



From the Office of the President

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.

REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

**State of the University Welcome Address
Regis University
St. John Francis Regis Chapel
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Jennifer Navarro will never forget that day. She'd been checking the mail for weeks, praying that the letter would come, the one that would change everything.

On that afternoon she shuffled through the bills and catalogs, and found one thick envelope. When she saw the name at the top, her heart began to race - Gates Millennium Scholarship.

She opened it, read the first line and started screaming.

It would have been a special moment for any young person on the verge of college, to receive a scholarship covering the full cost of undergraduate, graduate and doctoral studies. But for Jennifer, who was the first in her family to graduate high school, it meant even more. Because she knew that it would change the course of her life, and the history of her family.

When she broke the news to her parents, her mother got emotional. Her father went straight to the pep talk - opportunity awaited and she needed to take advantage. Jennifer just felt a profound joy in knowing her hard work at Arrupe Jesuit High School had paid off.

There was only one thing left for her to do - choose a college. The scholarship meant she could study anywhere in the nation, at any of the premier premedical programs across the country, any of which would be happy to provide her with the education she needs to reach her ultimate goal of becoming a doctor.

She chose Regis.

She chose Regis because it already felt like home to her. She'd learned from her time at our partner institution, Arrupe Jesuit High School, that we are committed to delivering a distinctive academic experience of the highest quality and to supporting first-generation college students like her. And she knew so many other Arrupe graduates who had come here and thrived.

She chose Regis because she understood that she would learn best from professors who cared deeply about her, who would spend the extra time to make sure she



understood, who would guide her gently and wisely on the road to success.

She knew that she would benefit from staff members who could help her learn from experience, through service, internships, faith development, and outdoor adventure.

You. She chose Regis because of you. Because she believes in the work that you do. And so do I.

The work you do every day. The work that is recognized and the work that happens when you think no one is paying attention.

Similar stories get played out for hundreds of families and for thousands of students, and the choice will become increasingly more complex.

And I'm happy to say that Regis is on the move. Evolving to meet the needs of our students as it has done since its inception in 1877.

I am paying attention. And I'm grateful.

You have done a lot of great work in the past year and I'd like to share just a few of our many achievements:

There is clarity in our future. Together we completed the strategic planning process with a vision of the University's future as a premier, globally engaged institution of learning in the Jesuit tradition that prepares leaders to live productive lives of faith, meaning and service.

Together, we will:

- Strengthen our Jesuit, Catholic identity
- Link our education to careers that matter through experiential learning
- Promote entrepreneurial engagement and partnerships with Denver, regional, national, and international communities
- Ensure that Regis University, our university, is recognized as a leading resource for the common good in the region

We have made good progress. Together, we:

Established an independent College of Computer & Information Sciences. By combining computer and information programs from all three of our existing colleges, we have built upon our recognized strengths in areas such as health informatics, information assurance and data science. The faculty is working together



and are eager to welcome new and returning students who will benefit from their expertise, passion and commitment to student learning. We will celebrate the launch of this college on September 16.

We received Board approval to establish an independent College of Business that unifies business programs from both Regis College and the College for Professional Studies. The specific goals of this new college are to build upon our distinctive Jesuit mission values and to prepare students to ethically contribute to business and social enterprises. This summer, our business faculty participated in a full-day workshop punctuated by local prominent business leaders and facilitated by the inspiring Father David McCallum of LeMoyné College, to create the vision for this new College of Business, which is on track to launch in 2015. I'm very encouraged by the collaboration between our business faculties in both Regis College and the School of Management to bring this vision about.

Our strong Jesuit, Catholic character will be nourished through increased investment in faculty development and research support, integration of our Jesuit liberal arts core curricula in all University programs, and a commitment to infusing these values into our new colleges.

We will be enhancing students' exploration of careers that matter through expanded Experiential Learning opportunities available to all Regis undergraduates, development of alumni mentoring networks, and integration of Jesuit discernment principles into our career development activities. We will invest in robust student advising and career services that help link curricula with student interest and life skills with an eye toward life after school.

The highly innovative Cultivate Health project was launched in our North Denver community in partnership with the Aria housing development, regional health foundations and providers, and the neighbors we will serve. The Colorado Health Foundation awarded the Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions a grant of \$1 million to support this project, which is focused on improving the health of the neighborhood in which we live, work, and learn through support of healthy eating and urban agriculture, neighborhood infrastructure improvements to support an active lifestyle, and a health service that will provide primary care to neighborhood residents and our own employees.

We will develop Regis as a global learning community that attracts international students to the Regis University experience and expands global learning opportunities for all of our students. We'll develop a more adequate and financially sustainable study abroad program, and we'll investigate and foster international investment in Regis University.



