

**Finishing One Book**

**And**

**Starting Another**

**Albert J. Simone  
President  
Rochester Institute of Technology**

**Community Address**

**August 31, 2006**



# Table of Contents

	<b>Page</b>
<b>I.</b>	
<b>WELCOME</b>	1
<b>II. SNAPSHOTS</b>	1
A. Development and Alumni Relations	1
B. Enrollment and Career Services	1
C. Student Retention	3
D. Academic Affairs	3
E. Student Life	5
F. Finance and Administration	5
G. Government and Community Relations	6
H. Communications	7
I. Diversity	8
J. Parent/Student Relations	9
K. Retirees of the Year	9
<b>III. LOOKING AHEAD</b>	9
A. Climate	9
B. Reallocation	11
C. Branding	12
D. Re-accreditation	13
E. Capturing History through the RIT Press	13
F. New President	14
G. Momentum	14
<b>IV. THANK YOU FOR THE MEMORIES</b>	15



## **WELCOME**

Good morning and welcome to the academic year 2006-7. This year 2,803 faculty and staff will be working the magic that is RIT. There are 261 new faculty and staff. Will all the new faculty and staff rise so we can give you a proper RIT welcome? Thank you for joining us and may your first year here fulfill all of your goals and dreams.

In what follows, I shall first provide a few snapshots of the past year. I shall then look ahead to the exciting year before us. Finally, I shall offer some concluding remarks.

## **SNAPSHOTS**

### **Development and Alumni Relations**

The largest capital campaign in RIT's history was completed on time, exceeding the \$300 million goal by \$9,708,511. New gifts and pledges over the past year totaled \$78,593,723, the largest (by far) fundraising year in RIT's history. Total activity for the year (including payments on pledges made in an earlier year) yielded a record \$89,004,695.

The new campaign faced a special challenge when then Vice President Laurel Price-Jones suddenly announced her decision to leave RIT. Lisa Cauda was appointed Interim Vice President.

Lisa and key trustees, especially Bill Buckingham, more than rose to the challenge. Everyone – trustees, faculty, staff, students, and community friends – pulled together, under the leadership of our colleagues in development, to bring about the successful outcome. Sixty-three percent of the faculty and staff contributed to the campaign, which is a very high rate across the country for university capital campaigns.

Alumni Relations continued its progress. For example:

- Twenty-two Chapters are established across the country, and another six are being developed.
- The alumni online community now has more than 15,000 registrants.
- Alumni Weekend at the Brick City Homecoming had 1,245 alumni attending 36 weekend events.

### **Enrollment and Career Services**

For the fall quarter of academic year 2005-6:

- Total headcount enrollment decreased by 138 or .9%.
- Total full-time-equivalent (FTE) enrollment decreased by 43 or .3%.

These decreases were not expected. Special efforts were mounted over the year to reverse the decreases. We have succeeded. For the fall quarter of the academic year 2006-07:

- Total headcount is projected to increase over last year by 188 or 1.2%.
- Total full-time-equivalent (FTE) students are projected to increase by 180 or 1.5%.

The above data reflect new (incoming) students plus returning students. Future total enrollments will be driven by the number of new students in 2006. Recruitment outcomes for the 2006-7 year are particularly strong:

- Freshman and graduate applications achieved record highs. Freshman applications increased 10%, transfer applications increased 7%, and graduate applications increased 26%.
- The incoming freshman class will be the largest in RIT's history.
- New graduate students will exceed last year's class by 12%.

For the 2006-7 freshman class, the following information is of interest:

- Women will increase by 8%, comprising 29% of the class.
- AALANA (African American, Latin American, and Native American) will grow by 8%, comprising 10% of the class.
- 50% of the freshmen will come from outside of New York State.
- 5% of the freshmen are international students.
- Student quality (measured by grade point average, rank in class, and standardized test scores) is comparable to 2005-6.

With regard to co-op and career services:

- Co-op placements increased 9% over last year to an all-time high of 5,094.
- Career Fair employer participation increased 42% to 297 companies (a record).
- Co-op earnings by students exceeded \$30 million for the first time.
- Overall campus interviews were up 33% to 2,478 (a record).
- The ten largest employers of Bachelor's and Master's degree holders include: Microsoft, Lockheed Martin, Micron Technologies, Toyota, Xerox, IBM, Harris Corporation, Boeing, Northrop Grumman, and Geico.

