Thank You Ed for your gracious introduction. Good morning everyone and welcome to RIT’s Brick City Homecoming. It is wonderful to have so many parents, alumni and friends joining us for this magnificent weekend. The RIT family has a great story to tell. The convergence of innovation and creativity on this campus clearly gives RIT an unfair advantage. When our “left brain and right brain” students engage with RIT’s outstanding faculty, a learning environment is created where innovation and creativity flourish. I have also come to appreciate even more RIT’s unique emphasis on career-oriented educational programs and a student-centered learning experience. Ed, by the way, is a fine example of the RIT experience. He is serving his second term as Student Government president. He is a computer engineering major with a minor in management, and he is currently on co-op at a startup engineering firm in Cape Cod.

As you tour the campus this weekend, you will discover exciting new courses in the most relevant career fields. You will find partnerships with business, industry and government prospering. You will find new laboratories and facilities throughout this thriving campus.

Let’s review some of RIT’s recent significant accomplishments and some exciting new initiatives for the coming year:

First, our enrollment has set records in several categories:

- 16,450 students call RIT home, an all-time high. This is not just in Rochester, but also in satellite campus around the world and even students studying on-line.
o RIT is now among the 15th largest private university in the nation, in terms of undergraduate enrollment.
o Enrolled students come from all 50 states and nearly 100 countries.
o This year’s freshmen class of 2,640 is an all-time high. This, after a record applicant pool of more than 15,000, making RIT one of the nation’s most selective universities.
o This year’s freshmen are among the most talented and diverse class - both in terms of gender and ethnic origin – in RIT’s history.
o Our graduate program continues to grow with 2,600 students. More than 40 percent are from outside the United States, reflecting the rising visibility and reputation of RIT abroad.
o And consider these two statistics as we live in a more technological and global world:
  ▪ RIT is now the third largest producer of undergraduate degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics among ALL private universities.
  ▪ We are now the number one producer of undergraduate computing degrees among ALL institutions nationally, public or private.
  ▪ The hallmark of an RIT education for more than 90 years has been experiential learning. Last year, more than 3,500 students in our cooperative education program - Co-op – alternated periods of study on campus with paid employment in more than 1,900 firms across the U.S. and overseas. For seven straight years, U.S. News and World Report has singled out a few universities, including RIT, as the elite
internship/co-op schools across the land. Among the largest employers of recent RIT graduates are: Microsoft, Toyota, Lockheed Martin, Xerox, Cisco, Harris RF Communications, Intel, Liberty Mutual, BAE Systems, Boeing, and many, many more.

Let’s address the academic side of the campus:

- We have added a distinguished and diverse group of new faculty to our already distinguished instructional and research staff. Four-time Pulitzer Prize winning photographer (and RIT Alum!) William Snyder joined our faculty. And few schools can claim they have an Academy Award winner. But we have Professor David Long in our School of Film and Animation.
- We have initiated a number of new academic programs in areas as diverse as sustainable engineering, philosophy, and human-computer interaction.
- We launched new Ph.D. programs in astrophysical science and technology and in sustainability, the first such Ph.D. program anywhere. These new Ph.D. programs will bring to 6 the number of unique cross-disciplinary Ph.D. programs offered at RIT.
- We have a number of new programs in the works including: undergraduate programs in journalism, chemical engineering, 3D digital graphics, and philosophy.

Speaking of Sustainability, we launched the Golisano Institute for Sustainability with the announcement of a $10 million gift from Trustee Tom Golisano, and we followed that up with an additional $18 million in pledged funding from State and Federal sources, $3 million in additional State funds to establish the New York State Pollution
Prevention Institute at RIT, a $2 million gift from Xerox, and additional contract and grant funding totaling more than $10 million over the past year. As a result, RIT’s activities in the area of sustainable production and manufacturing, in pollution control and prevention, and in the area of renewable energy sources, are now arguably among the strongest such efforts in the world.

- Sponsored research activity grew by 20 percent last year to almost $50 million, not including the $60 million from the federal government we received in support of the National Technical Institute for the Deaf. We have also initiated a new “Corporate R&D at RIT” program, where we have enlisted several major companies.

- Private gifts to RIT last year doubled from the previous year to almost $26 million, and the percentage of alumni who contribute to RIT increased from 8.4 percent to 9.6 percent. That’s a significant jump when you consider we graduate about 3,500 students each year.

- This year marks our 40th anniversary moving from Downtown Rochester to suburban Henrietta. You will be challenged to find any other campus in the nation that has grown this rapidly! As you walk around campus, you will see a few construction projects, either just starting or wrapping up:
  - We completed construction on our first certifiably green building, the new College of Applied Science and Technology Building, which recently received LEED Gold certification.
  - We have initiated construction on our new Student Innovation Center and Administrative Services Building.
  - Later this year, we will initiate construction on a new facility for the School for American Crafts, on the Vignelli Design Center, and
the Global Village housing complex, and we will begin planning a new facility for the Golisano Institute for Sustainability.

- Just yesterday, students celebrated the kickoff of construction for the RIT Campus Center, a new space here in our union for student clubs, organizations and activities to connect, socialize and study.
- You may have noticed a large complex on the northeast corner of the campus. Park Point at RIT is a new partnership between RIT and the Wilmorite Corporation that provides both housing and a “college town” experience immediately adjacent to our campus. We encourage you to visit Barnes & Noble at RIT as well as the theme restaurants and shops found at Park Point. You’ll look good in a brown and orange RIT sweatshirt!

