Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you back to another year at Mines. After months of preparation, the start of the semester is now clearly in the rearview mirror and we’re well on our way to settling in to our campus routine. We have much to look forward to this fall, and much to celebrate from our past year—a year that has seen us continue to grow and further our reputation as one of the most well-respected engineering and applied science research universities in the U.S.

In May, we had the privilege of conferring degrees on 938 graduates of our bachelors, masters, and doctoral programs—the largest commencement ceremony in our history. Perhaps even more significant, the Class of 2013 also had the largest number of women graduates ever—231 (160 bachelors, 58 Masters, and 13 PhDs). Even as we said goodbye to our newest graduates, we were preparing to admit our most academically prepared undergraduate class to date. Out of over 13,000 applicants, last month we welcomed 954 new freshmen and 145 transfer students to campus, along with 408 new graduate students. This year’s incoming undergraduate class holds the highest ACT and SAT scores (30 and 1325) to date, represents 43 states and 16 countries, and consists of our highest number of women (309 or 28%) and domestic underrepresented racial and ethnic students (210 or 19%)—both above the national average percentages in STEM fields. Each year our student population becomes more diverse in all aspects, including gender and ethnicity, state and country of residence, and even the pathway to Mines, as we continue to work with Colorado community colleges to formalize transfer agreements from their campuses to ours.

We also welcomed 23 new faculty and many new staff to campus over the last few months. Of the many world-class assets Mines has to offer our students, the opportunity to work closely with exceptional faculty in the classroom, lab, and field is no doubt the greatest. Our faculty not only challenge and inspire our students, but enhance and add to the body of knowledge in their fields. I’m excited to see what our newest members contribute to our vibrant community of teaching and research faculty. And I look forward to continuing (and hopefully even accelerating) this faculty hiring pace over the next several years.

Our talented faculty continue to drive Mines’ robust research culture. In 2012-13 we saw a record-breaking year in research funding with our faculty bringing in almost $62 million in total awards, led by the Metallurgical and Materials Engineering and the Chemical and Biological Engineering departments in the College of Applied Science and Engineering. Additionally, the Civil and Environmental Engineering department in the College of Engineering and Computational Sciences and the Petroleum Engineering department in the College of Earth Resource Sciences and Engineering both had strong showings. Overall, we continue to strengthen our national stature through the growth of recognized high-quality research programs in traditional as well as emerging areas of our various disciplines.

Thanks to the many remarkable Mines alumni and friends who have been so generous in their support, we had another record fundraising year, bringing in $35.4 million in FY13. More than 3,700 donors made gifts and commitments last year, including a $3.5 million commitment for the Merelli/Cimarex Energy Distinguished Department Head Chair in Petroleum Engineering, the
$3 million Grandey University Chair in Nuclear Science and Engineering, over $6.2 million in scholarships, and a record $1.9 million to the Mines Fund, which supports scholarships and the student experience. More than 80% of our students rely on private funding, and our generous donors help offset the cost of a Mines education.

This will also be another year of construction on the campus. The Elm Residence and Dining Hall is well underway. We should also be demolishing Brooks Stadium following the fall football season and breaking ground for construction of the new Clear Creek Athletics Complex facility next spring. Also, late next spring, we should begin construction of a new Welcome Center on Illinois between 18th and 19th Streets. Finally, we hope to be able to wrap up financing for a major cornerstone academic building during this school year.

Our strategic planning initiative started last spring with town hall meetings and small working groups. I’d like to thank everyone for their honest communication and efforts in moving through this significant undertaking. We’ll continue our practice of ample communication as we move towards solidifying the plan to present to the Board of Trustees later this fall.

Our strategic planning initiative, as well as our day-to-day efforts, ensures that Mines is well-positioned to advance into the next decade. Working together, we create endless possibilities for our university and make Mines a great place to live, learn, and work. Welcome back, and here’s to the start of a successful and rewarding year!

Best regards,

Bill Scoggins, President