## **Student Retention**

When student retention was first identified as a critical problem, the graduation rate was 58%. This rate had prevailed over the past 20 years. This is unacceptable.

A number of programs were introduced to increase this rate. These programs include the First Year Experience (FYE) program; the Early Alert program; a Degree Audit program; the possibility for full-year course registration; establishing an Internal Transfer Office; developing a more flexible curriculum with ready opportunities for minors and double majors; and introducing new pedagogy and faculty assignments to reduce the grades of D, F, and W in the freshman year, especially in the calculus, physics, and chemistry courses. Some of these programs have yet to reach their full potential in increasing retention/graduation rates.

Because of these efforts, the graduation rate was increased to 64% in 2005 for the 1998 cohort. Again, this is unacceptable. Two years ago, Kit Mayberry introduced the concept of Learning Communities (LC's). An LC is a cohort of, ideally, 20-30 students who stay together for about half of the courses they take in the freshman year, with the option to stay together for selected courses in subsequent years. Professors who teach LC's meet regularly to discuss the cohort as a whole and to share experiences regarding individual students. LC's, in conjunction with the other programs cited, appear to be the key to increasing retention and (as a consequence) graduation rates.

This past year, 22 LC's were offered, with 429 students from all RIT colleges (except NTID) participating. In the coming year, 35 LC's will be offered to approximately 900 students. This year's freshman retention rate for LC's is expected to be 92.5%, compared to 90.5% last year for freshman LC's and to 88% for freshman over the campus as a whole.

If this year's LC retention rate is projected forward, this cohort should experience an 80% graduation rate. As LC's are introduced more extensively in future years, we expect the campus as a whole to have an 80% graduation rate within a few years because of the impact of LC's alone. If we intervene in other ways now being discussed in sophomore and upper division classes, we believe we can achieve a Category-of-One graduation rate of 90% by the completion of the current Strategic Plan in 2015.

## **Academic Affairs**

Highlighted activities from the Division of Academic Affairs include:

- Establishment of a School for Mathematics which will efficiently coordinate:
  - Undergraduate and graduate courses and programs for College of Science majors and majors from other colleges.
  - Research and teaching.
  - External initiatives.
  - Academic advising.
  - Faculty and student assessment.

The College of Science generates almost 20% of the RIT student credit hours, with the Department of Mathematics delivering almost half of these credit hours. The new School is the largest academic department at RIT in terms of faculty, and produces more student credit hours than the College of Business and the College of Engineering.

- Identified six strategic technologies for research initiatives. The technologies are:
  - Imaging Science.
  - Microsystems Engineering.
  - Sustainable Systems.
  - Computing and Information Technology.
  - Astrophysics Science and Technology.
  - Access Technology.
  
- Increased the number of course offerings in Entrepreneurship from two undergraduate and one graduate to five undergraduate and four graduate offerings, with three new sections in the coming year.
  
- Obtained \$480,000 over three years from the Luce Foundation to plan a Ph.D. program in Sustainability.
  
- Approved new programs in:
  - Ph.D. Computing & Information Science.
  - M.S. Game Design & Development.
  - M.S. Networking & System Administration.
  - B.S. Biomedical Sciences.
  - B.S. Digital Cinema.
  - B.S. Urban & Community Studies.
  
- Pending new programs (in Albany) are:
  - Ph.D. Color Science.
  - M.S. Software Engineering.
  - M.S. Facilities Management.
  
- This July and August RIT hosted 257 middle- and high-school teachers from 166 schools in 28 states. RIT is the NY State affiliate for Project Lead the Way (PLTW). PLTW is a pre-engineering curriculum for middle- and high-school students. RIT trains teachers to teach pre-engineering courses for which their students can receive college credit. During the 2005-06 academic year, 1,333 high school students received RIT college credit for the PLTW courses they took in high school.