- Outside of Rochester, this fall we officially opened our new campus in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, paid for by the UAE government. This complements our existing campuses in Croatia and Kosovo.

- We have a very vibrant campus in terms of student life. We offer diverse programming with 163 active clubs and organizations.
  - I encourage you to have your son or daughter get involved with the RIT Leadership Institute and Community Service Center. Here, they can volunteer for more than 200 public service organizations.
  - RIT is home to several “special interest” houses, ranging from Art House to Engineering House. Did you know that PC Magazine, just last month, ranked RIT’s Computer Science House as having the No. 3 positive hack of all time by creating an Internet Coke Machine back in the 1990s? An innovation in a computer game and saving Apollo 13 were first and second, by the way.
- We have 24 varsity sports, including Division I hockey. Did you know our Tigers beat nationally-ranked Cornell and Minnesota last year?! (applause)
  - Speaking of athletics, our student athletes posted an impressive 3.16 grade point average, exceeding the overall student body’s 3.05 GPA.
- Did you know? … A student team from RIT won an Engineering Excellence Award at the 2008 Microsoft Imagine Cup World Finals in Paris. Ziyan (Joe) Zhou, Adam Risi and Zachery Shivers, named Team Sparx, programmed and configured a network of sensors to take readings of such environmental variables as temperature, humidity, carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide, and set the system up to be accessible via cell phone. The team’s design also won the Software Design Invitational at the U.S. Imagine Cup finals.
- Finally, we held our first “Imagine – RIT, Creativity and Innovation Festival”, with over 400 exhibits, demonstrations, and performances displaying the extraordinary range of creative and innovative work here at RIT. Over 17,000 people attended, and we look forward to an even bigger festival next Spring as we move to identify RIT as an international center of innovation and creativity unlike any other….One of the most popular exhibits at the festival was the mobilized hot dog robotic assembler, built by a group of students in our College of Applied Science and Technology. Their robot cooked hot dogs, fixed them with toppings, placed them in buns and dropped it on a tray alongside a snack and a drink before serving it to our visitors. You should have seen the lines for this exhibit. I’d like for our student team on this project to please stand
up and be recognized … *(applause)* … What will they think of next?!

Save the date for our next Festival - May 2!!

- **Now…let me talk a bit about some of the ambitious conversations we’ve been having on campus.**

As you all know, in our lifetimes we have seen global competition force the elimination of the kind of jobs in this country that once allowed hard-working individuals to support their families even if they did not have a college degree. With all this change and global competition, does America still possess any significant competitive advantages that we can exploit to both sustain and advance the quality of life here? I think the answer to this question is a resounding yes, and happily, RIT is well positioned to take a leading role in these efforts. The wide-ranging talent of RIT faculty, staff and students is ideally suited to meet the needs of industry for new technologies and new ideas for businesses, products, and services. This unique combination of intellectual assets also places RIT in a strong position to become a national leader in addressing complex social problems such as global warming or sustainability. RIT’s unique program mix of the traditional “institute of technology” programs in science, technology, engineering, and business combined with its strong programs in the liberal, design, and creative arts and the unique diversity provided by NTID, gives the university the potential to become a national center of creativity and innovation unlike any other. I like to say: Imagine RIT, not as just a “teaching university” or a “research university”, but as the first “innovation university.”

If we can continue to move RIT in this direction during the years ahead, RIT will quickly take its place among the nation’s finest universities, public or private. And we will have accomplished that goal for the best of reasons
– we will have worked for the benefit of our students, our community, our
nation, and the world, and perhaps had some fun along the way.

**Let me take just one more moment on the topic of alumni,** and this
affects current alumni as well as our “alumni-in-training”, our students. This
weekend’s reunion activity is just one example of the programming added to
our alumni relations program. We recognize the important role our alumni
will play in the continued growth of RIT. That is why we are making a
greater effort to enhance our alumni relations programming, services and
benefits over the next several years. We will also be looking for more ways
to engage our alumni with current students – as mentors, guest lecturers, and
career advisors. I invite you all to get involved as we continue working to
build our RIT family connections.

I am proud that we now have more than 102,000 alumni living in 123
countries. The true measure of RIT success is not the graduation of students,
but rather the success of our alumni!

**These are some of the highlights I wanted to share with you today
about where we are and where we are going.** My wife, Rebecca, and I are
so grateful to all of you for giving us the opportunity to think big about what
we can accomplish together, and we are honored to be a part of the RIT
family.

We have a full weekend planned for you, so we hope you will take this
opportunity to participate in the variety of activities. We encourage you to
visit any one of the eight colleges to mingle with faculty, administrators and
staff. Enjoy yourselves at some of the signature events, including a
presentation in the Gordon Field House by Bill Nye, star of the PBS series
*Bill Nye the Science Guy*. And don’t forget tonight’s show, also in the
Gordon Field House, by comedian Jimmy Fallon, *Saturday Night Live* star and future host of NBC’s *Late Night*.

Thank you for being a part of our family and sharing this special weekend with us. There are more than 4,000 of you here this weekend. We hope that you will leave here feeling a stronger connection to RIT and to each other.

Thanks again and have a great weekend!

*(Go to Question and Answer session with Audience)*