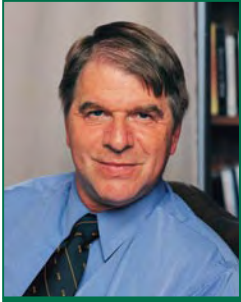


Inside Vermont



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PRESIDENT'S BRIEFING

What strikes me above all as I look back over the ground we have traversed this past year — my fifth as president of the University of Vermont — is that this is a time of exceptional accomplishment at UVM.

We see the University's advance manifested almost everywhere we look, from the expansion and improvement of our physical facilities to the creation of the Honors College, which saw its first graduate receive her diploma at Commencement this spring and two of its students — Kesha Ram and Laura Balzer — awarded prestigious national fellowships, Kesha the first Truman Fellowship in more than a decade and Laura one of only 25 Goldwater Scholarships in mathematics nationwide. The academic prowess of our students was further demonstrated this year by our winning student-athletes, who for the third year in a row walked off with the coveted America East Academic Cup, making UVM the first institution in conference history to win the award four times.

We have added new interdisciplinary graduate programs, new undergraduate majors and minors, and a cutting-edge new curriculum in a Medical College ranked seventh in the nation this year in primary care. We have developed thriving new residential learning communities, expanded service-learning and other forms of experiential learning, and taken strides in support of our effort to become recognized as one of the nation's premier environmental universities.

Our advance is registered, too, in the heartening generosity and enthusiasm of our community that has already brought our Campaign for the University of Vermont to a successful conclusion, with our \$250 million goal having been surpassed back in January and with the total at \$265.6 million and still counting as we go to press. This year was the first time ever that our commitments through the UVM Fund have exceeded \$9 million and that our Parents Fund has exceeded \$2 million in cash donations.

The scholarly productivity of our faculty resulted in forty-five invention disclosures this past year, twenty-five U.S. patent applications filed, seven patents issued (with others pending), and four licenses/options signed (with seven more in negotiation). Such innovation aimed at commercialization of University research supports Vermont's economy by creating new businesses and new jobs. We have also created new mechanisms for identifying and supporting the development of valuable intellectual property through the Seed Grant Fund and the Innovation Grant Fund, both central elements of our new agency, UVM*Ventures*. Faculty research is also supported through the successful launch of UVM's National University Transportation Center and the Vermont Advanced Computing Center.

Another important faculty contribution to our advance is in the works in the form of problem-based learning communities developed in response to the stimulus of our collaborative exercise in visioning the curricular development of the University embodied in "Signatures of Excellence." Several exciting proposals for new learning communities have been submitted this spring, and incentive grants will be awarded shortly to successful proposals, paving the way for the launch of these innovative programs next spring.

And, finally, the advance of UVM is recorded in our enrollments — the highest in our history, with student credentials equaling or exceeding the high-water marks of past eras. As we move ahead, I know we will continue to be proud of our University and appreciative of what we have achieved together. Our collective commitment to intellectual vitality, academic excellence, and competitive performance is moving us ever closer to our vision to be the nation's premier small public research university.

Daniel Mark Fogel
President

Commencement 2007

The last time U.S. Congressman John R. Lewis spoke at the University of Vermont he was an energetic 22-year-old civil rights leader one year removed from orchestrating and serving as keynote speaker at the historic March on Washington. His return more than 44 years later as keynote speaker at UVM's 203rd Commencement was no less passionate and contained a similar message: get off the sidelines of society and help those in need.

An estimated 5,700 people attended the ceremony that was moved to the Multipurpose Facility at Patrick Gymnasium due to inclement weather. An additional overflow crowd of about 1,000 people watched a closed-circuit broadcast in Patrick Gymnasium.

Lewis, a Georgia congressman since 1986 and a passionate advocate for civil rights, gave the crowd the type of fiery, emotion-filled address he's become known for, challenging graduates to build a "beloved community," which he defined as a loving, non-violent community that works together to correct injustices.

"Whatever it is you care about — whether it's getting to the truth about the war in Iraq, global warming, shrinking economic opportunities for the middle class, or the injustice of poverty — you have to find your passion and make your contribution," said Lewis. "I knew that I could strike a blow against segregation and racial discrimination. I decided to get in the way. I decided to get in trouble. But it was good trouble; it was necessary trouble . . . We may have all come over on different ships, but we're all in the same boat now."