## **Student Life**

Mary-Beth Cooper continues to introduce spirit and spark into student life at RIT. Some of the metrics which reflect this progress are included in the Noel Levitz nationally-normed survey of students' perceptions of their experience at RIT (approximately 2,000 RIT students participated in the survey):

- The most important satisfaction categories for RIT students (in order of importance) are: instructional effectiveness, advising, safety/security, campus climate, registration effectiveness, student centeredness, and concern for the individual. RIT improved significantly in each of these categories from 1996 to 2006.
- Between 2004 and 2006, of the 89 individual items which make up the categories in the survey, RIT declined in only one (adequate selection of food in the cafeteria).
- Noel Levitz identified items of “strategic strength” for RIT. These are:
  - Content of major courses is valuable.
  - Instruction in major is excellent.
  - Quality in all classes is excellent.
  - Most faculty knowledgeable in field.
  - Academic advisor knows major.
  - I am able to experience intellectual growth.
  - Good variety of courses.
  - Major requirements are clear/reasonable.
  - Computer labs adequate/accessible.
  - Academic advisor is approachable.
  - There is a commitment to academic excellence on the campus.
  - Faculty available after class/office hours.
  - Campus is safe and secure for students.
  - Campus is well-maintained.
  - Institution has good reputation within the community.
  - Drop/add policies are reasonable.
- Noel Levitz identified no “Institutional Challenges”.

## **Finance and Administration**

The accomplishments of F&A include significant cost cutting, revenue generation, and high service. From 560 specifically identified items of this nature that cut across the entire division, I have selected a few to offer a sense of the scope and scale of these activities:

- Restructured long term institutional debt resulting in present value estimated savings of \$7.7 million over the life of the bonds. The strategies invoked to achieve these savings included the advanced refunding of pre-1997 debt and a basis swap involving the Series 2002 A-bonds.
- Closed on the sale of Racquet Club property generating a sale value of \$700,000 cash for the Institute. In conjunction with this sale, the RIT associated retirement community was

successfully launched with the construction and sale of five patio homes and total site development work underway.

- Food Services completely renovated the Dining Commons food facility with new food concepts which resulted in an increase of customers by over 100,000 (149% increase) during the fiscal year.
- Field House operations generated \$166,747 of revenue for the Institute, which was a 52% increase from the previous year.
- Information and Technology Services completed the major project of replacing social security numbers as the primary identifier on campus for students, staff, and faculty. This was a major achievement and required a total departmental effort to achieve.
- Initiated construction on:
  - College of Engineering expansion (\$8.4 million).
  - College of Business expansion (\$3.3 million).
  - College of Applied Science and Technology – Engineering Technology Building (\$8.5 million).
  - Center for Bio-Science Education and Training (\$12.4 million).
  - Communication Services for the Deaf Student Development Center (\$6 million).
  - Frisina Quad (\$847K).
- College Town will break ground before the end of the year.

## **Government and Community Relations**

The Government and Community Relations Division continues to leave torrents of dust in their wake. For example:

- At the Federal level, \$3 million in additional dollars were secured to support research in defense modernization and sustainment in CIMS, bringing the total to \$24 million over 9 years. In addition, \$4 million was approved for a new research initiative in alternative fuels, and \$2 million was secured to support road infrastructure adjacent to RIT. These results were obtained because of the very close working relationship RIT has with Senators Clinton and Schumer, as well as Senator Inouye of Hawaii, Congressmen Kuhl and Reynolds, and Congresswoman Slaughter.
- At the State level, \$1.6 million has been raised to support CIMS research and outreach programs, infrastructure improvements on Jefferson Road, and NTID community interpreting programs. Again, outstanding professional and personal relationships are maintained with the Rochester delegation.
- Special events on the RIT campus include:
  - U.S. First Robotics Competition.

- Chase Corporate Challenge (10,000 runners and 10,000 on-lookers).
  - PBS's By the People.
  - Track and Field Competition for the Special Olympics.
  - Empire State Games.
- RIT surpassed its United Way campaign goal, raising over \$368,000. RIT leads the area colleges in per capita giving and has one of the highest participation rates in the Colleges Division.
  - RIT is supporting Professor of Criminal Justice John Klofus as a Loaned Executive to Mayor Duffy. John will establish a Center for Public Safety Initiatives at RIT to analyze data and build models to prevent violence in the City. This is a unique joint partnership with RIT, the City of Rochester, and the Rochester Police Department.
  - The Liberty Hill Breakfast Series held 21 sessions involving 850 participants. Over the past fourteen years, there have been 276 sessions accommodating 10,141 participants.

