Wednesday, March 9, 2016

World Trade Center Institute

20th Maryland International Leadership Awards

Remarks of USM Chancellor Robert L. Caret

Good evening. I am very pleased to join you as we celebrate and honor some extraordinary individuals and companies with the World Trade Center Institute’s International Business Leadership Awards.

I want to thank Deb Kielty, the WTCI’s Executive Director, for the very generous introduction and for the opportunity to speak briefly with you this evening.

I also want to thank WTCI Chairman Harold Adams and Vice Chairman Mike Gill for their exceptional leadership. There can be no question that WTCI deserves major credit for the dynamic growth in Maryland’s international business profile.

Let we also acknowledge Maryland Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford. The Administration of Governor Larry Hogan and Lt. Governor Rutherford has shown itself to be insightful, disciplined, and committed to strong economic growth, with a true global outlook.

And finally, allow me to offer ”preemptive” congratulations to Norman Augustine, former Chairman and CEO of Lockheed Martin, on receiving the 2016 Governor’s International Award. I have the great pleasure of working closely with Norm, who also serves as a member of the USM Board of Regents. We are all quite fortunate that Norm is so generous with his considerable talents and abilities. In addition to his service on the Board of Regents, he is Chairman of the Maryland Economic Development and Business Climate Commission, and is a member of the United States Energy Security Council. Norm is a champion of a strong business climate and of a strong educational and R & D ecosystem. His leadership on these fronts is having a national impact.

Turning now to my remarks, I realize I am all that is standing between all of us and our dinners . . . so I will be brief. But I do want to take a few minutes to highlight the University System of Maryland as a truly **global** force. And that is in terms of education, research and innovation, economic development, and service.

I had the fortune of being here last year as President Jay Perman highlighted the important international work being done by the University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB). He talked about the hundreds of trips made by UMB faculty, staff, and students to more than 100 countries the previous year—including the Philippines, Zambia, China, and 100 others—to teach, study, connect, and serve. His message of an interconnected world, and the vital role higher education plays in that world, was inspiring. And with UMB having received more than half-a-billion dollars over the past decade in federal and foundation support of international activities, it is undeniable that they are a key player on the global stage. Even since his comments last year, UMB’sInstitute of Human Virology was awarded a $50 million grant to fight AIDS in Zambia, $24.5 million to fight Botswana's AIDS epidemic, and is involved in the Global Virus Network studying Zika.

I also know that a few years before that, University of Maryland, College Park (UMCP) President Wallace Loh spoke at this event. UMCP is another example of an internationally engaged university. Each year, more than 2,000 UMCP students participate in education abroad programs with over 400 options from which to choose. In the other direction, 115 foreign countries are represented in UMCP’s student population and almost 32 percent of UMCP graduate students are from outside the U.S. The institution has agreements with more than 200 international partners. UMCP is one of only three U.S. members of “Universitas 21”, the leading global network of research universities. And—in partnership with the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development—UMCP operates the Maryland International Incubator, connecting Maryland and International companies for successful joint ventures.

Of course, it makes perfect sense that the USM’s two largest research universities—joined in a strategic partnership titled M-Power—are prominent fixtures in the international arena. When the Center for World University Rankings released its 2015 global rankings this past July, both UMB and UMCP were ranked among the top 500 universities worldwide, with UMCP listed at number 72.

But the fact is, this international emphasis and perspective runs throughout the USM. Across the system, close to three percent of our undergraduates—3,235 students—are foreign students and close to ***13 percent*** of our graduate students—5,262 students—are foreign students. Last fall, when Reuters ranked the 100 most innovative universities from across the globe—which took into account the volume of patent applications, the number that were granted, the number of scientific journal articles published, and other criteria—the USM, considered as a single body, placed 54th. For example, we have 1,000 international students at UMBC, 450 at Towson, 250 at Salisbury, and 116 at Frostburg. We have international students on all of our campuses from hundreds of countries around the globe.

Consider just a few examples of the variety of international initiatives happening right now across the USM:

In 2015 seven UMBC students and recent alumni received Fulbright grants to research and teach in Malaysia, Indonesia, Poland, Ecuador, Paraguay, Canada, and India. And UMBC has active partnerships with Kyushu University in Japan and the University of Kassel in Germany.