President Daniel Mark Fogel conferred degrees on 2,494 graduates, including 1,919 bachelor's, 401 master's, 57 doctoral, and 97 M.D. degree recipients, in addition to graduate certificates. Among degree recipients were students from 39 states and 46 international students from 20 countries. Approximately 1,104 graduates were from Vermont. The graduating class included 168 African, Latino/a, Asian, and Native American (ALANA) and Bi/Multi-racial students.

In addition to Lewis, the University presented honorary degrees to Henry Louis Gates, Jr., an internationally renowned scholar of African and African-American history and culture; Jackie M. Gribbons, a UVM administrative leader across four decades and co-founder of UVM's highly ranked graduate program in Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration; Leonard Miller, a Burlington native and class of 1951 alumnus who has been a major supporter of UVM's Center for Holocaust Studies; Floyd Rourke, the retired chair, president, and CEO of Sandy Hill Corporation, a pulp and paper machinery company in Hudson Falls, New



Photo: Bill DiLillo

U.S. Congressman John R. Lewis

York, and chair of the Lake Champlain Cancer Research Organization; and Thomas Slayton, who retired this year from *Vermont Life Magazine* after 21 years as editor-in-chief of the publication. Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, the Holocaust survivor who recounted his experiences in the award-winning memoir *Night*, received an honorary degree from the University on April 25, when he delivered a public lecture on campus.

John M. Hughes, senior vice president and provost, announced the winners of the student awards. Christine Hertz won the Mary Jean Simpson Award, honoring the senior woman who exhibits the highest qualities of leadership, academic competence, and character; Seth Bowden won the F.T. Kidder Medal, honoring the senior man ranking first in character, leadership, and scholarship; Martin Klimes and Alaina Dickason won the Class of 1967 Award, presented to the senior who best exhibits leadership, academic competence, and character, and who has earned the respect of faculty and fellow students; Lindsey Carfagna won the Keith M. Miser Leadership Award, recognizing outstanding service to the University; and Rhian Waters and Stephanie Onyekaba won the Elmer Nicholson Achievement Prize, recognizing the greatness of the student's UVM experience and the expectation that the student will make a major contribution in his or her field of interest. Bevin Alexandra Cohen, who starts work on a master's of public health (MPH) degree at Columbia in the fall, distinguished herself as the first graduate of the Honors College after completing the program in three years.

The UVM Alumni Association honored Richard Sugarman, professor of religion, with the George V. Kidder Outstanding Faculty Award, awarded for excellence in undergraduate teaching and advising. Sugarman concluded by saying that words from the Talmud best captured the way he felt about the award: "Much have I learned from my teachers; even more from colleagues, but most of all from my students."

UVM*Ventures*

The University of Vermont has launched a new technology transfer funding program called UVM*Ventures* designed to facilitate the transition from research conducted by UVM faculty to the development of products and spin-off companies based on the research.

Initial funding for UVM*Ventures*, part of UVM's Office of Technology Transfer, has been provided by the University and an anonymous donor.

"As Vermont's only research university, UVM has a vital role to play in promoting the state's economic development through companies and products arising out of innovative faculty research," said President Daniel Mark Fogel. "UVM*Ventures* provides vital support for that effort and is critical to its success."

Bridging the gap

Current technology transfer efforts at the University and elsewhere in the country typically have a gap in the research-to-business-application continuum that UVM*Ventures* is designed to bridge.

Funding, usually from venture capitalists, is readily available to entrepreneurs who have well-developed business plans and refined, ready-to-market concepts or products.

But early stage commercial concepts — research findings that may simply suggest a commercial application — have difficulty attracting funds and often founder.

"The program is designed to provide a boost to an innovator at a critical juncture, when an idea is taking shape, but isn't ready for the prime time of the venture capital markets," said Todd Keiller, director of UVM's Office of Technology Transfer. "It will significantly lessen the possibility that good ideas with good commercial potential are left on the table."

"We have a very talented faculty at UVM with impressive research productivity," said Frances Carr, director of research and graduate study at UVM. "This program will significantly increase the chance that faculty innovation with commercial application realizes its potential."

Three-tiered system

UVM*Ventures* establishes a continuum of support for faculty entrepreneurs designed to bring them to a point where a traditional venture capitalist would be attracted.

