

UNIVERSITY CONVOCATION

September 18, 1996

Welcome to our annual University Convocation. As you can see from our video, Stony Brook was national news this year--not just once, but many times. Our research, our role in mentoring one-tenth of all the national Westinghouse winners, our adoption of a kindergarten class in Washington Heights who will eventually become members of the Stony Brook Class of 2012--all have been in newspapers and on national TV. But the real news is what's happening here.

I spoke a year ago of the hard financial decisions I had to make to survive our budget cuts and at the same time bring the mushrooming debt and deficit under control. Last year we made tough cuts, but we did not retrench or lay people off, and we retired the first third of our debt and deficit. It wasn't easy, but it was done. We expected comparable cuts this year, and I had also committed to retiring the second third of the debt. When, in fact, the State budget was not as bad as anticipated, when I was able to allocate additional funds to the vice presidential areas, things seemed not so bad.

And that has been the outlook since the academic year started. So my message today--my prediction--is: This is going to be a good year. Well you may ask, "Compared to what?", but my answer stands: it's going to be a good year. I felt it when the students returned to school this fall. I felt it when the student affairs professionals worked so hard to make opening week both fun and instructive, and the folks at Staller offered students free--good--movies. I felt it when the facilities staff really was able, against all odds, to make a significant beginning toward humanizing this campus, even with too little time and too little money. I felt it when people noticed the new trash receptacles and settled in at the new outdoor tables and sat on grassy knolls that had suddenly emerged from the underbrush. I felt it when I saw faculty members here on Opening Day helping students move in. We have a long way to go to beautify this campus. But we have started. Somehow, this year perceptibly marks the beginning of a new era at Stony Brook.

The commitment to a student-centered research university is at the heart of the Provost's Academic Plan and the Draft Five-Year Plan. That commitment has fostered the campus renovation that have begun, student registration and payment by telephone, the new transportation plan, the Molecular Medicine Building, and everything else we do. We are working hard to free our community from the irritants by initiating one-time-only car registration, better bus routes so that, for example, there are direct runs from

South P Lot to the Health Sciences Center--and no need to pay carfare--and soon an enlarged bus shelter with food kiosks, refurbished classrooms, an improvement of the landscaping and concrete repair, outdoor furniture, and student art. We completed the first phase of improved safety lighting, and we even built more parking spaces, 300 more, 180 for faculty and 120 for students. There are still plenty of hassles and irritants to go around--construction work in the parking garages at HSC for one, although even that has been offset by 110 additional new spaces. But we have begun, and I am very grateful to the people who are delivering these improvements.

At the same time we have quickened our pace in terms of research funding, grants for pedagogical innovations, and medical practice. Yes, it is a busy and energetic time at Stony Brook.

It will be useful to look at where we are now, financially and educationally. (Since we do not have all this year's data this early, some of the slides I am using will record last year's figures.)

(LIGHTS DOWN)

First, a glance at all the revenue sources of our 1995-96 budget. (Slide 1) As you can see slightly more than half our funds come from our health care operations. State tax support is

only 15.6 per cent; if we talk about state allocations, which include tax and tuition revenue, the total is still only 23.6 per cent, or less than a quarter. Research funding almost equals our tax support, a total of 13.8 per cent. The rest is made up by self support operations such as the dormitories, fund-raising efforts, etc.

(Slide 2) Without the Health Care budget, the percentages are dramatically different: State tax support is 32.6 per cent, research 28.8, and self sustaining operations 20.8. Notable in both these slides is the impressively large role research revenues play in funding the University.

(Slide 3) Now for how the money is spent: Including our health care budgets almost two thirds (60.5 per cent) goes to support people, and another third to supplies and expense. As you can see utilities and equipment are only 6.2 per cent of our total. It is striking that without health care, the numbers are almost identical. Most significantly, the percentage for personal services remains at 60.7 per cent.

(Slide 4) Again, looking at the numbers including health care (which yields, remember from the first slide, 52 per cent of our revenue), predictably about one third goes to hospitals and clinics, another third to Instruction and Departmental Research, and the rest is on this chart divided into many pieces. Please

note that general administration (including among other things all our financial operations) is 4.4 per cent of the total and maintenance and operations a mere 6.4 per cent.

(Slide 5) Without health care, those tiny slivers look larger. Instruction and Departmental Research still comprise about a third, but research expenditures have jumped to 20%. Maintenance and operations is still only 12.5 per cent of the total. Instruction and Departmental Research comprises 52 per cent of the State budget.. We can be proud of that number, but we must also understand why it will take continuing concentrated focus to retire the debt and deficit and to cure the deferred maintenance problems on this campus--unless money is husbanded on campus and allocated for rehab projects, beyond the State's funding for these purposes, we will continue in a state of disrepair.

(Slide 6) This slide demonstrates the relative amounts of funding which go to the Provost's area, the Health Sciences Center, The Hospital and Veteran's Home, and all other functions. (It does not include state fringe benefits.) Although it is far too busy a chart to examine carefully now, it does help you understand the relative size of the funding of each of these major functions.