Last month, SU President Janet Dudley-Eshbach traveled to Cuba for an international higher education conference, representing our 12 USM institutions, as part of a special delegation of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. The conference, which attracted thousands of participants, is viewed as the next major step of opening up Cuba to our higher education community.

Over the past ten years, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) has provided a total of 50 technical advisors to the U.S. Agency for International Development. These technical advisors have worked in several countries including South Sudan, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, Cameroon, South Africa, Zambia, Liberia, Malawi, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Azerbaijan and Haiti.

In 2014, Towson became an IIE Generation Study Abroad institutional partner, committing to a 40 percent target increase in study abroad participation by 2020. To that end, TU has targeted outreach to underrepresented groups including minority, low-income, and first generation students to increase access to study abroad. To that end, TU has launched recruitment initiatives in Asia, Africa and South/Central America and is initiating new international partnership agreements in Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Azerbaijan, Peru and Ecuador.

Bowie State University (BSU) is one of eight founding HBCU members of the HBCUs-China Network. The HBCUs-China Network responds to the regional and economic development needs of the United States and China. It promotes the cultural and educational exchange of students from HBCUs and Chinese universities. Bowie students interested in exploring opportunities for academic research and professional study can apply for the China Study Abroad Scholarship from Chinese Ministry of Education.

At the University of Baltimore (UB), the Merrick School of Business faculty routinely leads dozens of students on overseas trips, from China to United Arab Emirates to Brazil, where they meet with business leaders to gain insights into international trade, cultural norms, and entrepreneurial opportunities. The UB School of Law enrolled 43 students last fall, representing 25 countries. And UB students also are heading off to Cuba this summer for a cultural immersion experience.

I recently spent a day on the Frostburg State University (FSU) campus where I had dinner with about two dozen students, including many international students. Let me tell you what I heard: In spring of 2014, FSU only had seven students from India, all in the M.S. in Applied Computer Science program. Those seven students shared how great their experience was with friends, families, and used Facebook to spread word of that experience. One of the students at the dinner was the primary mover and shaker in this effort. Today there are 78 students from India attending FSU, most from the same city my dinner partner originated from; what a great example of the role social media plays in the new global village.

The University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES)—internationally recognized for its scholarship, research, and outreach—provides insight and expertise from Brazil on the impacts of deforestation, to the Arctic on the impact of global warming, to China on harmful algal blooms, and numerous other parts of the world.

And, of course, the University of Maryland University College (UMUC) has had a global focus since its founding, serving the educational needs of people across the globe, especially our military communities. UMUC is one of the most dynamic institutions of higher education in the world. Continuing its historic role, UMUC was recently awarded new Department of Defense contracts to teach face-to-face classes to active duty military personnel in Europe (a ten-year contract) and Asia (a seven-year contract), continuing a 65-year tradition of providing higher education to our troops overseas. UMUC operates on U.S. military installations in more than 20 countries and has sent faculty to teach troops in war zones like Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and Vietnam. More than 50 flag officers are UMUC graduates and more than 1 million service members have taken courses with UMUC.

I mention all this not simply to boast about the USM, but to underscore the fact that the USM fully understands the importance of global scholarship, global service, and global engagement in today’s interconnected, “flat” world.

Think about just a few of the key challenges we face, from cybersecurity to big data to global climate change. None of these fall into either side of the false dichotomy of global versus local; everything is now global. And to effectively meet and master these challenges, the university community must embrace a global outlook, stressing innovation, entrepreneurial activity, R&D, and direct business partnerships.

This is a perspective I am committed to as USM chancellor. But I also know it is going to require a broad-based, cooperative approach. To the business leaders who are here tonight: you are the people that know and understand globalization best of all. You are experts on the logistics, economics, and finance that surround these efforts. I want to pledge to you that the USM stands ready as a valuable, capable partner. We want to work with you in expansive public-private partnerships that can benefit all involved.

Some of you may know that a half-century ago or so, General Lyman Lemnitzer—Supreme Allied Commander of NATO—observed that "the sun never sets on the University of Maryland." At the time, his comments were in reference to the worldwide reach of UMUC. But I believe that today those words go far beyond that meaning. Toady the entire USM is a global force for education, discovery, and service. And I am convinced that if we work together, the impact and benefits will significantly increase as the century progresses…”the sun truly never sets on the University System of Maryland!”

 Thank you.

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