



**State of the University Address
Delivered by President Samuel L. Stanley Jr., M.D.
September 15, 2010**

INTRODUCTION

Good afternoon. I'm delighted to welcome each of you to our annual University Convocation. This is, indeed, a special occasion for me in that it not only provides an opportunity to share with our University community where we are as an institution, but also a chance to welcome our new faculty and to wish each of you the very best as we begin a new academic year.

Having completed my first full year as President on July 1, I am prouder than ever to be affiliated with Stony Brook University and its amazing faculty, staff, and students. The fact that we have continued to raise the bar of academic quality, and the reputation of this great institution on a worldwide scale during some of the most challenging times in this University's history, is nothing short of extraordinary.

But, keep in mind, the greatness that you will hear me talk about today would not be possible without your dedicated efforts and the value that you place on professional and academic excellence and superior service to our students and our community.

RECOGNITION OF NEW FACULTY

Before I share with you the highs and lows of this past year and give you a glimpse of where we are going in the coming year, I would like to take a moment to recognize the 61 new faculty members who have joined us this year.

We want you to know that we are excited about what you will contribute to our University and our community and wish you a long and successful career here at Stony Brook. You have joined a University family of some 14,500 faculty and staff members. And while you know about our academic excellence and commitment to education and scholarship throughout our academic operations, the Stony Brook University Medical Center, the Long Island State Veterans Home, and our Arts and Athletics programs are a key component in the quality of life for this region. And Stony Brook is a driving force in Long Island's economy, responsible for \$4.6 billion in economic impact annually.

To all of you, welcome aboard!

RECOGNITION OF NEW ADMINISTRATORS

Before I continue, let me also briefly recognize a few other individuals who have recently been added to our ranks and have already started making a positive impact in their new roles here at the University:

- Tonjanita L. Johnson was appointed Chief Deputy to the President.
- After a national search, Kenneth Kaushansky was appointed Senior Vice President of Health Sciences and Dean of the School of Medicine.
- Jack Marburger relinquished his interim status and has accepted an appointment as Vice President for Research.
- Margaret M. McGovern, Professor and Chair of the Department of Pediatrics, will be leading Stony Brook Children's Hospital as Physician-in-Chief. She will continue as Chair of Pediatrics in the School of Medicine.
- Nancy Squires was appointed Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

ADDRESS

If I were a betting man, I would say that the odds are pretty good that the vast majority of my presidential colleagues across the country have resorted to taking a “good news, bad news approach” to presenting their state of the University messages these days. And, while most of us would prefer to focus on the good news and the many positive things that make us unique as institutions, we all know that it is important for you, our faculty and staff, to also be apprised of the challenges that are before us so that we might face our obstacles together, with far less negative impact on our students and our academic programs.

BUDGET

Without question, the significant reductions in our budget over the past few years have been a hindrance to our plans for continued growth and productivity. From 2008-09 through 2010-11, real cuts to Stony Brook University tally up to nearly \$59 million. Put another way, since April 1, 2008, our State budget allocation has been reduced by nearly 20%.

To help put our budget situation into perspective, especially for the sake of those who are newcomers to our institution, I would like to share with you a few vital budgetary statistics, which have become customary at this gathering.

Of our total all-funds budget of \$2 billion, \$303 million comes in the form of state allocation, of which \$134.5 million (44%) comes from tuition and miscellaneous revenue and \$168.5 million (56%) in the form of State tax support (this is what has been cut). Of the 2010-11 State Purpose Funding, 81% is used for personnel (salary and wages), 13% for utilities, leaving only 6% for everything else. This points out the challenge we face in dealing with our budget cuts—we have very few areas other than personnel where we can make significant reductions.

STATE SUPPORT PER STUDENT FTE

The recent cuts that we have endured are part of a longer, more disturbing trend in State funding of higher education. As a

State institution, one of the most discouraging statistics we see as we look at dwindling fiscal resources, is the continued downward spiral of State support per Student FTE. In 2005-06, State support per Student FTE registered at over \$8,000. In 2010-11, if we remove all inflationary factors like contractual salary increases and utilities, that support is down to less than \$4,000 per student FTE, a decrease of around 55%.

TUITION

So if the State support per Student FTE is falling, where do you derive additional revenue to help maintain a quality education for each of your students? Well, obviously, many other states have looked to tuition increases to make up this difference. However, as we look at the most recent statistics for tuition and fees among other public AAU institutions (2009-10), Stony Brook ranks fourth for the lowest tuition and fees for in-state undergraduate students. We are first on the list when it comes to the lowest out-of-state tuition for undergrads. Given the cost of living in New York and Long Island in particular, it becomes clear that we are not receiving tuition revenue that is commensurate with that of our peers, or our neighboring institutions.

