

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION
2006 Annual Meeting
May 23, 2006
Northrop Mall and Auditorium

The 102nd annual meeting of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association (UMAA) began at 4:30 p.m. with a reception and dinner for a record crowd of 2,070 under a 150-yard long tent on Northrop Mall. The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. in Northrop Auditorium by UMAA National President Robert Stein. Stein welcomed the audience and announced that the alumni association has had impressive crowds and distinguished speakers for its annual meetings in the past—including Walter Cronkite, Ted Koppel, Leslie Stahl, Garrison Keillor, and Patricia Schroeder—but that tonight United States Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor attracted a record-setting audience of nearly 4,200 alumni and friends.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA PRESIDENT

Stein introduced Robert Bruininks, president of the University of Minnesota. President Bruininks said that he is absolutely thrilled that after four long years, and just before the 2006 Legislative session ended a few days ago, legislators gave the go-ahead to a new, on-campus Gopher football stadium. "The UMAA has been behind this idea since day one—with financial support and its network of advocates," said President Bruininks. "The stadium is going to be a great new facility—for students, for alumni, for fans, for our team, for our marching band, and for larger University events like convocation and graduation. We're bringing back the "Big 10 football experience" to campus, and that is a great thing. It will build our University community, connecting alumni to today's students and to the campus, and renew the state's pride in Gopher athletics."

President Bruininks said that he was pleased to report that the stadium is not coming at the expense of the University's most academic priorities. The Legislature chose to fund a significant portion of these academic priorities, including a new biomedical science research facility. This facility is the first of five biomedical research facilities that the University plans to build or renovate over the next ten years. "That's an aggressive schedule, but it's one we believe is critical to the future of the biosciences at the University and the competitiveness of Minnesota's biomedical industry," stated President Bruininks. He thanked alumni and friends for advocating for the University with their elected officials, assuring them that the University community is doing its part to meet Minnesota's needs and to make the best use of our resources.

President Bruininks also reported on the University's intensive strategic positioning process, which set new, high aspirations, established priorities, and identified new ways to improve efficiency and service. "Our vision is lofty: to improve lives through the advancement of knowledge and discovery," said President Bruininks. "Our goal is clear: to become one of the top public research universities in the world within a decade." To achieve this goal, 34 task forces composed of 500 participants were organized to study issues ranging from the University's role in PK12 schools to collaborative research. The task force recommendations are now shaping the University's agenda and being incorporated into budgets and planning agreements.

Already in motion is the establishment of three new combined colleges on the Twin Cities campus that encompass dynamic areas of study in fields ranging from ecology to human development to design. And preliminary planning is underway for other exciting academic initiatives, including a new University-wide undergraduate writing initiative; an Institute on the Environment; and a new campus-wide honors program. President Bruininks concluded his address by urging alumni and friends to continue to communicate to neighbors and elected officials the new excitement at the University and the long-term importance of a leading research university system to our region's future.

UMAA YEAR-IN-REVIEW

Margaret Carlson, UMAA chief executive officer, reported that the alumni association's vision is to become the most influential organization in advancing the University's goal to become one of the top three public research universities in the world. "The alumni association is built on a foundation of making things happen for the University," said Carlson. This year, the UMAA helped grow the Legislative Network to more than 12,000 alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends, who lobbied their legislators in support of the University's bills before the legislature.

"The alumni association also has a long tradition of supporting academic excellence," said Carlson. The UMAA partners with the University to fund and host the annual Distinguished Teaching Awards, which recognizes the shining stars among the University's faculty. Next fall the UMAA, in partnership with the University of Minnesota Foundation and the Minnesota Medical Foundation, will dedicate the new Scholars Walk. The Scholars Walk will enshrine the amazing accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students who have distinguished themselves at the University. The Scholars Walk dedication follows the unveiling of the Alumni Wall of Honor, which recognizes those alumni who have received the Outstanding Achievement Award, the University's highest honor for its graduates.

Among other activities, this year the UMAA hosted a Homecoming Breakfast; built spirit and community on campus through its Maroon and Gold Fridays program; and advocated for athletics by speaking out all over the state in support of the University's plan to bring Gopher football back to campus. "This annual meeting marks the close of another successful year," stated Carlson. "Throughout our history, dedicated alumni have been essential to our success. The immense time and talent that they contribute is what makes us a strong and vital organization. And, whether it's building a new stadium, calling a state legislator, advocating for the president's vision to make the 'U' a top three University, or simply pulling on a Gopher sweatshirt, the 56,000 members of the alumni association deserve heartfelt thanks for our successes."

"So Hats off! to alumni and friends," concluded Carlson. "Thank you for supporting our world-class University."

