. It is supported by the Veterinary Medical Colleges, which aims to increase the capacity through bricks-and-mortar at veterinary schools. The aim is that it will be jointly supported by the USDA and other federal institutions. One and a half billion dollars is their goal, but we'll see. The point is to build structures, and have a competition for which veterinary schools would get these buildings. The preference would go to schools that are unique and that serve a whole region or serve a consortium. We have an opportunity to get additional resources in interesting areas.

I want to emphasize again that communications is incredibly important; it's important for me to be informed and that's how I see this address. I would love conversations or discussion or feedback or e-mails or any other communication. We're actually a community of 1,400 people, so the idea that I'm going to have in-depth conversations with everybody is unrealistic. But I would welcome ways we can gather together. Gail Luciani, our communications director, is going to do a survey to see what works best for people, similar to what she did at New Bolton around the time

of the bio-security problems. She's going to repeat it but also extend it to the whole School so we have a baseline and get a sense of what works best so I encourage you to help her by filling it out.

Thank you for your time.