- The Pre-Seed Capital Fund offers faculty at the earliest phase of commercial development grants of up to \$20,000 for business planning and prototype development. The Office of Technology Transfer will provide business and technical consultants to assist faculty at this stage. UVM*Ventures* plans to make approximately ten Pre-Seed grants per year.
- The Innovation Fund will make grants of up to \$200,000 available to faculty whose business and product ideas are more developed. Grant applications will be reviewed internally by Keiller and Carr and by a team of outside advisors. An anonymous donor has contributed funds to pilot the Innovation Fund concept, and the University is seeking additional funding that will draw from University, private, and public sources, and from revenue generated by new companies and products technology transfer efforts spawn. The University plans to build an endowment from these sources that will support three to five Innovation Grants per year.
- The University is also helping facilitate the creation of a third tier of funding, separate from the University, that would function as a venture capital fund dedicated to UVM innovators and local Vermont start ups.

According to Keiller, this three-tiered system is unique in higher education. No other university "offers faculty this kind of steady financial support from the time an idea is generated to the point where it's an easy decision for a venture capitalist to get involved," he said.

UVM*Ventures* will be a boon to the Vermont Center for Emerging Technologies, the high-tech incubator affiliated with the University. The Pre-Seed grant should significantly increase the number of UVM faculty who are able to take advantage of VCET, Keiller said, which requires that a potential client have sound business and prototype development plans.

Five UVM faculty have already received support from UVM*Ventures*. Keiller says that he is aware of "ten very good, very promising ideas that will likely receive funding from the Pre-Seed Fund" and hopes that other faculty will come forward with more ideas. "Our hope is that the creation of UVM*Ventures* will demonstrate to faculty that the University is very serious about promoting technology transfer based on our faculty's intellectual property," he said.

Billings Returns to Billings

Regular visitors to the Billings Center over the past year may have shared the same thought upon entering the Henry Hobson Richardson-designed architectural gem on University Place. Everything looked as it has for decades, but something was missing.

Then came the dawn: The beautiful oil-on-canvas portrait of Frederick Billings by Vermont artist Thomas Waterman Wood (1823–1903) that has hung over the stately, carved oak fireplace in the Billings entry hall since 1884 was gone!

Stolen? Defaced? Or perhaps removed from public view to make way for a more contemporary form of artistic expression? Thankfully, none of the above was true. In fact, the Billings portrait was taken down to be repaired and restored after it was accidentally damaged during a refurbishing of the facility in 2006.

“This is one of the most important historical portraits in Vermont by one of the most important Vermont artists of the nineteenth century,” said J. Brooks Buxton ’56, who provided the funding for the restoration and reinstallation.

Thomas Waterman Wood was born in Montpelier and went on to pursue a brilliant career as an artist, best known for his portraits, his depictions of rural life in New England, and his studies of African-American soldiers in the Civil War period. He founded an art gallery in Montpelier that still flourishes today as the T.W. Wood Art Gallery and Arts Center.

The restorative work on the portrait was done by Randy Smith, Art Restoration of Middlebury, and the restoration on the gilded frame was done by Steve Wienert, R.S. Wienert Frame Design, of South Burlington. Also consulting on the project was Merlin Acomb, retired exhibition designer/preparator for the Robert Hull Fleming Museum. “The best in Vermont,” Buxton says of the three.

Billings (UVM Class of 1844 and a native of Woodstock, Vermont) received a standing ovation from the small group gathered to witness his restoration to his customary place as he passed beneath the massive sandstone entry archway that has welcomed generations of UVM students to study and commune under his watchful eye.



Photo: Sally McKay

Frederick Billings returns to his customary place in the Billings Center

New York Times Features Study by UVM's Gund Institute

New Jersey may bring to mind dense cities, neon boardwalks, and jokes about the turnpike. But it also is known for the watery quiet of the Pine Barrens, fine beaches, and choice farmland.

In New Jersey, like elsewhere, conversion of open land for development has often been justified in economic terms: new jobs, more taxes. But what is the value — the economic value — of a bog, a salt marsh, or an urban park?

On May 21, 2007, *The New York Times* featured a new report by Robert Costanza and his colleagues at the University of Vermont's Gund Institute for Ecological Economics that answers this question for New Jersey in precise terms.

In an article on the front page of the Metro section, Pam Belluck reports that the study, commissioned

by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, puts dollar values onto different types of natural lands. Storm-slowing sand beaches cash in at over \$42,000 per acre, freshwater wetlands at \$11,568 per acre, and grasslands at \$77 per acre.

Costanza and his collaborators, including UVM professors Austin Troy and Matthew Wilson, developed the report by analyzing numerous studies of wetlands and other land types and by calculating the cost of replacing their “ecosystem services” — like flood control, pollination, and climate regulation — with human-made substitutes.

The new report is part of a larger effort by the Gund Institute to study and quantify “natural capital” across the planet with the goal of conserving important lands and waters through a recognition of the economic value of ecosystems.