

Sam Hawgood's Address to Special Meeting of the Regents

July 17, 2014

Thank you, President Napolitano.

Good morning everyone!

Chairman Varner and members of the board, I thank you for this vote of confidence in me to lead UCSF as its tenth chancellor.

I deeply appreciate your trust in me.

Although you are appointing me as Chancellor this morning, I know it will be my actions over the next months and years that will truly **earn** me that title.

As the President mentioned, I have been at UCSF for 32 years and have had the privilege of serving the university in several capacities.

With my family I moved from Australia in 1982 to begin my UCSF career as a post-doctoral fellow in the Cardiovascular Research Institute.

There I learned the critical role of basic, curiosity-driven research – science purely in the pursuit of new knowledge, then and now the foundational strength of UCSF.

Early in my career I also benefited enormously from what I now know is the unusually collaborative and mutually supportive culture of UCSF, an environment that surely demands excellence and hard work, but an environment that is warm and supportive with teachers and mentors who are eager to see their students and colleagues succeed.

I am proud that this culture that I encountered three decades ago remains the culture of UCSF today.

After establishing my own laboratory I returned to clinical medicine to practice in the neonatal intensive care unit to connect my scientific work with clinical medicine.

There I was daily reminded of the nobility of our mission to improve the health and lives of the people we are privileged to serve, and also the responsibility and thrill of training the next generation.

In the daily grind, this nobility of mission should never be forgotten.

The last 32 years have indeed been an extraordinary experience for me.

Extraordinary, first and foremost, for the opportunity to work with the faculty, staff and students that make up the UCSF community.

Their remarkable talent and commitment to our public mission is inspirational and a daily reminder to me as to why our work is so important.

Extraordinary also for the privilege of working side by side with the incredible group of volunteers and donors, especially our directors of the UCSF foundation who work so hard and so successfully on our behalf.

This combination of exceptional internal talent and external support gives me great confidence as I take on my new role.

The work we do at UCSF occurs at the intersection of three sectors - higher education, healthcare, and discovery. Opportunities for advancement, even transformation, in all three sectors are huge, but all three sectors are also ripe for disruption by new organizational and business models.

After three decades I understand and deeply respect the core values of UCSF that importantly including the principle and practice of shared governance with the faculty.

But I also know that, while we must fiercely preserve and protect these core values we must be neither complacent nor nostalgic.

Our times call for a rigorous look at the reality of the world today and a willingness to boldly move forward in new directions.

I embrace the opportunity to work closely with the faculty as we embark, together, on this journey.

As Chancellor I will have both the opportunity and the obligation to provide forward-looking leadership and make UCSF a model for the country at a time of such great opportunity in the health sciences.

I will take just a minute to describe some examples of what I mean.

First, healthcare.

The Accountable Care Act gets the headlines, but the pressure for fundamental change in the health care system comes from somewhere far deeper than Washington.

Society itself is demanding greater value in health care. Academic health centers and health science universities cannot remain above the fray, and must provide the innovation and leadership to solve the value equation.

It is clear that academic health centers can no longer survive alone. We must explore new, sometimes challenging business and governance models to get to necessary scale. Calibrating risk will be very important, but we must act boldly to avoid being marginalized by large consolidated non-academic systems.

Our strength in healthcare across the UC system is a critical asset, and I look forward to working across campuses to make UC Health a national role model for high value innovative care.

Second, education.

Here the disruption is coming from at least two directions – the first is driven by the rising debt burden of our students, and addressing this burden must be a key priority for me.

The second more profound disruption is driven by an unprecedented access to vast amounts of information and a widening gap between the traditional ways we still teach and the natural way young people who have grown up in a digital world best learn.

With our singular focus on the graduate and post-graduate health sciences UCSF can lead the way in transforming not just what is taught but how it is taught to prepare our learners to make a substantial difference in the world.

Finally, research.

Curiosity-driven basic science is and will remain the jewel in the UCSF crown, but two realities must be faced.

The first is funding. Federal funding in research and development is flat with a declining purchasing power of ever harder to get grants. I am committed to doing everything possible to strengthen basic, applied and population research at UCSF by securing new sources of funds and relieving the burdens currently placed on our research faculty.

The second is the merging of technologic, biologic, and global population sciences into integrated knowledge networks in ways unimagined only a few years ago.

This rapidly evolving convergence often forged by big data requires new approaches to team science and a willingness to expand the traditional boundaries of the health sciences pursued at UCSF.

Both these trends and others in the research sector suggest innovative public-public and public-private partnerships are needed.

In addition, we must pursue new routes to funding and even more vigorous approaches to the dissemination and commercialization of our discoveries.

By leading the pre-eminent university singularly focused on the health sciences, I embrace the critical role the UCSF Chancellor has to play here in San Francisco, across the UC system, nationally – and even internationally – as the academic health sciences adapt to the reality of the world they occupy today.

No institution is better positioned to lead at this time of exceptional opportunity.

The late Maya Angelou, speaking about leadership said she had learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.

It is my hope that throughout my term as Chancellor I can succeed in making all 23,000 members of the UCSF family and the thousands more who look to us for hope and inspiration feel the same sense of excitement, engagement, and optimism that I have today.

It is an honor for me to begin service as the tenth Chancellor of UCSF, and I again thank you for the confidence and trust you have placed in me.

Thank you for your attention.