

**Dr. Jordan's remarks  
Metro State Faculty Professional Development Day  
Friday, Jan. 19, 2007**

**Good morning. What a great day to be a Metro State Roadrunner! You, our faculty and staff, are what make Metro State what it is: highly praised by our students for the quality of your teaching and the strength of your support, contributing to their successes, as we move forward to become the preeminent public urban baccalaureate college in the nation.**

**Most of you have heard me talk about our goal of preeminence for a year and a half now. It's a lofty goal but one that I believe even more strongly now that we can attain within the next ten years through the combined effort of all of you sitting in this room.**

**Author Ben Sweetland has said, "Success is a journey, not a destination." I believe that you are the fuel that ignites the success of our students, and that your collective passion for education will propel us toward our journey to preeminence.**

**How will we know when we've achieved preeminence? Our trustees defined this in October, and I think their definition resonates with our core values. It includes these elements:**

- 1. High expectations for student success.**
- 2. High standards defining student competence.**
- 3. Faculty who encourage and improve student achievement, who value being current in their discipline and use it to enhance instruction, and who continually seek ways to be more effective teachers.**
- 4. A curriculum that emphasizes the integration of theory and practice, and one that prepares students for success in their profession.**
- 5. Liberal admissions policies coupled with precise assessment of students' skills and reliable and appropriate advising based on that assessment.**
- 6. Widespread student, faculty, staff engagement with regional communities and beyond.**
- 7. Providing affordable, high quality, accessible education, recognizing the importance of financial aid.**
- 8. Graduates who are well prepared for the responsibilities, challenges, and opportunities offered by life, their families, their communities and their careers.**

**Lofty? Admittedly yes. Attainable with the collective effort of everyone in this room? Absolutely.**

**Last year, Metro State concluded its year-long celebration of its first 40 years of providing the metro Denver community with access to an urban academic experience that challenges and empowers students through more diverse learning opportunities, resources, connections and people.**

**In 40 short years, Metro State has accomplished much, including:**

- Surpassing CSU as the second-largest undergraduate student population in Colorado.**
- Serving as the state leader in undergraduate teacher-preparation programs**
- Enrolling the highest number of minority students in the state, more than CU and CSU combined. Metro State has become the college of choice for students of color!**
- Building an NCAA II athletics powerhouse with four national championships.**
- Becoming the number one institution for transfer students. Nearly 30 percent of all Colorado transfers**

**from two- and four-year institutions came to Metro State last year.**

- **Graduating 60,000 alumni—90 percent of whom stay in Colorado and provide our state with a college-educated workforce**

**How have we achieved so much in a short four decades?**

**Because of talented and passionate faculty and staff like you and your colleagues!**

**Let's take a look at some of the progress we've made to date toward the goal of preeminence.**

**In fall 2005, I laid out a three-phase plan of stabilization, growth and assessment. Our accomplishments so far in phase one, stabilizing the institution, are impressive, and a good benchmark in tracking our trajectory to preeminence.**

**The welfare of the faculty continues to be a high priority. This past year, I made a \$4.5 million cumulative budget improvement above the usual budget increases to the faculty compensation. This includes:**

- **\$650,000 to base increases, making the average 3.61% rather than 1.8%**
- **\$1.2 million to new faculty positions**
- **\$1.75 million to adjunct faculty adjustment**
- **\$616,000, giving an additional 3.9% increase to Associate and Full Professors**
- **\$300,000 to change the summer pay structure**

**We have also infused \$3.3 million into classroom equipment and faculty computers, including acquiring every piece of equipment specifically identified in an academic program review or program accreditation report.**

**And, for future budget discussions, I have outlined the need for additional faculty positions and requested \$2.6 million in funding in order to improve the percent of credit hours taught by tenured and tenure-track faculty.**

**With statistics showing a clear correlation between student retention and the number of full-time faculty teaching lower-division classes, in fall 2005 I set an overall goal to boost, over time, Metro State's full-time faculty from 38 percent to a more acceptable percentage of 60 percent. Thanks to the work of many of you in this room, the start of the fall 2006 semester**

**brought 62 new full-time tenured and tenure-track faculty. Subtract the 19 faculty we lost to retirements and resignations, and we had a net gain of 43 new faculty; of those 20 are of color.**

**This is a good start, but only the first step, one that will be made more effective if we can offer new and veteran faculty members alike opportunities for professional development. Today represents the first college-wide professional development day of my tenure, but it is my hope that you will all have, and pursue, other avenues for professional development as well, which will be discussed throughout the day. This morning, Provost Rocha will elaborate a future professional development initiative.**

**It is our goal that professional development, today and throughout the academic year, will provide you with the support you need to develop the teaching and leadership skills required to fuel our journey to preeminence. This expedition will inspire and empower students, while we pursue academic excellence through leadership and collaboration.**