PHEEIA

I think the State support per FTE number and where we stand nationally in tuition costs compared to our AAU peers make it very clear why we fought so hard for a rational tuition policy and the possibility of differential tuition. Being able to effectively address the issue of tuition through the SUNY board of trustees would be an important part of dealing with continued decreases in State funding and the rising costs of general operations. It is terribly unfortunate that the State missed the chance to enact the Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act during this most recent budget cycle.

I want to make one personal point about PHEEIA. I was stunned and extraordinarily disappointed when some of our elected officials stated they were opposed to PHEEIA, and the

concept of differential tuition, because, as they put it, SUNY was created to educate the poor and middle class, and therefore did not need to be excellent. I don't believe that, you don't believe that, and I know the students at Stony Brook and their families don't believe that. No, we believe that every high school student in New York should have the opportunity to be educated at a great, let me say that again, a great, public university, just like the students in Michigan, North Carolina, California, and Pennsylvania. So, we are not done fighting; this is simply too important for New York's future. And I am very encouraged by the progress we made in the previous legislative session. Our argument was bolstered by strong support from our faculty and staff and our student leaders, as well as major business groups like the LIA, and the State Trade Unions. And thanks to strong champions for Stony Brook and Long Island, like Senator Brian Foley and Assemblyman Steve Englebright, SUNY's message was brought front and center throughout the State. So we may have lost round 1, but I remain hopeful and continue to urge the legislators to stay true to the promise for an agreement on a rational tuition policy and increased flexibility for SUNY and Stony Brook in the near future.

So, back to the budget. Needless to say, when you take a nearly 20% cut in the State allocation, and couple it with the lack of any significant increase in tuition revenue or the regulatory relief and enhanced entrepreneurial flexibility that PHEEIA would have provided, you begin to understand why we have been forced to make some very difficult programmatic decisions.

Included among the difficult decisions that we have had to make was the relocation of the sustainability programs from Stony Brook Southampton to our main campus. You will hear more about the developing plans for the Southampton campus in the coming weeks, as the Provost and a committee of campus, SUNY System, and community stakeholders return to their discussions regarding the future use of the campus. But in the meantime, I can say to you that Southampton will remain dedicated to

educational purposes, including Marine Science Research, graduate programs in the arts, programs and partnerships with SUNY schools and other key stakeholders, and as a resource for teaching and conference use.

Other decisions that have resulted from budgetary cuts included the closing of one of our leased spaces in Manhattan as well as a continued push toward reducing our workforce through early retirement incentives, voluntary separation programs, and attrition.

EARLY RETIREMENT/VOLUNTARY SEPARATION

So what about those voluntary separation programs and the early retirement incentives? Some 1,700 Stony Brook employees are eligible for the early retirement and voluntary separation plans. At present, 224 individuals have submitted paperwork expressing interest in taking advantage of these programs, with 61 of those having already made official commitments. Without a doubt, we are going to lose many highly valued and highly qualified employees who will take with them a considerable amount of knowledge and experience when they leave the University. Those of you who remain will be relied upon in an even greater way to help us continue the tradition of excellence in programs and services that is customary for Stony Brook University.

To make the most out of the vacancies that will result, at least from a fiscal perspective, we will not be quick in refilling many of these positions. I do commit to you, however, that we will seek the best possible solutions for continuing the effective operation of every aspect of the University so that our students and faculty do not experience significant decreases in the quality of our programs and services.

Now let's talk about some good news. I am pleased to say that we continue to attract some of the best and brightest students in the country and around the world.

In terms of our freshman class, it is the best in the University's history. Almost 28,000 first-year students applied for a class of approximately 2,700 freshmen, and an additional 4,723 transfers applied for one of our 1,200 transfer seats. Academically, the 2010 freshman class has a higher mean high school grade point average and average combined SAT scores than last year's outstanding freshman class. To give you some perspective on the increasing quality of our incoming students, the SAT scores of Stony Brook freshmen have improved by almost 80 points since the year 2000.

Equally important, new students are attending Stony Brook from across the country and around the world. According to admission records, the number of out-of-state freshmen increased from 15.5% last year to 18% this year. And we continue to be proud of the fact that we are the most racially, ethnically, and economically diverse of the SUNY Centers; we remain accessible and provide extraordinary opportunity for outstanding students. Stony Brook ties for second in the percentage of freshmen who receive Pell Grants, at 30%, which is nearly twice the median percentage at other public AAU institutions.

