

FINAL DRAFT

Brick City Festival and Alumni Weekend 2003

State of the Institute

Good morning everyone and welcome to our sixth annual Brick City Festival and Alumni Weekend. It is wonderful to have so many parents and alumni together. We consider ourselves a family at RIT – students, faculty, staff...and parents and alumni are certainly a big and important part of our family. I must add, by the way, that we consider students “alumni in training.”

The RIT family certainly has a lot going for it. We are undeniably a university on the move. See for yourself as you tour the campus this weekend. You will discover classrooms with exciting new courses in the hottest careers.

You will find partnerships with business, industry and government prospering. And you will see construction projects dotting the landscape.

Let me begin with a review of some significant accomplishments of the past year and some exciting new initiatives for the coming year:

- We recently added our second Ph.D program. Our doctoral program in Microsystems engineering – the science of making fast and powerful devices smaller and smaller – is the first in the nation. We have also added several new programs for master's, bachelor's and associate degrees and now have 340 professional and career-oriented programs at RIT.

■ Just last week, we dedicated Albert Paley’s sculpture, the “Sentinel.” Paley, a faculty member and world-renowned sculptor, created his largest piece to date and it is the largest sculpture on any campus across the United States. Albert’s magnificent work speaks to and celebrates the blend of art and technology at RIT.

■ RIT is also internationally recognized for its School of Photographic Arts and Sciences. Here is their latest work. On Thursday, a team from RIT participated in its 20th “Big Shot.” This is what they captured at Sweden’s Royal Palace in Stockholm. The tradition of “Big Shot” – a nighttime photo involving light and an extended exposure – has also taken RIT to the Alamo and the U.S.S. Intrepid in New York City.

■ RIT is also launching the American University in Kosovo, located in Pristina. Studies will focus on business, economics, computers and the application of management and technology. The Kosovo University was featured in yesterday's *New York Times*. The university is RIT's third Eastern European venture, joining the American College of Management and Technology in Dubrovnik, Croatia, and the U.S. Business School in Prague, Czech Republic.

■ A year from now, many activities for this special weekend will be held in our new Gordon Field House and Activities Center. The Field House will open in the spring and will be the venue for our 2004 commencement ceremonies. The Field House will

have the flexibility to host a variety of events and accommodate up to 8,500 people. The multi-purpose facility will enhance student life, campus traditions and events including commencement, concerts, guest lectures and intramurals. Sometime next month, we will also find out if we will host a Presidential Debate in 2004 in our new Field House. Stay tuned.

- RIT is also about to embark on its 175th anniversary. The celebration will kickoff during 2004 Commencement and continue through the 2004-2005 academic year. Our theme is Education, Exploration and Innovation. These three words aptly describe RIT's history dating back to 1829. These words also clearly define RIT's future with our vision to lead

higher education in preparing students for successful career development over their lifetimes.

Certainly, RIT is a university on the move and the word is spreading.

RIT is becoming a popular first choice across the nation – and globally – for new students. I am pleased to report a number of milestones in enrollment. We have more students this year than ever before, more diversity than ever before and the highest quality in our history. Among private universities, we rank 20th in total enrollment and 8th in full-time undergraduate enrollment.

- Total enrollment is about 15,450 students, the largest student body ever at RIT.

- RIT's freshmen class includes approximately 2,025 students.
- The freshmen class is the best qualified in RIT history, with an average SAT score of 1220.
- About 50 percent of the freshmen class are from outside New York State.
- The freshmen class contains 29 students who are National Merit, National Achievement or National Hispanic scholars.
- RIT's overall AALANA (African American, Latin American, Native American) population will continue to grow. Eight percent of the freshmen, 10 percent of the transfers and 9 percent of the entering graduate students are AALANA.

- The international student population remains close to last year's record of 1,351 students, despite the uncertainties created by the world political situation.

Student success, of course, always remains a top priority.