(Slide 7) Examining our budget this year against last year

is a game of Catch-22. The State gave us \$3 million additional dollars to be used for such things as committed salary increases and cost of living expenses in a few categories. That funding will be absorbed by those needs. We also received \$330,000 for an enrollment adjustment. Simultaneously, our base budget was reduced by \$1.84 million, and a utility cut of \$1.89 million-- still under very serious debate because it is not realistic.

(Slide 8) You may remember that last year I allocated budget reductions over a two-year basis. We took the first cuts last year. Then I reserved money for a mid-year rescission. The rescission came as expected, and departments did not have to flounder around at the last moment to find the moneys; the budget proved accurate and thereby stable for the whole year, if certainly tight. Since the 1996-97 budget was not completed and delivered to us until after the new fiscal year began this July, we began the fiscal year expecting the second-year cut I had warned about a year ago. However, we actually received more money than we had earlier anticipated from the State. So on a one-year basis, shown in the second column, we cut the budget (the red part), allocated additional money to the departments (the dark blue part), saved money for the utility shortfall which, if the cut is reduced, will be allocated out later, and used the \$400,000 shown in the green segment to help create a Campus Initiatives Budget for more campus repairs and computer systems upgrades. Money for a mid-year rescission was reserved again this year as

last year; if we do not have the rescission, the money will be allocated. I have urged that the fiscal restorations be used for desperately needed one-time only purchases in case we are cut again next year.

(Slide 9) The next slide brings together all the funds that have been allocated for campus-wide initiatives and reserves. First of all, the second of our three year debt-reduction payments, the first having been successfully handled in 1995-96. I committed to retire the debt and cure the structural deficit in three years, and we will succeed at that. Afterwards, we will have an additional \$3 million a year to allocate to the new programs, equipment, and facilities improvements we need. Almost \$3 million were required for the mid-year rescission and utility shortfall contingencies, and an additional million was reserved for unforeseen contingencies, a mere 1/8 of a percent of our total all-funds budget. And finally, the Campus Initiatives budget that last year paid for the first installment on our new computer systems and the campus facilities improvements including lighting has been increased from \$1 million to \$1.2.

(Slide 10) A ten-year history of State support tells the story. The red columns show actual State support and the blue columns show State support adjusted for inflation. As you can see, since 1990 our support has decreased dramatically, and buying power shrank even before that. In constant dollars, we have found

our State support slip by almost \$50 million in those ten years.

(Slide 11) This slide is the other side of that picture. As State support slipped, tuition increased dramatically, from less than \$25 million to almost \$61 million. Students have had to assume a larger and larger financial burden over this decade.

(Slide 12) This slide shows the factors of State support, tuition, and FTE enrollment on a single chart. Enrollments, which were growing slightly in the first half of the decade, have remained remarkably stable in the last five years.

(Slide 13) The Health Care budget grew over the past five years by about a third, from almost \$300 million to almost \$400 million from 1991 to 1996. The slight decline in the expense budget for this year reflects the hospital's efforts to control costs within an environment of rapid change. (Slide 14) The fifteen-year growth of our research expenditures--from less than \$40 million in 1982 to \$100 million in 1996, is one of our most impressive statistics, recognized obviously in our high National Research Council ratings.

(Slide 15) And now let's look at our students. Headcount is down by 465 students or 2.6 per cent from last fall; we believe FTE will be close to target, if not on target, but we do not have those figures yet. SUNY suffered enrollment decline around the State, caused, I suspect, by the uncertainties about tuition and financial aid at the time students were making their decisions.

About two thirds of our students are undergraduates and 14 per cent graduate students on the west side of campus, 14 per cent HSC students, and 10 per cent SPD.

(Slide 16) We do not yet have this year's figures on our students' geographical distribution, but last year 95 per cent of our undergraduates came from New York, including 45 per cent from Suffolk County and 30 per cent from New York City, primarily Queens and Brooklyn. (Slide 17) Our full-time graduate students will perhaps surprise you, with 58 per cent from Suffolk County, 23 per cent other New Yorkers, and 19 per cent out-of-state, including international students. By contrast, 43 per cent of our PhD students come from Suffolk, 9 per cent from New York City, and 36 per cent out of state, including 31 per cent international. Since these figures changed little during the previous five years, they are probably very close to this year's figures.

(Slide 18) This slide is particularly revealing because it shows the ethnic distribution of our students and of our faculty. On the left you will see that our undergraduate students are now 49 per cent white, but our faculty are 86 per cent white. Clearly it has been hard to change those percentages much in years in which we were hiring very few professors, but as we recruit in the years to come we must create a more diverse faculty. 17 per cent of our students are Asian and 8 per cent of our faculty; 10 per cent of our students are African American against 4 per cent of

our faculty; and 7 per cent of students are Hispanic but only 2 per cent of our faculty. Many of our students are, of course, of mixed heritage, and our system of assessing diversity does not provide sensitivity to those differences. Our students are increasingly diverse, a fact that adds great richness to the educational experience we can offer at Stony Brook.