## **Communications**

University News Service (UNS) continues to forge ahead:

- *Democrat and Chronicle* placements were up 8% from the previous year; coverage on local TV stations was up 31%, and up 43% overall when TV stations outside of Rochester are factored in; radio coverage was up 120%.
- There were 840,000 visitors to the UNS Website, 78% higher than the previous year. There were more than two million pages of news, up 61%.
- The RIT film documentary "RIT 175", produced by RIT and WXXI, received a Telly Award.
- UNS was presented five PRISM awards from the Public Relations Society of America-Rochester Chapter. These were top honors judged by the Indianapolis Chapter. The awards were for Editorial/Op-Ed, Feature Story, Photography, Video News Release, and the *News & Events* Newsletter.
- UNS launched its first pod cast, "The President Simone Radio Show" with WITR.
- The "Ask the President" Website fielded more than 500 questions over the past three years.
- The "Ask AI" WITR radio call in show had four live one-hour broadcasts.

## **Diversity**

- An Office of Diversity, headed by a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO), has been established. Alfreda Brown, currently Chairperson of the Commission for Promoting Pluralism, will

serve a two-year appointment as Interim CDO. The CDO, reporting directly to me on the same line as the Vice Presidents, will bring together our numerous diversity initiatives across the campus so we can have a cohesive, comprehensive, and efficient approach to diversity. The CDO will be the “official” face of diversity at RIT and in the community. The CDO will consolidate recent gains made in diversity; will continue this momentum in the years ahead; and – most significantly – will emphasize, by its establishment, the pivotal importance of diversity at RIT.

- Recruiting of AALANA faculty remains extraordinary, with 29% of new faculty hires being AALANA. In each of the past five years, AALANA faculty have represented approximately 30 percent of all faculty hires. The pools from which we recruit average 6% AALANA.
- For the second year, the Partnerships in Pluralism program was a success. Twenty-six pairs of faculty and staff, one member of each pair being a minority and the other member a majority, participated. The purpose of the program is to create opportunities for minorities and majorities – especially individually as well as in groups – to bond personally and professionally. A third program is being initiated for this year.
- Significant programs throughout the year include:
  - The Campus Week of Dialogue.
  - Martin Luther King Celebration.
  - A five-day Expressions of Diversity Conference.
  - Thomas Jefferson High School Career Conference. This school is among the two most seriously challenged schools in the Rochester City School District.
- Four new Greek-Letter organizations were established – three were Latin American and one was African American.
- Seven of the past twelve Student Government presidents have been AALANA, and five have been women.
- This coming year our Minett Professor (Augie Melendez, Director and Vice President, Human Resources, Global Manufacturing & Logistics, Eastman Kodak) will coordinate a Trustee-sponsored Diversity Day for the campus.

### **Parent/Student Relations**

This year is noteworthy in that I have received more than a dozen letters or calls from parents of students who have just graduated, telling me how pleased they are with the education, personal growth, and career opportunities their sons and daughters received at RIT. While I receive a few such communications each year, this year marked a noticeable increase.

### **Retirees of the Year**

Emeritus Professor of Philosophy Dane Gordon received the Faculty Retiree of the Year Award. Dane had been at RIT 38 years before retiring. Of course, he never really retired and is on the campus almost daily, still pursuing his scholarly interests – once a professor, always a professor. I shall speak to Dane’s most current project later on.

Staff Retiree of the Year is Cathy Whittemore. Most of you will remember Cathy’s no-nonsense style laced with the utmost competence, dedication, and good humor. She started at NTID, was President Emeritus Rich Rose’s Administrative Assistant for 13 years, and my Administrative Assistant for five years. I must admit, she certainly cracked the whip and kept me in line.

RIT could not be better represented by any two individuals.

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

### **Climate**

To effect significant change in order to reach stretch goals, a positive climate is a necessary condition. Without a positive climate, progress can be made, but full potential cannot be achieved. When one attempts to achieve significant change under a negative climate, progress will be slow until the climate begins to change. In fact, the best way to achieve a ramp-up in positive growth and change is to improve the organizational climate first.

We have been working hard to improve the RIT climate for a number of years. I believe the climate now is a most positive one across the campus. The attitude that faculty, staff, and students have about RIT is strong, much stronger than it was a number of years ago, and it is growing stronger each year.

I firmly believe that the best way to avoid a crisis situation is to prevent the crisis from happening in the first place. If, because of external factors beyond anyone’s control, a crisis does occur, the existence of a positive climate will greatly facilitate working through the crisis.