Let me share with you the recent work of one of our students. Her name is Kimberly Miner and she recently won a gold medal in the animation category at the Student Academy Awards in Los Angeles for her short film, *Perpetual Motion*. I know you will enjoy and appreciate the following video.

(FILM CLIP HERE)

And to think she did this as a freshman....

Kimberly demonstrates the heights RIT students can reach. Our faculty, academic programs, and outstanding facilities produce thousands of graduates with this kind of skill and talent every year. It is the constant revitalization of the Institute that keeps RIT and our graduates at the leading edge, and that revitalization is the result of investment back to RIT.

Let me tell you about our most ambitious initiative to date aimed at securing these vital resources.

A few years ago, some of our most committed Trustees and generous donors launched “Powered by the Future: The Campaign for RIT” with a goal of raising \$300 million by

the year 2006. Thanks to our thousands of donors and hundreds of volunteers, The Campaign currently stands at \$180 million or 60 percent of our goal. Through these funds, we are committed to continuing to grow and enhance the academic opportunities for our students in five key areas.

First, RIT will focus on students. To attract outstanding students and assist those who may not be able to afford the cost of attendance, we are pledging to add \$75 million to the endowment to increase merit scholarships, graduate fellowships and student financial aid.

Equally important is our second campaign focus of reinventing the campus. As you will see throughout the weekend, our campus has changed a great deal in the past

few years. New landscaping and gathering places, new buildings, student study spaces and an overall warmer environment have transformed “Brick City” into a new community with a vital spirit. By 2006, The Campaign will support these initiatives with over \$70 million.

Our third initiative: recruiting and retaining the best faculty for our leading academic and research programs. In order to successfully recruit faculty with the critical combination of outstanding knowledge in their field and a strong desire to teach, we also must provide these leaders with room to expand their knowledge. This means new laboratories, graduate students, and resources to pursue innovative academic and research programs. Our goal is \$50 million.

Supporting applied research and learning is our fourth key initiative, and is instrumental in ensuring RIT's leading academic position as well as building our already outstanding relationships with industry and government. New programs such as micro-optical systems, photonics, bioinformatics and microsystems engineering are leading the way toward success in this area. The impact of \$75 million will make this happen.

Finally, RIT must build its unrestricted funding – a \$30 million initiative – to ensure our agility to pursue important opportunities as they arise. For example, having the flexibility to create a cutting edge academic program to meet the needs of an emerging industry is critical to our continued success.

Preparing today's students for the business world of tomorrow is the key to our Powered by the Future Campaign.

So what does the future hold? Let me tell you about my vision for RIT.

We are about to embark on a new strategic plan that will advance RIT to the year 2015. This strategic plan will be more than a strategic plan. It will offer a “dream” which will shape RIT's destiny. ... Let me share part of my bold dream for RIT.

Imagine that we take a snapshot today of the nation's 100 best graduating high school students. Perhaps one-half of them apply to and are accepted at the best traditional

universities (such as Harvard) and one-half to the best research universities (such as MIT).

Now imagine a time – 10 or 15 years from now – when the 100 best students in the country graduate from high school. This time, one-third of them apply to the best traditional universities (Harvard), one-third apply to the best research universities (Like MIT), and one-third apply to the best “career-focused universities.” And RIT is at the top of that list.

These students apply to RIT because RIT is different from the Harvards and the MITs, and these students prefer what RIT represents!

I'm trying to get as many people as possible to share in this dream. With the support of our campus community, our friends and our alumni, we will raise RIT to the next level of excellence.

These are some of the highlights I wanted to share with you today about where we are and where we are going.

We have a full weekend planned for you, so we hope you will take this opportunity to participate in the variety of activities. We encourage you to visit any one of the eight colleges to mingle with faculty, administrators and staff.

Thank you for being a part of our family and sharing this special weekend with us. There are about 3,000 of you here

this weekend. We hope that you will leave here feeling a stronger connection to RIT and to each other.

Thanks again and have a great weekend!