We will also promote a culture of innovation that seeks out creative partnerships with regional businesses and organizations, and that incentivizes the Regis community to develop creative projects for the University.

As you know, we have been really focused on our student recruitment and our image this past year. We crafted an effective solution to the enrollment shortfall actuality this year and in the future through structural, leadership and process changes. Regis College freshman enrollment for fall 2014 has recovered, and we're on track to exceed our new class goal of 480. With the implementation of new enrollment marketing campaigns, we're embracing our Jesuit values and seeing positive responses from prospective students. This is where you each really make a difference, helping a visitor, telling - and living - the Regis story.

All that I have described has happened because of you. Your hard work and dedication has helped our university draw on our history and past successes to reshape and guide its future. A future that welcomes many new students like Jennifer Navarro who are choosing Regis University for its ability to deliver a distinctive academic experience of the highest quality.

It is no surprise to you that reimagining our University has not been easy - particularly for a highly tuition-dependent institution with a very modest endowment. Let's consider the financial results for the past academic year. Net tuition and fees totaled \$111 million. When you add all other operating income that includes student room and board, donations, grants, investment income and the like, our total operating revenue grew to \$133 million. Unfortunately, our operating expenses totaled \$135 million. While we all worked very hard to find ways to align our operational spending to our operating revenue, in the end, we came up \$2 million short and had to rely on non-operating activities such as asset appreciation, non-operating private gifts and such to end the year in balance. But as we all well know, just like household budgets cannot be balanced with the appreciation in one's home or retirement fund, it simply is not a good way to build a strong financial base for this institution. Not only are these investments not immediately accessible, these types of financial adjustments may not always be positive in any one year.

In the current year, we have completed our first quarter and have noted some key successes. For example, the freshman class we are welcoming later this week is significantly larger than expected. However, we still have work to do. Our current projection is that we will bring in revenue of approximately \$135 million, but our current forecast has us spending at a rate of \$140 million.



What does this mean, particularly considering that we have built such positive momentum through our strategic plan?

Let me be clear, I want to invest in our most important resource – our people. I want us to move forward with the budgeted 2 percent salary adjustment with the understanding that we need to balance the operating budget. I have great confidence in your creativity and resolve to make this a reality. Therefore, I am charging the University Budget Committee, my vice presidents, our deans and each one of you to address and resolve this issue. Through a transparent and open process, I am expecting UBC, VPs and deans to engage each of you in this effort. I envision a series of open forums, town halls and small working groups to help realize this goal. With a target date of December 15, to complete this work, salary adjustments will move forward effective January 1.

We have hired many new faculty and staff who are eager to become a part of the exciting transformation underway at Regis University. In addition, we have made significant changes in our senior leadership. In particular, our new vice president and CFO, and vice presidents for Enrollment Management and Advancement, bring fresh ideas and new energy to the team. Last year, I promised you that I would hire only the best people to round out the Cabinet. Salvador Aceves, Roby Blust and Jason Caniglia are at the top of the country's talent pool in their fields. Our priority must be to align our strategic plan and spending to reflect our priority of providing transformative education to our students. Salvador and Roby are here, and I ask them to stand and be recognized. Jason will join our team on September 8.

To achieve this, I need your help in three important ways.

First, help us achieve our goal of balancing the operating budget allowing our salary increases to move forward.

Second, continue to help me with the implementation of the strategic plan.

And third, help me prepare for the launch of our comprehensive campaign as we come to you to ask your opinions on our future fundraising priorities.

As I reflected on the future of Regis University, celebrating our successes and acknowledging our challenges, I was reminded of the story of three bricklayers, which goes something like this:

A man happened to walk by three bricklayers busy at work.



He asked the first bricklayer, "What are you doing?"

"I'm laying bricks," the first bricklayer said.

The man asked the second bricklayer the same question.

"I'm putting up a wall," was the reply.

The passerby then posed the question to the third bricklayer. "What are you doing?" he asked.

"I'm building a great university," the third bricklayer replied.

Our efforts to rebuild Regis University and implement the ambitious goals of our strategic plan may evoke similar responses within our community. To some, the changes coming will represent adjustments directly connected to the work they do. To some, they may represent a realignment of resources to better support new and emerging priorities that serve students. Finally, to others, they are what is needed to help Regis University fulfill its commitment to Jesuit education.

The road ahead will not be perfectly smooth or easy. There will be moments that challenge us, difficult decisions, things we wish we could have done better. But I can say, with certainty and from my heart, that we are moving in the right direction. Regis is rising. Most importantly, working together, we will make Jennifer Navarro proud to call herself a Regis University graduate.