



# NEW LEADERS FOR A NEW AGE

Todd S. Hutton, President | October 4, 2007



*On October 4, 2007, Utica College President Todd S. Hutton hosted the annual President's Dessert for faculty, staff, and invited guests. That evening, President Hutton gave his State of the College address, and introduced the College community to the public phase of "Achieve: A New Dream, A New Era," a \$25 million comprehensive campaign. This ambitious campaign – the largest in the College's history – has four priorities:*

- *Complete a state-of-the-art science and technology complex*
- *Increase scholarships*
- *Enhance the College's teaching and learning environment*
- *Increase unrestricted annual giving*

*As part of his State of the College address, President Hutton showed the Achieve campaign video, which is included in this publication for your viewing pleasure.*

*The full text of President Hutton's State of the College address, the campaign video, and more information about the campaign's goals can be found on the Utica College Web site: [www.utica.edu/achieve](http://www.utica.edu/achieve)*

*Published by the Utica College Office of Marketing and Communications.  
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**“NEW LEADERS FOR A NEW AGE”**

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Thursday, October 4, 2007

Utica College President Todd S. Hutton

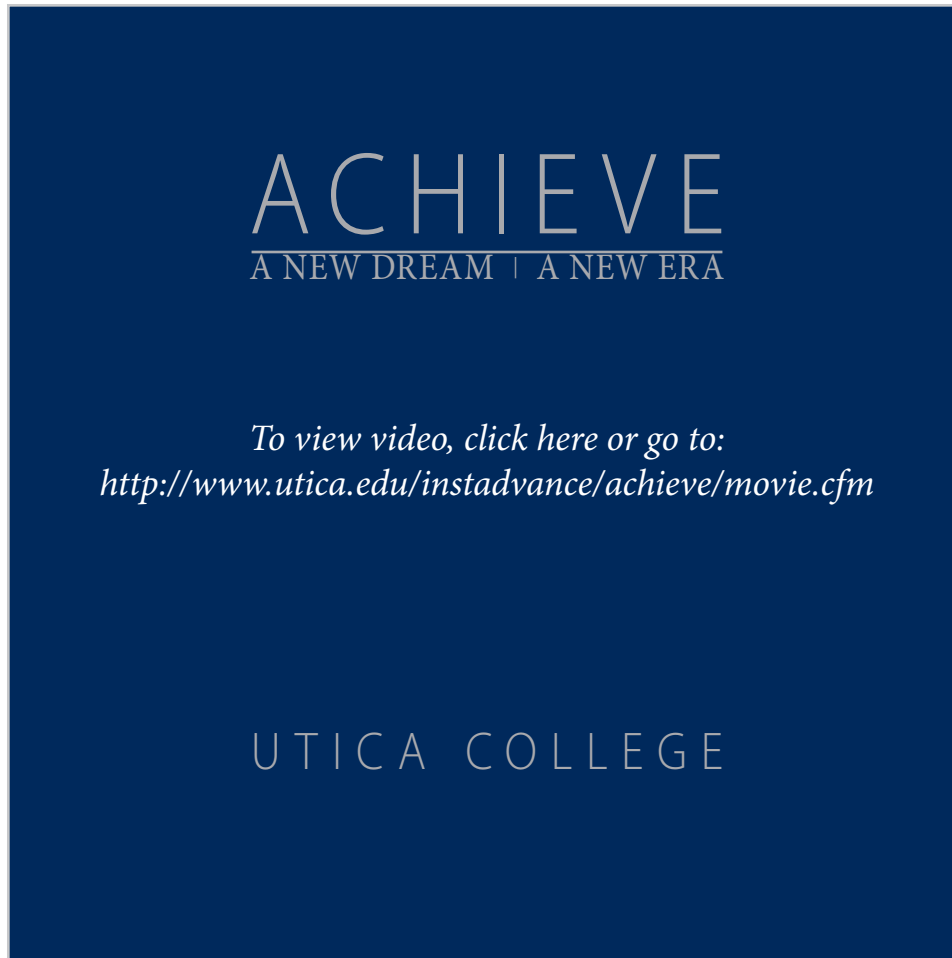
Let me extend Jennifer’s and my greeting as we celebrate the College’s 62<sup>nd</sup> academic year. This is already proving to be a special year in many ways. Five nights ago we officially and publicly announced “Achieve,” the largest campaign in the College’s history, with a \$25 million goal. Five years ago, I wrote that this campaign is not simply necessary but is an historical imperative for this college. Our work is too important, our students are too precious, our faculty are too vital, and our needs are too great for this institution not to undertake and succeed in a major fundraising campaign.