**For example, the newly created Center for Innovation has implemented the Faculty Fellows Entrepreneurship Program. This program will examine, stimulate and support the development and teaching of entrepreneurship in disciplines across the curriculum at the College. Its purpose is to expand the number and scope of experiences and courses in entrepreneurship and to stimulate and nurture the entrepreneurship spirit in all students without regard to academic major.**

**Speaking of leadership, I am proud to say that Metro State boasts a group of accomplished professors who are known nationally in their respective fields. For the consideration of time, I can only highlight a few. Some of these passionate individuals include Marketing Professor Nancy Frontzcak who was named marketing professor of the year in 2005; Music Professor Fred Hess, who won the 2006 International Jazz Composers Symposium Award, and Chicano Studies Adjunct faculty member Tony Garcia—who just received the newly established United States Artists Fellowship award for his unique artistic vision. Selected from more than 300 nominees, Garcia was chosen based on his artistic quality, creativity, innovation and risk-taking.**

**In addition, several of our faculty members have created one-of-a-kind programs and partnerships, enriching the array of offerings at the College and distinguishing us as a provider of unique opportunities.**

**Industrial Design Professors Ken Phillips and Mick Jackowski together started Brand Spankin' New, a student-operated retail outlet, the first of its kind in the country entirely run by undergraduate students.**

**Teacher Education Professor Susan Haugland recently received a grant from the Mayor's Office to develop a pioneering program to educate providers of pre-K education.**

**And, through the Adventure of the American Mind program, Technical Communications Professor Peggy O'Neill Jones is developing valuable resources for educators and librarians throughout the state.**

**Another example of the entrepreneurial thinking of our talented faculty is the Tools of the Mind curriculum, which has been honored by the United Nations as an exemplary early**

**childhood education program. The curriculum, developed by our own Professor Deborah Leong, is spreading across the country as a means to teach young, at-risk students how to self-regulate and thereby improve their learning outcomes.**

**It is evident that through the wide array of our successes, Metro State continues to help transform Colorado by building a stronger community and more viable economy, and boosting the number of our state's college graduates.**

**However, we still need to do more. Let me tell you why: Colorado is the nation's fourth most highly educated state, with one in three adults having a college degree, however we're importing these graduates. Our state does a poor job of sending its own residents to college, especially low-income and minority students. We're ranked 35<sup>th</sup> nationally in sending low-income students to school and 44<sup>th</sup> in sending students of color to college.**

**We have a civic obligation and an economic imperative to educate our low-income and minority students. Otherwise, this fast-growing segment of the population will be qualified only**

**for low-wage jobs when today's educated Baby Boomers retire, as they are doing in record numbers.**

**It makes economic sense for Colorado: College graduates earn almost twice what high school graduates do, supplying the state with more tax money. If Colorado could graduate and employ low-income and students of color at the same rates as other students, it would generate an additional \$967 million in tax revenue each year, according to the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.**

**This is important to all Coloradans because of the social and economic impact of these statistics. Colorado must educate more of our own, or we're in trouble! The demographics of the workforce in Colorado are clear. It is composed largely of educated people due to retire soon. We must educate more of our future workforce, to avoid low-wage professions for our high-school graduates. Similar to the Sunbelt states, new entrants into Colorado's workforce are largely of color, and primarily Latino.**

**In fact, according to recent census data, nearly one in five Coloradans is now Latino. And one in two births in Denver is Latino. While the total population of Colorado showed a**

**nearly six percent increase, the total Latino population grew more than 17 percent.**

**We must look within Colorado to educate our own. Last week at Governor Ritter's State of the State Address, he noted that 30 percent of Colorado high-school students do not graduate. Less than one-half of minority students graduate from high school in Colorado. The Governor has set a goal to cut the drop-out rate in half within 10 years.**

**A longitudinal look at the demographics of education in the Denver metro area shows a shrinking pipeline to education. Let me explain:**

- Denver's school district has the largest minority population in the metropolitan area, with 80 percent of its students being of color.**
- Community College of Denver, which offers the most diverse community college experience, has a student body that is nearly 48 percent of color.**

- **Metro State has the largest minority student population of any four-year institution in the Front Range at 24 percent. The state average of four-year colleges is 17 percent.**

**There is an obvious need to reverse Colorado's shrinking pipeline, and focus on access, retention and graduation for these students who are Colorado's future workforce.**

**On campus, we held a mirror to ourselves as institution and asked: are we doing all we can to further true opportunity and student success across all ethnic groups? We found the answer to be no, and we're now working to improve.**

**Two years ago, Metro State and Ft. Lewis College participated in a study that monitors equity in four areas for historically underrepresented students:**

- **access**
- **retention**
- **institutional receptivity**
- **academic excellence**

**The results, or the reflections in our mirror, indicated:**

- **These students are more likely to need remedial courses, earn poor grades and fail to graduate.**

**This is true regardless of their grades from high school.**

- **There is a lack of continuous advising and support from Metro State while students are taking remediation at the community colleges.**
- **This creates a “trap-door” effect for many of these students, as Metro State admits them to the College but then allows most of their initial education to occur at community colleges.**