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

Stein announced the 2006-2007 slate of officers forwarded by the UMAA Board Development Committee and elected by the UMAA board of directors on March 11, 2006:

President	Dennis Schulstad
President-elect	Tom LaSalle
First Vice President	Bruce Mooty
Vice President	Archie Givens
Vice President	Mary McLeod
Vice President	Jessica Phillips
Secretary-Treasurer	Ertugrul Tuzcu
Past President	Robert Stein
Chief Executive Officer	Margaret Carlson

The slate of new board members was introduced, voted upon, and approved by those present:

At-large representative	Karyn Gruenberg Goldstein (second term)
At-large representative	Yvonne Cheung Ho
Northwest USA representative	Susan Johnson
Northeast Minnesota representative	Mark Phillips (second term)
Southwest Minnesota representative	James Resch (second term)
At-large representative	Bob Stein
At-large representative	Sandra Ulsaker Wiese
At-large representative	Min (Amy) Xu

PASSING OF THE GAVEL

Stein introduced Dennis Schulstad, who will take office as UMAA national president on July 1, 2006. Schulstad is a 1966 graduate of the University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts and a retired United States Air Force brigadier general. He was an elected member of the Minneapolis City Council for 22 years. He is the Minnesota state chair of Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve and is a founder and board member of the Minnesota Military Family Foundation and Appreciation Fund. Schulstad has given key leadership to the on-campus football stadium initiative, co-chairing the plan to honor veterans in the new structure and testifying for the stadium at the state legislature. He has provided volunteer leadership to alumni association membership and marketing programs for six years.

Schulstad accepted the gavel and thanked Stein for his extremely effective leadership of the UMAA during the past incredibly successful year. Said Schulstad to Stein, "your wisdom, experience, and commitment to our university have served us well and you can take great pride in the many accomplishments you helped make possible."

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Stein introduced the Honorable Sandra Day O'Connor, retired Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Justice O'Connor last visited the University of Minnesota 1987 to speak at the Law School while Stein was its dean; she received an honorary doctorate at that time. Said Stein, "Justice O'Connor is revered not just as the first woman to sit on the Supreme Court, but also as one of the most distinguished justices ever to serve. Clearly she has left her footprints on the sands of time. No other Supreme Court Justice has had a greater impact on our nation's law during the past 25 years than Justice O'Connor. She has been described as a 'swing vote,' a 'balancer,' and a 'pragmatist.' Whether the issue is affirmative action, or campaign finance reform, or the breadth of *Roe v. Wade*, or the role of religion in public life, such as prayer in public schools and nativity scenes in public places, Justice O'Connor is the Justice who wrote the majority opinion or represented the critical fifth vote that established the result as the law of the land. Yes, Justice O'Connor has been one of our country's most influential judges."

Greeting the audience, Justice O'Connor said, "I know of no other university with as large and enthusiastic an alumni association I am proud to be one of you." She spoke about different "firsts," including the first Supreme Court justice, the first court confirmation battle and her own first: becoming the first female Supreme Court justice. The title of Supreme Court justice brought O'Connor excitement but also challenges. Accepting the role of "first" meant encountering scrutiny from the press, the government and the public. She said, however, that she recognizes her appointment opened countless doors for women across the country.

The first female law clerk on the Supreme Court was Lucille Lomen, said O'Connor, who was hired by Justice William Douglas in 1944 after a search for a qualified male clerk proved fruitless. Now 40 percent of Supreme Court clerks are women, but the percentage of women on the Supreme Court "has dropped substantially, as Ruth Bader Ginsburg is currently the only female justice." O'Connor also noted that football great Byron "Whizzer" White was the first justice to lead the NFL in rushing in his rookie season. "I can safely predict," O'Connor said, "that he will be the last."

The first African American Supreme Court Justice was Thurgood Marshall, who offered O'Connor a piece of advice on how to deal with the scrutiny that comes with being a "first." After recounting a disappointing case from early in his career, he said that he learned that there are two choices in life: stop or go on, recalled O'Connor. "Thurgood Marshall taught us to go on."

O'Connor concluded her remarks by stating that concerned citizens need to stand up for an impartial, independent judiciary. Recent "verbal attacks" by politicians and others threatening to impeach judges and limit the kinds of cases they can hear is a grave threat to the balance of powers enacted by the founders of this country, she said. The framers of the Constitution were careful to ensure the independence of the federal judiciary, O'Connor continued, because they know that "without justices who could and would make decisions that they knew were unpopular, we would lose the protections of our Constitution."

The audience applauded O'Connor enthusiastically.

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ADJOURNMENT

Stein thanked the alumni and friends for participating in the UMAA's 2006 Annual Celebration. He adjourned by asking the audience to stand and join alumna Sarah Wigley in singing "Hail Minnesota!" and the "Minnesota Rouser" with the University of Minnesota Marching Band.

Submitted by,

Cheryl Jones
UMAA Deputy Administrator

for

Ertugrul Tuzcu
Secretary-Treasurer