

Students need you now more than ever

Presiding at commencement has been one of my most rewarding experiences as chancellor, and this year will be my last time. Many of you no doubt have heard of my intention to step down on June 30, 2009. On that day, my thoughts will be not only with this year's graduates but also with those students who hope to begin their freshman year at KU this fall. Will those students have the financial resources they need, or will some of them have to put their educational plans on hold?

When I came to KU in 1995, most of the students who will graduate this spring were in elementary school. KU enrolled 27,600 students. The national economy was strong. Microsoft had just introduced Windows 95, and the Internet stock market boom was just beginning.

Today we face an economic crisis unlike anything most of us have ever seen. Yet, we cannot fail our students. This past academic year, for the first time, enrollment exceeded 30,000. Our incoming freshmen had the highest average ACT score ever. In fiscal 2008, you, our donors, created 86 new scholarship funds. Thanks to you and past contributors, we were able to provide a record amount of student aid: \$29.6 million.

The bottom line is that more students are coming to KU, and they have great potential. Many rely on your support.

I know many of you have been affected by the economic downturn, but I ask that you continue to give, as generously as you can, to our urgent needs and to those areas of KU closest to your heart. I want to name three key areas in need of your support.

Scholarships and fellowships — Until every deserving student has access to a KU education, the need for



KU enrollment reached an all-time high of 30,102 students during 2008-2009.

student aid won't end. Likewise, we want to give graduate students the resources to put their best energy into study and research. Graduate fellowship holders work alongside top faculty researchers in making significant contributions to society.

NCI designation — Achieving National Cancer Institute designation for the KU Cancer Center has been KU's number-one goal since 2005. This designation would give us access to the leading clinical trials and special research funding available only to such centers; that translates into the best care in the region. The cancer center also is expected to generate more than 9,000 jobs and \$1.3 billion in annual economic activity, so it's in the best interest of the region to meet this goal.

Deferred maintenance — KU has more than 50 priority deferred maintenance projects. The renovation of historic buildings is a visible part of this, but improvements you don't see — such as up-to-date air handling systems and other upgrades that greatly affect the learning environment — are a primary component.

During my 14 years as chancellor, I have had the chance to meet many of you at gatherings around the country.

I have always been impressed with and thankful for your consistent generosity and unwavering interest in KU.

After I step down to return to teaching and research — the core of every great university — KU will keep in touch with you. I ask your support for the incoming chancellor, for whom a search is taking place now.

Most importantly, I ask your continued support for our students, current and future, who dream a world that is healthy, green and peaceful.



Robert E. Hemenway

Robert E. Hemenway
Chancellor, University of Kansas



SUPPORT STUDENTS NOW

Those who would like to honor Chancellor Hemenway's service may make a commemorative gift to the KU General Scholarships Fund at kuendowment.org/chancellor/.