(Slide 19) Graduate student diversity does not compare with undergraduates--two thirds are white, 7 per cent Asian American, 4 per cent African American, another 4 percent Hispanic American. Faculty percentages have already been discussed. In recruiting graduate students, we still need to improve our yield of diverse students.

(Slide 20) The majority of our undergraduates, 51 per cent, are female, but only 28 per cent of our faculty are. (Slide 21) An even higher percentage of graduate students, 54 per cent, are women.

(Slide 22) And what do our students study? Undergraduates, more than 900 of them, have chosen Psychology as a major, another 740 Biology, followed by Social Science Interdisciplinary and English, both with about 400 majors. Clustering around 300 are Business, Biochemistry, Political Science, Economics, Multidisciplinary Studies, and Sociology.

(Slide 23) For graduate students, full-time and part-time together, Liberal Studies dominates with more than 800 majors. Nursing has almost 500, Medicine 426, and Social Work 300. Then, clustering around 150 each, are Management and Policy, Physics, Music, Chemistry, Dental Medicine, and English! These numbers interest me greatly because I think our perceptions about our majors are not the reality. We need to broaden our perspective to best serve all our students.

(LIGHTS UP)

These graphs and other factoids will be made available during the coming year in Happenings.

In research, clearly Stony Brook is the jewel in SUNY's crown, as indicated in the National Research Council's ratings of graduate programs. Of the 10 SUNY graduate programs ranked in the top quartile nationally, one was at Buffalo and nine were at Stony Brook. A recently published analysis of that report showed that Stony Brook ranks 39th in the nation among all private and public institutions. Another national examination of research excellence, to be released next spring from Johns Hopkins Press, focuses on per capita faculty research at universities--thus differentiating between larger and smaller institutions in the calculations. It shows us tied for second among all public institutions, ranked only below Berkeley. Our research funding

continues to grow annually, despite continuing worries about possible federal funding cuts. Our faculty continue to win extraordinary honors--our quality is recognized.

Our commitment to economic development is no less powerful. I have often said that to be a great national university, we must be a great local university. Well, we are. We are deeply involved in Project Long Island, the Long Island Association's plan for rejuvenating our economy post defense industry. Discoveries in our labs lead to fledgling companies in our Incubator, in hopes--often realized--that the companies will settle on Long Island and make a significant positive impact. Our collaboration with Brookhaven National Lab and Cold Spring Harbor will provide the intellectual capital for a new national high tech and biotech center of excellence on Long Island. Our Waste Management Institute will be central to solving the problems of disposal, and Marine Sciences and other researchers will focus on protection of the Island's ecology. The Health Science Center does and will provide the state-of-the-art medical care that our region needs. Our Engineering School will continue to invent products of the future. Our role on Long Island is pivotal--and our commitment to that role passionate. This University is indigenous to Long Island, and we will serve her well.

More good news: we are building buildings again. The Student Activities Center will be open by January. The first

phase of funding has been granted to begin planning the renovation of the Engineering facilities

. We broke ground for the new Molecular Medicine center this month. Molecular Medicine is the first academic building built on campus in 25 years--it is true cause for celebration.

The Medical School celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. It does so in a period of swirling national movement in the medical field, with hospitals merging, HMOs and insurance companies looming large, and everybody worrying. Our Health Sciences Center plays an ever-growing role in health care, medical and professional education, and research.

I feel that we are arriving at a consensus on what our future directions should be. The Provost's Academic Plan is now published, after thorough vetting on campus. The Draft Five-Year Plan is more recently published, and there will be public hearings next week at free hour on Wednesday and Thursday for students, faculty, and staff to discuss its recommendations. After those meetings, appropriate changes will be made, and I will approve the plan. Even before the campus-wide discussions, however, many of the recommendations of the nine Task Forces have been realized on campus. If you look at the most recent edition of Happenings, you will see a description of Stony Brook accomplishments this year. It is a truly amazing list.

It is exciting to see this campus at this point of transition--building on our strengths and never being willing to stay where we are. Stony Brook still has the strength and energy of its youth, and yes, the willingness to embrace change. No wonder I believe this is going to be a good year.

SHIRLEY STRUM KENNY

We are, of course, once again saying goodbye to people we love. My own office has been traumatized by the retirement of Joanne Elsesser, who as Secretary to the President greeted President John Toll when he first arrived and has held the President's Office together for 31 years. We miss you, Joanne.

And we are celebrating another man of considerable longevity at Stony Brook who has made a lasting impact on this campus. Vice President J. Howard Oaks has been the pillar of the Health Sciences Center for **more than 20 years**. Howard has over those years demonstrated the intelligence, the fortitude, the strength, and the common decency to create and sustain a health sciences center that grew strong in its early years and that, like Howard, has a heart. I am very pleased that Dean of Medicine Norman Edelman will become Vice President of the Health Science Center, but I have never seen in Norman's office jawbone as art object or the obscenely clean desk that I encounter in Howard's office. I know there are lots of people who cannot imagine Life After Howard, and I know that he takes with him the love, gratitude, and smiling remembrances that he so well deserves. So Howard, if you will come here, I want to read some pronouncements.