We began the 2010 fall semester with 23,916 students, 202 more than last fall. If enrollment patterns continue, we should come close to meeting our expectations for the fall. Just to give you a sense of our growth in recent years, we have some 4,800 more students than we had just 10 years ago. We are proud that we have provided a Stony Brook education for more students, and we would like to continue to do so. That being said, we are at a crossroads. To maintain the level of quality that is expected from a top tier institution and to do what is right for our current students and faculty, we have decided to cap our undergraduate enrollment—for now. This is not a step we take lightly. The intent is to keep the student-faculty ratio from increasing so we don't overburden our professors and undermine student access to the courses they need to graduate.

FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The quality of our students represents a continued source of pride for Stony Brook. And one of the reasons they come here is because of our outstanding faculty, and the national and international recognition that they bring to this institution. While there is not enough time at this event for me to appropriately outline even a small part of the many accomplishments of our faculty over the past year, I would like to share a select few of our most recent faculty achievements so that you will know the brilliance that sits among you today.

President Barack Obama selected Elizabeth M. Boon, Assistant Professor of Chemistry, as a recipient of the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE). In addition to receiving an invitation to the White House to receive her award from President Obama, Dr. Boon will receive \$200,000 per year for five years to continue her research.

Jennifer L. Anderson, Assistant Professor in the Department of History, received a coveted Emmy nomination in the category of Outstanding Individual Achievement in a Craft: Research as part of the research team for “Traces of the Trade: A Story from the Deep North” that aired on the PBS series *Point of View*.

Professor John Parise from the Department of Geosciences was awarded a Fulbright U.S. Distinguished Scholar Award for 2009-2010, which will allow him to pursue his studies on the synthesis of novel materials at high pressure while visiting the Department of Chemistry at the University of Edinburgh.

Joanna Fowler, Senior Chemist, Director of the Radiotracer Chemistry, Instrumentation, and Biological Imaging Program at Brookhaven National Laboratory, and adjunct faculty member in Stony Brook’s Department of Chemistry, was awarded the National Medal of Science at a White House ceremony. She was one of nine researchers named by President Obama to receive

the nation's highest award for lifetime achievement in science.

Daria Semegen, a Professor from the Department of Music, won the 2009 Susan B. Anthony Lifetime Achievement Award from the Anthony Center for Women's Leadership in Rochester, New York, site of the Susan B. Anthony House National Historic Landmark.

Three Stony Brook University professors—Philip B. Allen, Barbara V. Jacak, and Alan Tucker—were named 2009 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) fellows.

Stony Brook University Mathematics Professor Dennis Sullivan was awarded the prestigious Wolf Prize in Mathematics for his innovative contributions to algebraic topology and conformal dynamics.

The National Academy of Engineering (NAE) elected Eric W. Kaler, Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Vice President of Brookhaven Affairs, as one of 68 new members and nine foreign associates.

The Emerson String Quartet, Stony Brook University's resident ensemble, won its ninth Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music Performance for its May 2009 recording "Intimate Letters," released by Deutsche Grammophon.

Lorna W. Role, Chair of the Department of Neurobiology and Behavior, and member of the Central Nervous System Disorders Center in the Centers for Molecular Medicine at Stony Brook, was named a winner of the prestigious Director's Pioneer Award from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for her proposal for light-induced deep brain stimulation of cholinergic neurons involved in degenerative brain diseases such as Alzheimer's.

Please join me in congratulating these and other faculty members for their outstanding efforts in teaching, research, and service.

SBU AND ARRA AWARDS

Another measure of the extraordinary efforts of our faculty, staff, and students, comes in our growth in sponsored research. Stony Brook faculty rose to the occasion and performed with true distinction in achieving funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. We received 102 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act awards, resulting in some \$55 million in ARRA funds and generating some \$11 million in indirect funding. This effort is significant, in that our awards in this area constitute 45% of the total amount awarded to all SUNY campuses and is greater than the combined total of the amounts awarded to the other three university centers. More importantly, for the first time, Stony Brook surpassed \$200 million in sponsored research expenditures. Now, because a significant amount of this came from ARRA money, I am not certain we can do this again next year, but what a wonderful goal for us to shoot for, as we work to build sponsored research at SBU. My thanks to all of you for your hard work in getting this done.

ATHLETICS

Athletics is yet another area where Stony Brook has been increasing its success and reputation. The increased attendance that we have seen over the past decade in such sports as football, men's and women's basketball and lacrosse, continues to be indicative of the growing excitement and interest that our sports teams are generating across the campus and within the community. From the 2000-01 fiscal year to fiscal year 2009-10, attendance at the four sports that I just mentioned has doubled, increasing from a little more than 30,000 attendees to over 60,000. This past year, in particular, has also been a banner year for Stony Brook Athletics.