**We are now working to strengthen our “safety net” for students and have laid out the following new initiatives:**

**First, we have gone back to the roots of the original Auraria concept, developed in 1963, by rejuvenating our partnership with the Community College of Denver. We now have a stronger program in place for students who complete general education or remedial courses at CCD, allowing students to achieve academic success and seamless transitions.**

**Taking this a step further, we’ve branched out and have developed a pilot 2+2 program with both Front Range Community College, which has a strong Latino student**

**population, and Aurora Community College, with its significant African American population, to deliver full-degree programs in three different majors at those institutions. Last month, a front-page story in the Denver Post entitled, “Metro State Enters New Turf,” praised the College’s efforts for this program in improving access for place-bound students.**

**On campus we have undertaken a new initiative called “transition services” to provide students with academic support. We have developed a first-year freshman seminar, called Metro State 101. Beginning in fall of 2007, all provisionally admitted freshmen will be required to take this first-year seminar, which will provide valuable learning experiences and opportunities that will assist our students in better engagement with the academic community, while improving access and retention patterns. This initiative, which also has a strong focus on peer mentoring, supplemental instruction and civic engagement, also is beginning work on retention programs specifically aimed at sophomores and transfer students. Teacher Education Professor Dalinda Solis and her colleagues will be discussing this initiative in a later session.**

**These programs and partnerships will be critical as we work to achieve status as an Hispanic Serving Institution—or H S I—by 2010. HSI is a federal designation that requires 25 percent of the student population to be Hispanic and brings additional federal resources. Through our developing partnerships with the community colleges and our ongoing work with the public school systems in the metro Denver area, we have the opportunity to serve almost 10,000 Hispanic students. Currently, we’re serving one third of that number.**

**Does becoming an HSI, and doubling our Latino student population to 25 percent, mean we don’t serve other students? Of course not. But it does mean that we intend to be the four-year institution of choice for the fastest-growing population in the seven-county metro area. By becoming an HSI, we will have access to federal grants that will help all Metro State students.**

**Talking about the HSI initiative brings to mind another example of the kind of faculty drive that distinguishes Metro State.**

**This semester Assistant Professor of Finance Juan Dempere, now in his second year with us, heard Provost Rocha speak about becoming an HSI and took it upon himself to research further what this would mean for the College. He compiled the results of his research into a compelling presentation that shows why it makes sense, financially and demographically, for Metro State to pursue this designation. Dr. Dempere will present his compelling findings later today.**

**Another example is Marketing Chair Clay Daughtery who saw Colorado's growing multi-cultural population as a wonderful opportunity for his marketing students. He rolled up his sleeves and has created a course on how to market to diverse populations, which includes guest lectures from well-known Latino and African American marketing professionals.**

**We are continuing to build on Metro State's culture of diversity. I have established a senior leadership team that reflects the diversity of Metro State. This includes:**

- The appointment of a first-generation college graduate who is Metro State's first Hispanic Provost.**

- **The creation of an Office of Institutional Diversity, which leads institution-wide efforts to ensure diversity and civic engagement.**

**We have also created a concept of an “urban land-grant” institution that focuses on civic engagement. I have tasked Women Studies Chair AJ Steele to lead a task force of faculty and staff that will look at how we can greater enhance our civic engagement efforts and collaborate with our urban constituencies.**

**A current example is our work with Denver Public Schools to prepare students for college.**

**Currently, we are working with Denver Public Schools and other area school districts to achieve Hispanic Serving School District status at the K-12 level. We are also in talks with DPS to assist with the reforming of several schools in the district.**

**In addition, we’re partnering with DPS on the implementation of our \$9.5 million federal Department of Education Teacher Quality Education grant. This grant is to better prepare and**

**retain secondary education teachers to teach in urban schools and thereby boost student achievement.**

**We have provided more than 100 families at four DPS elementary schools access to a program that teaches basic language and literacy skills through 2006 Toyota Family Literacy grant allows**

**This critical partnership contributes to our “urban land-grant” goal, enabling us to help solve urban problems in our community while exposing our students to real-world applications that will enrich the utility of their Metro State education.**

**There is a book by Author Alice Walker, entitled, “We are the ones we’ve been waiting for.” You are the ones, Metro State has been waiting for! At Metro State, success begins with you. I urge all of you to act on your inherent intellectual creativity and commitment to our students. Drive your success: whether it is reaching out to the business community, involving your students in a project for nonprofit organization, devising a new program here at Metro State, or doing independent research on an area of interest to the College. You are empowered to**

**be the keys to our students', our institution's and our communities' success. Because, you are the ones we've been waiting for!**

**I am confident that together, with hard work and focused energy, we will complete Metro State's trek to preeminence and it will be a journey filled much perseverance, determination and success.**

**Thank you. Now I'd like to open this up to questions.**