It is always desirable to move from a position of strength. The time to introduce significant change is when you least need that change. The reason for this is that since you really do not need the change that much, the resistance to change – and typically change is resisted by at least some constituents – is minimal. To garner support for change is all the easier if you are starting from a strong climate position.

So, why have I said all of this? It is because I am introducing a combination of initiatives to improve in a substantive way the already strong climate we have. What would make me happy is to leave for my successor the strongest possible campus climate.

Accordingly, I have established the office of Chief Diversity Officer, reporting directly to me. I have discussed this position briefly in the previous section under Diversity.

I have also expanded the Office of the Student Ombudsperson to that of a campus-wide Ombudsperson. The new Ombudsperson will serve the needs of faculty and staff as well as students. I have appointed Lee Twyman, the current Student Ombudsperson, as Interim Campus

Ombudsperson for one year. At the end of the year, we shall conduct a national search for a permanent Ombudsperson. This individual will serve a three-year term. At the end of this three-year period, we will make a determination on whether we wish to establish the Campus Ombuds Office on a permanent long-term basis.

There is no crying need or crisis which is forcing the establishment of an Ombuds Office. Rather, it comes at the request of faculty and staff at a time when things are going relatively well. However, at the same time, certain individuals have issues which they feel would be better served through an informal process of counseling and information sharing rather than through a more formal process which could lead to a grievance. The idea is that the informal process, most of the time, will avoid the more formal grievance situations.

The Ombudsperson, who reports directly to the President, will be neutral and independent with regard to any issues raised by faculty, staff, or students. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

Finally, we shall be adopting a campus-wide Honor Code in the fall. The Code has already been reviewed by Student Government, Staff Council, and the Academic Senate. It will be discussed one more time before approval.

The intent of all three initiatives, taken together, is to provide a climate (environment or atmosphere) of openness, fairness, and trust across the campus. I want to be sure we have a climate in which everyone feels comfortable and confident that they will be treated with respect at all times. People should feel free to raise questions, to debate, and to disagree without fear of retaliation or recrimination. I think these measures will make a strong climate even better. As I said at the outset, the stronger the climate, the faster we can run and the further we can reach.

Fifteen years ago, I introduced the notion of “Shared Governance”. It has taken 15 years to achieve reasonable clarity on what that means among trustees, faculty, staff, administration, and students. In summary, shared governance means that before important decisions are made, the constituents affected by the decision will be consulted for their input. This input will help shape the decision that is made. In this way, even though decisions may not be fully agreed with by those affected, the decisions will be supported because those affected at least understand the rationale and had an opportunity to influence the decisions. The initiatives I have described above – Chief Diversity Officer, Campus Ombudsperson, and Honor Code – are companion components to the shared governance process.

To sum up, in the coming year (and future years), we must work continually to enhance the campus climate.

## **Reallocation**

I asked every unit in the university to offer 2% of its budget to a central pool for purposes of reallocation. As a consequence of this approach, some units across the university received budget cuts of up to 2%, while other units received significant budget increases based on reallocation as well as new monies.

Reallocating the budget was not necessary to balance next year's budget. However, without the reallocation component, significant progress towards pursuit of our Strategic Plan would not have been possible.

Going forward, I believe that reallocation has to be part of the RIT culture. This will be a significant change in what is the general expectation across academia as a whole. Typically, universities each year receive brilliant proposals for new or expandable programs. It is assumed that all existing programs are intrinsically valuable (otherwise they would not have been introduced in the first place). Therefore, new and expandable programs have to be funded from new monies. Hence, tuition and donations must be increased significantly in order to accommodate the obvious merits of the new and expandable programs while maintaining the existing programs.

This attitude, perhaps more than any other single factor, is what explains the spiraling costs of higher education. Of course, other explanations have been offered (by me and others). These have to do with the increasing costs of technology and materials which academia requires disproportionately to other sectors of society, the increasing need to provide "higher quality" programs for students, and the need to compete for the best students and the best faculty in the competitive marketplace. I submit that altering significantly the existing financial base is never seriously considered, unless there is an absolute crisis situation.

However, it is really not logical to argue that programs created years ago are always still as relevant and valuable now as they might have been earlier. Some of the existing programs may be of lesser quality than they once were or when compared to competitive programs. Existing programs may no longer command student interest or may no longer meet societal or industry needs. Existing programs may not be financially viable because of the high cost of labor, facilities, equipment, and other support required by them. These programs may be redundant in the marketplace – i.e., there is enough supply in the system to meet the demand. Some existing programs may no longer match a changing university mission.