The women's cross country team won its third straight America East Championship title, while the men's Soccer team stormed through the America East Conference tournament, winning the championship without allowing its opponents a single goal! Men's basketball won the America East regular season title while posting its best season ever, setting program records for overall victories (22) and conference wins (13), and hosting its first-ever

Division I post-season game. In football, Stony Brook grabbed a share of the Big South Conference title in dramatic fashion in the final game of the season, and Head Coach Chuck Priore was selected as Big South Coach of the Year. In men's lacrosse, the Seawolves captured the America East regular season title, won the America East post-season tournament, and won the first NCAA Division I post-season tournament game in school history. Stony Brook men's lacrosse is now ranked in the top ten in the nation for the first time in school history. The Stony Brook University baseball team won its second America East championship in three seasons, and won a game in the NCAA Tournament.

While our focus as an institution of higher learning will always be academics, I am extremely proud of the performance of our student-athletes and the positive and professional manner in which our athletics administration and coaches represent Stony Brook. Their efforts have brought significant public attention to our University, and their accomplishments have enhanced our reputation as an institution committed to excellence in its every endeavor.

PROJECT 50 FORWARD

Before I conclude, I would like to mention Project 50 Forward, an exciting new vision of how we will approach the next half century and beyond.

Project 50 Forward is a comprehensive initiative designed to enhance the fundamental teaching, research, and service missions of Stony Brook University. Through greater accountability and the commitment to do more with less, this initiative will develop a solid platform to support the future growth of the University and strengthen Stony Brook's role in the economic renewal of New York State.

I believe that Project 50 Forward will add value to the Stony Brook degree, propel us into the ranks of the top 20 public research universities, and make a positive impact on everyone

associated with this great institution, but it is going to require the involvement of our entire University community. With your suggestions, engagement, and support, we will look for every opportunity to provide our faculty and students with the resources they need to excel.

There are three essential elements at the core of Project 50 Forward: Operational Excellence, Academic Greatness, and Building for the Future. Operational Excellence will focus on every facet of University operations, with an eye toward reducing costs and streamlining operations. Using a generous gift from the Stony Brook Foundation, we have engaged Bain & Company to help with this process, which is designed to help us improve our effectiveness and efficiency, while also helping us deal with our budget situation. Academic Greatness will be achieved through the implementation of a comprehensive Strategic Plan, which is being developed with input from faculty and University leadership. Following a significant review of our academic programs, the Strategic Plan will identify and address areas in which we can build upon excellence, developing programs that will truly differentiate Stony Brook from other institutions and continue our trajectory toward greatness. Building for the Future, which falls under the auspices of a new Facilities Master Plan, is the third essential element of Project 50 Forward. The Master Plan will enable us to review, analyze, and develop a best-use model for new and existing buildings and infrastructure for all our campuses, including Main Campus, the Medical Center, the Research and Development Park, Manhattan, and Southampton.

Working together, with Project 50 Forward as our blueprint, we can accomplish all of our goals. I encourage you to explore the Project 50 Forward Web site for more detailed information about this initiative.

CONCLUSION

Although some of our focus in the coming months will involve looking at how we will address many of our challenges, I hope

that we all will take the time to enjoy and take note of the many exciting and positive things that are happening around us. For example, we have just recently launched a new Children's Hospital, which is designed to address the growing need for specialty children's health care in the region; Nobel Halls, the University's first LEED-certified residence halls, named for Stony Brook Nobel laureates Paul Lauterbur and C.N. Yang, has opened to a very positive reception; the Advanced Energy Research and Technology Center, which is located in the Stony Brook R&D Park and will house material science labs, engineering labs, and specialized facilities for a consortium of University researchers, institutions, public and private utilities, and federal laboratories, is scheduled to open this fall; and the Simons Center for Geometry and Physics is substantially complete with a scheduled opening for later this semester.

These and so many other recent additions to our campus serve as a wonderful reminder that Stony Brook is an extraordinary university; it is an exciting place to learn, live, and work. What has been achieved here in a little more than 50 years is truly remarkable, but we can, and we will, accomplish even more. There is no question that we face challenges, but I am absolutely convinced that we have the creativity and the resourcefulness on this campus to rise above the hard times.

The poet Horace is credited as saying, "Adversity has the effect of eliciting talents, which in prosperous circumstances would have lain dormant." Now more than ever, we need to draw upon your strengths and your talents. Adversity abounds, but the capacity to overcome the adversity that we face abounds in even greater measure. Please get involved, and share your thoughts and ideas with us as we strive to make this our most productive year ever.