At the public rollout of the campaign – what I’m calling the “coming out” gala – I announced that we had raised \$20,700,000 toward our \$25 million goal, with three years remaining. Just one day later, as the result of an additional gift by one of our trustees, we were at \$21 million. This is an extraordinary achievement for a young institution, and I want to thank everyone in this room who helped us reach this point. You are the leaders for a new era in the College’s history.

I mention the campaign because there are significant ties with this year’s campus theme, “New Leaders for a New Age.” During the coming year we will be exploring the art and science of leadership from many different angles – forwards, and, I hope, sideways, upside down, inside out, and backwards. Of course, anytime we examine something in more than a straight-on way, someone, somewhere feels uncomfortable. It happened during our “Dissent in a Free Society” theme when we invited actor and social activist Mike Farrell as our commencement speaker, and conservative commentator and former Congressman Bob Barr as a featured lecturer. And it will happen again. But that is the price we pay for open and free inquiry. Of course, “free” doesn’t mean lack of responsibility. We always try to see many different sides of any issue, and we’ll do so again this year. I’m greatly looking forward to the opportunity to explore those many sides of leadership.

While we contemplate the role of leadership in our society and the importance of the Achieve campaign for our future, let's listen to the words of students, faculty, staff, trustees, and friends of the College who describe in compelling ways the enduring value of our College and the critical need for a successful campaign.

[At this point in President Hutton's remarks, the enclosed video was played for members of the audience.]



“I’m never going to let Utica College leave my heart. It will always be there.” These are the unscripted, from-the-heart words of a new leader for a new age in the College’s history,<sup>i</sup> Erica Eckman, a management major and campus leader who epitomizes the reason we must succeed with the Achieve campaign. Utica College is preparing men and women to be what Thomas Friedman calls “dreamers in action,” a “generation of strategic optimists” that has more dreams than memories, a “generation that wakes up each morning and not only imagines that things can be better but also acts on that imagination every day.”<sup>ii</sup>

Imagining that the world can be better is one result of a Utica education for many of our students. We just heard Attia Nasar, a public relations major and campus leader, recall her experience by saying, “I found so many people who want to change the world. And we’re going to do that together . . . That’s one of the best things that I’ve ever found anywhere, and I found that right here at Utica College.”<sup>iii</sup>

Before long, our nation will be calling upon individuals like Erica and Attia to act upon their imagination and their commitment, and to bring about positive change. And Utica College will be looking to them to provide leadership among their fellow alumni in support of their *alma mater*, because without that support and loyalty, our College will never progress to the levels that we will expect and our students and alumni will demand in the future. In the meantime, we are turning to our current alumni, nearly 20,000 strong, and to our trustees, friends, and others in our college community to be the leaders in our current endeavors to advance the College to new levels of excellence. The Achieve campaign is a critical vehicle for our success.

It is probably no surprise to anyone that much of my focus this year is on the Achieve campaign. Raising money is what college presidents do. However, we are ultimately educational leaders as well, and I am proud of the educational experience that Utica College offers its students, whether they are attending classes full-time or part-time in Utica or are taking advantage of one of our online programs. Our College has always been known for its top-flight programs, and our faculty continue to build upon this reputation through their teaching, research, and curriculum development.

In the sciences, social sciences, and humanities, for example, faculty in many departments conduct groundbreaking research even as they focus the vast majority of their time on teaching and advising. Chemistry Professor Michelle Boucher’s work on carbon silicon polymers;

Biology Professors Sharon Wise and Bryant Buchanan's investigations into the effects of light pollution on animals; English Professor Frank Bergman's study of the literature of Walter Edmonds; History Professor David Wittner's comparative research on the history of Japanese and American industries; Psychology Professor Scott Smith's work on cross-cultural communication; and English Professor Gary Leising's published poetry and his work on the pedagogy of teaching poetry – all are examples of the intellectual leadership of our liberal arts faculty.

Of special mention is Biology Professor Larry Aaronson, who was recently bestowed with the prestigious Carski Foundation Distinguished Teaching Award from the American Society for Microbiology. Also, Journalism Professor David Chanatry received awards from the Broadcast Education Association for two stories on Albania and other awards for his stories on an Albanian youth group and on lead poisoning affecting refugees in Kosovo, both of which aired on Public Radio International's show *The World*. And Communication Arts Professor Jeffrey Miller became another in a long line of UC faculty who have received Fulbright Fellowships.

