

Spring 2012 President's Welcome Back

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back to campus for what promises to be another successful semester. This is an ideal time to look back at our experiences as a campus community as well as look forward to where we are headed.

In an uncertain economy, I am pleased to say that we are on-point with our budget strategy. The State of Colorado is seeing overall financial improvement this fiscal year, but the outlook for the future remains unclear. The good news is that we are in a strong financial position due to steady enrollment and rebounding research funding. Demand for a Mines education remains high, with 11,350 undergraduate applications submitted for the Fall 2012 semester (a 15% increase over last year) and 2,702 Fall graduate applications to date (an 11% increase over last year). I am confident that we will remain in a strong financial position as long as we continue our efforts to reduce our reliance on state funding. To this end, we have recently begun another round of discussions with State legislators, along with other Colorado research universities, regarding the possibility of additional flexibility to Mines' State-regulated policies, so that we are better positioned to operate an efficient and effective world-class research university.

Growth and progress are all around us. The most visible sign of growth is in our physical surroundings, with Brown Hall, Maple Hall Residences, and Maple Street Plaza completed, and Marquez Hall, Weaver Towers, and the new Student Wellness Center construction on track. Another sign of growth and progress is in our capital campaign. The CSM Foundation is in the early phase of fundraising for endowed faculty chairs and scholarships, capital projects, and the Earth Energy Policy Institute. Initial efforts are exceeding expectations, and we are all optimistic for continued success this year.

In our 137th year as a university, we created our first college. Creating the College of Engineering and Computational Sciences was the right thing to do. While change is never easy, this move was absolutely necessary for Mines to not only remain competitive with our peers, but to distinguish ourselves as a world-class research university focused on engineering and applied science. My thanks go out to Provost Parker, Dean Moore, and Professors Berger, Camp, Hereman, McCray, and Vincent for their leadership during the transition.

Our students are succeeding both in and out of the classroom. A Mines education should offer both career preparation and a broad learning experience so that our graduates are ready for any path in life. I continue to be impressed by our students' ability to balance their studies with other interests such as music, writing, or athletics. Our Mines Madrigal singers and student speaker Britton Welch made us all proud at Mid-Year Commencement, and our orchestra, concert band and chamber choir gave a wonderful holiday performance last month. Our scholar-athletes continue to excel on and off the playing field, with our women's soccer team advancing through the RMAC tournament and NCAA regionals to the Elite 8, our men's cross country at the NCAA championships, our women's volleyball going to the NCAA tournament, and students from men's and women's soccer, men's cross country, volleyball, and football receiving All-American honors this past fall.

As we have matured the residential campus concept, student activities and "the student experience" are an increasingly important way for Mines to distinguish itself. Involvement in activities help our students gain valuable skills such as leadership, teamwork, and communication, all of which transfer into the classroom and beyond into a successful career. In fact communication is the focus of this year's Leadership Summit on January 28. Associate Dean Morgan and his team have put together a first-class conference this year, highlighted by keynote speaker Erik Weihenmayer, the only blind man in history to climb to the summit of the world's highest

peak, Mount Everest. For students who desire a more formal approach to skill-development, the new Center for Professional Education, spearheaded by Dean Boyd and Professor Snieder, helps graduate students acquire non-disciplinary skills through courses, workshops, and seminars, all with the goal of better preparing our students for success in academia and industry. If our Career Center outcomes are any indication (and I certainly think they are!) we are on-track with encouraging students to complement their studies with engaging activities. This past year 90% of our undergraduates and 94% of Masters graduates received job or graduate school offers, and 100% of PhDs received job offers.

Our research portfolio is well-balanced and supports our mission of earth, energy, and environment. I'm proud to say that even in the era of decreased federal research budgets, late last year we won a National Science Foundation Engineering Research Center (ERC) grant (in partnership with Stanford, Berkeley, and New Mexico State) on a project called "Reinventing Urban Water Infrastructure." This was a team effort by our faculty including Professors Drewes, Moskal, Cath, Figueroa, Higgins, Illangasekare, Maxwell, McCray, Munakato Marr, Sharp, and Siegrist. We maintain strong momentum in industrial research and very recently secured, due in large part to the efforts of Dr. Middleton and Dr. Nummedal, a major contract with a large oil company in the unconventional energy arena. And our partnership with the Petroleum Institute in Abu Dhabi continues to mature and provide an ongoing set of research projects to several investigators across the campus. Our success in securing research contracts relies heavily on the efforts of Dr. Poate, Mr. Brown in Research Administration, and our talented faculty, whose quality of work has brought Mines national and international attention, and whose diligence in pursuing grant opportunities has benefited the entire campus.

Our greatest asset is our people. Together we innovate, deepen our knowledge and understanding of the nexus of earth, energy, and environment, and work to make our campus community and global community thrive and prosper. I look forward to continuing our work together in support of Mines success— I am sincerely grateful for your efforts and involvement in making Mines a world class university focused on excellence in scholarship and education. Here's to a wonderful semester!

Best regards,

Bill Scoggins, President