Given the current culture, reallocation decisions based on financial viability, marketability, academic core, synergy and complementarity with other programs, relevance, and quality are made only rarely in a typical university. Therefore, if RIT can establish annual campus-wide reallocation as an on-going and expected critical aspect of its culture, RIT will have a strategic advantage over competitor universities. The 2% reallocation this year is as much a move to begin the establishment of this component of the RIT culture as it is to redirect funds to higher priority needs.

I realize that some units at RIT already reallocate budget to some degree each year. I also realize that the process is a difficult one, and one which can be divisive if not appropriately conducted. We will discuss this concept and process at the Vice Presidents and Deans Councils and with the governance groups over the next year so we can all be on the same page.

Summing up, as we go forward, campus wide reallocation must be a key strategy in each year's budget formulation. RIT will find a way to make it a reasonable and important part of its culture.

## **Branding**

All field work on branding research now has been completed by our consultants, Art & Science, LLP. Specifically, field work included:

- Review of RIT materials supplied by RIT.
- Campus interviews and focus groups conducted in fall 2005; 40 interviews with 150 individuals, representing faculty, students, and staff from RIT's eight colleges and local alumni and trustees.
- Alumni Phase: 400 completed phone interviews.
- Prospective Student Phase: 700 completed phone interviews.
- Corporations/Organizations phases: 34 completed phone interviews.
- Admitted Student Phase (includes enrolling and non-enrolling students): 720 phone interviews in Phase 1 followed by 420 secondary phone interviews.

Findings from the Alumni Phase have been presented by Art & Science. While analysis of data and field notes is progressing as scheduled on Prospective Student and Corporation/Organization phases, the Task Force has elected to delay reporting of findings from these two components until analysis is completed on the Admitted (enrolling and non-enrolling students) Student Phase.

Integration of findings from all phases will be completed and reported in September to the Branding Task Force and selected members of the RIT community. A full report including findings, interpretation, and recommendations will be presented to the RIT Board of Trustees in November. Based on this report, we shall develop a branding implementation plan within the spring time frame.

### **Re-accreditation**

RIT will undergo its 10-year Middle States re-accreditation process this coming year. The self-study document is already well underway, thanks to over a year's worth of good work by a campus-wide Steering Committee, ably chaired by Tom Raco. Throughout the fall and winter, the university community will have input into the final document, which, along with the evaluation site team visit in March, will form the basis of the re-accreditation decision. While we fully expect RIT's re-accreditation, we will not miss the opportunity the process poses for serious self-scrutiny and planning.

### **Capturing History with the RIT Press**

The RIT Press now has one imprint: the "RIT Cary Graphics Arts Press". This coming spring quarter, the RIT Press will introduce a second imprint: the "RIT University Press". This newest imprint will be used on all non-graphic arts-related titles.

The first publication under the RIT University Press will be Professor of Philosophy Dane Gordon's new edition of the history of RIT. Dane's first edition, published in 1982, presents RIT's history from the beginning through 1982. His second edition takes the history of RIT through 2006. Dane has been working steadily – in his inimitable scholarly and personable fashion – for six years on the new edition. I know it will be accurate, complete, valued, and – especially important – readable.

I expect the second publication – hopefully in late Spring 2007 – of the RIT University Press to be the Bob Davila story (the working title at the moment – and one that may change during the final editing process – is *Moments of Truth: The Journey of Robert R. Davila*). Professor of Research and Teacher Education Harry Lang, along with two co-authors, Oscar Cohen and Joseph Fischgrund, have been hard at work for two years preparing a biography of NTID Vice President Emeritus Robert Davila. As you know, I asked Harry – a renowned biographer and researcher – to tell “the remarkable story of a journey (still underway) through life that just had to be told”. I have read the final manuscript – it is inspiring, motivating, and often breath-taking in many ways. It offers lessons for everyone.