The faculty in the College's various professional fields also contribute mightily to the growth of the College's reputation through their scholarship and professional activity. During the past year we have seen the emergence of a new research center at Utica College, the Center for Identity Management and Information Protection. Spearheaded by the College's economic crime and justice studies professors, this center is a collaboration of corporate stakeholders, government agencies, and other academic research centers.

Other faculty in the School of Business and Justice Studies and the School of Health Professions and Education have also distinguished themselves and the College. Just a few examples this past year: Physical Therapy Professor Tom Crist and Anthropology Professor John Johnsen have continued to lead the College's Anthropology Field School at the World Heritage site of Butrint in Albania. Based upon this work, they recently presented a paper titled "Introducing Forensic Anthropology to Albania Using the Problem-Based Learning Model" at the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences.

Also during the past year, Criminal Justice Professor Bruce McBride co-authored the seventh edition of his book, *Proactive Police Management*, and Criminal Justice Professor Kyung-Seok Choo published *Gangs and Immigrant Youth*. Ted Orlin, the Harold T. Clark professor of

human rights scholarship and advocacy and president of the International Human Rights Education Consortium, addressed the Congressional Human Rights Caucus in February; and Education Professor Thomas Diana presented a paper at the 2007 Association for Science Teacher Educators International Conference that focused on the professional development of alternative certification science teachers.

Finally, faculty from our education department and Institute for Excellence in Education, including professors Lois Fisch and Laura Dorow, and the director of learning services, Kateri Henkel, continued to offer training programs under the auspices of the College's award winning Adapting Curriculum for Student Success (ACSS) project. The aim of this federally funded, multi-year project is to improve access to higher education for students with disabilities through teaching innovation. It should be pointed out that Professors Fisch and Dorow have also led inclusion initiatives for teacher education in the State of New York.

I have offered here only a sampling of the intellectual pursuits of our faculty, who are playing the key leadership role in building the College's academic reputation. They are also spearheading the many innovations that continue to emerge in this new era in the College's history.

These innovations include not only the ACSS project that I mentioned earlier but also such pedagogical innovations as online teaching and learning for both campus-based and distance education courses and programs. While our faculty are not yet using such cutting edge delivery tools as podcasting that early adopting schools are now using, they are using online course management systems in new and creative ways. They are also pursuing a very ambitious agenda of new program development. I would venture to say that most of you in this room are already aware of most of these developments. However, our alumni and friends are just now learning about the near-term plans to expand our offerings. For this reason, I'd like to recap briefly these plans.

Among the programs that we can expect to see in the next year or two are master's in health care administration, justice administration, cybersecurity, and human rights advocacy – all of which will address a particular niche in their respective industries and fields. Other graduate offerings will include a graduate certificate in gerontology that will be marketed to a wide variety of professions, and a transitional master's in occupational therapy that will enable bachelor's-prepared and certified practitioners to pursue a master's degree. We will also see new majors

in geoscience and in forensic science (which is an outgrowth of our Anthropology Field School in Albania). Our new concentration in risk management and insurance will be expanded into a major, while we introduce a new computer gaming concentration in computer science and a health communications concentration with our communications major. With the guidance of a new advisory committee of industry leaders, the College is also poised to re-introduce its once-heralded construction management major, with a new emphasis on the most recent trends within the construction management profession. All of these planned offerings are intended to address particular social and economic needs and to add to the College's high-demand programs.

On the international front, we are in negotiations with the University of the Dominican Republic to establish a center for the study of economic crime in Central and South America, and I will be traveling to Malaysia and Singapore this month to continue serious discussions with a large private university in Kuala Lumpur to establish a similar center and joint-degree program for the Asia market. We are also exploring demands for American-style educational programs in Vietnam and Albania, where we already have potential partners. Additionally, I will be at Dong-eui University in Pusan, Korea to receive an award on behalf of Utica College for our cooperative endeavors with that institution.

Utica College has played a leadership role in many fields over the years, and innovation and entrepreneurial spirit have long been defining qualities of many of our programs. A number that come to mind instantly are public relations, economic crime investigation and management, psychology-child life, therapeutic recreation, occupational therapy, gerontology, and construction management – all of which have influenced their professions. Others have taken a lead in the generation of knowledge in a particular field. I think of our faculties' and students' work in microbiology, or the Underground Railroad, or nationalism and ethnic identity in Central and Eastern Europe.