Finally, the next publication (ready for distribution this September) of the RIT Cary Graphic Arts Press is a full-color book displaying extremely valuable American posters which tell the story of America over the years. I bring this to your attention because of its example of a traditional RIT strength – the ability to partner and collaborate in unique ways to achieve remarkable outcomes. In this instance:

- The subject material is a selection of posters on loan from the collection of Mark Resnick, a Vice President at 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox in Los Angeles and a prominent collector of American posters. The posters – along with the book – will be on display at the RIT Bevier Gallery from September 9, through October 11, 2006, highlighting the American Image exhibition.
- The posters were digitally photographed using new capture technology designed and optimized by the immediate past McGhee Professor in Imaging Systems Management, Nitin Sampat, and several of his students.
- The book was designed by Associate Professor of Graphic Design Bruce Meader and Professor of Graphic Design Roger Remington. Roger also contributed an essay to the book.
- The book was printed by RIT's Printing Applications Lab on an Indigo digital press donated by Hewlett-Packard, who also contributed technical advice along the way.
- All of the paper (specially developed for the Indigo Press) was provided by Mohawk Fine Papers.

As RIT continues to advance its scholarship and integrates it into the teaching process, the RIT Press – under both of its imprints – will be of increasing importance.

## **New President**

I think the campus is looking with excitement towards the advent of a new president. Of course, there is also a bit of anxiety. Uncertainty will do that to people.

I certainly am looking forward to my successor. My role over the year, in this regard, is to offer whatever counsel I can to the Search Committee along the way, and to serve as super salesman and honest broker with the finalists.

The 21-person Search Committee, under the most able leadership of Trustee Don Boyce, is doing a splendid job.

## **Momentum**

We need to do everything we can to reinforce the very positive momentum now underway.

This means assisting Lisa Cauda as her division builds on the success of the Capital Campaign and begins to implement the new three-year Strategic Plan for Development and Alumni Relations.

Continuing our momentum means working hard on that part of our culture change which emphasizes that scholarship (research; creativity; discovery, application, and integration of new knowledge; and pedagogy) is integral to the teaching process and to the quality preparation of our students. This is the 15<sup>th</sup> Opening Day Address in a row that I have addressed the topic in one way or another. We have made significant progress over the years. We must continue to define and refine the essence of scholarship, teaching/learning, practice, and professional service (STLPS) as they relate to and complement one another.

There is no single hard and fast rule or no single precise formula for this complementary relationship. The acceptable balance among the mutually reinforcing components of STLPS may well be different for each individual, department, or college. The differences will reflect differences in department and college missions; differences in individual goals; and differences in the needs of individuals, departments, and colleges. The optimum balance for STLPS can (probably will) change over time.

The only constants are that the STLPS balance must optimally support student success and be consistent with the overall RIT Vision, Mission, and Strategic Plan. Faculty and staff, working in tandem with their department heads, deans, and supervisors, are responsible for determining the STLPS balance over time, consistent with guidelines provided by the vice presidents, president, and trustees.

Continuing our momentum means persistently developing the area of innovation, entrepreneurship, and commercialization of creative ideas that come from our faculty, staff, students, and alumni. This will be a way to further distinguish RIT as a career-focused university which utilizes scholarship to implement its educational goals.

Finally, continuing our momentum means we need to utilize the campus climate to develop and challenge new ideas, to converse and debate openly and fairly with one another, and to never say “never” as we stretch for the next level as a premier educational institution.

## **THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES**

My 15 years (almost) at RIT have been a wonderful time in my life. This is the best job I have ever had on many dimensions. You – the faculty, staff, and students – have been a delight (most of the time), and that is all – maybe even more – than one can expect. My administrative team is superb. I shall miss (a year from now) immensely its humor, creativity, dedication, loyalty, and competence. The trustees have been steady and solid, always thinking of what is best for RIT.

So, I would like to thank the entire RIT community, as well as the surrounding Rochester community, for giving Carolie and me the opportunity to contribute and to be part of such a wonderfully vibrant and genuine institution at a most exciting time in its history.

Carolie and I have learned a lot these 15 years. We have tried to contribute as much as we could, but no matter how hard we tried, we have always gained more than we could ever give.

What have we gained? The most important things are: loving and caring campus friends; competent colleagues among the faculty and staff who know how to respectfully challenge ideas, creatively find better solutions, and faithfully support decisions, especially the tough ones; bright, passionate, full-of-surprises students, many of whom have become wonderful friends; and a Rochester community which takes great pride in all of RIT's accomplishments.

It has been quite a ride. This is my final Opening Day Address. This year we shall finish one book – which took 15 years to write – and start another.

Thanks for the memories.