One of the College's challenges in the coming years will be to continue improving quality in all that we do while also building a competitive advantage in a remarkably competitive higher education marketplace. In this day and age, having quality programs is simply not enough. The "build it with quality and they will come" adage no longer holds true. We have seen this at different stages in our own history when the market became soft, such as the early- and mid-90s



and periods during the 70s and 80s. For the College to remain a leader in many fields, and to become a leader in others, we will need to distinguish ourselves and differentiate UC in both the regional and global environment.

The environment in which Utica College exists today has been described as “the perfect storm” of higher education. As Andrea Leskes, the vice president for education and quality initiatives at the Association of American Colleges and Universities, has observed, colleges and universities are buffeted by such climatic conditions as:

- “a larger and more diverse student body that attends college in more chaotic ways
- the new needs of the twenty-first century workplace
- the rapidly changing information age
- the parallel universe of for-profit and corporate-based educational providers
- increasing competition for public resources
- a stricter regulatory environment at all levels of government<sup>iv</sup>

If we add to the gathering storm growing calls for more public accountability and transparency regarding learning outcomes, competition from universities in other nations that are attempting to adopt the U.S. model of higher education, college affordability as an emerging national policy issue, and, for institutions in the Northeast, a precipitous decline in the traditional college-age population in the next decade, we could very well be faced with a storm surge of enormous proportions. Andrea Leskes emphasizes that in order to weather the storm, the academy must embrace a culture that is truly centered on learning, that applies critical evaluation to educational performance and uses the results for programmatic and institutional improvement, that creates more coherence in undergraduate education with more emphasis on the interrelationship of courses, and that takes a more holistic view of education in which academic leaders see both the big picture and recognize how the smaller elements interrelate.<sup>v</sup> Leskes concludes that:

*“Simply battening down the hatches and waiting for the storm to pass over is not the answer. Nimbleness, self-reflection, and a willingness to change with the times are characteristics not just of the students we want to produce, but of the institutions we need to build. Isn’t this what it really means to model the lifelong learning higher education advocates?”<sup>vi</sup>*

I’m proud to say that Utica College has in many ways exhibited the traits that Leskes claims are needed to survive the building storm. New programs that address social and economic needs, new ways of reaching new populations, such as distance education, strategic planning that confronts environmental realities, new initiatives to extend our reach and reputation into parts of the nation and the world where there is a demand for the education that we have to offer, and a strengthened commitment to inclusion and diversity – all will help Utica College not only survive the storm but also successfully ride the waves into a more prosperous future.

Still, we have more to do – for the here and now and for the future. As we explore in the next planning cycle what leadership means for the institution and its programs, we must also explore what it means for our students. As part of our planning endeavor, we should ask such questions as: What is our role in preparing men and women for leadership in their professions, in their communities, and the larger society? What are the most effective ways to nurture leadership traits? What is the balance between general education (including both curricular and cocurricular programs) and the major courses of study in preparing students for leadership? Many of these questions may be addressed over the course of this year’s campus theme.

Every time I read our mission statement and discuss it with new members of our community, I am surprised anew that we are not more explicit and self-conscious about our role in helping students develop leadership skills. Reviewing mission is always part of a strategic planning process. Perhaps an explicit commitment to nurturing leadership traits in our students should be on our agenda for the next decennial planning process – for both mission and curriculum.

An article in the Winter 2006 issue of *Liberal Education* pointed out that “leadership skills” do not stand out in the national consensus on learning goals that were described in the 2004 national report, “Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree”. Nor do

two other goals: “contributing to community” and “imagination and creativity.”<sup>vii</sup> In my mind, all three are essential to a quality education that integrates liberal and professional learning. I would think they are also essential to the health of our nation. The authors of this article, titled “Learning Goals in Mission Statements,” assert that “few curricula have been implemented to facilitate the attainment by students of the propensity for contributing to the community and the skills of leadership and imagination that many presidents and trustees foresee that our students will need.” They concede that many campuses have developed opportunities for service learning and others have created leadership courses and student-life programs emphasizing the development of leadership skills (like UC’s own Leadership Weekend), but they stress that these programs and courses “tend to be on the margins of campus life and available to only a few students. And creativity and imagination are seldom drivers of educational programs.”<sup>viii</sup>

So, it seems to me that the Utica College community must ask itself whether we are paying enough attention to leadership, creativity, and imagination in the educational experience that we offer our students. If we are to heed the argument by Richard Florida, author of *The Creative Class*, that U.S. society is experiencing a sea change in the way Americans work and live and that creativity is becoming a dominant ethos, then we certainly should pay more attention to building an educational experience that develops our students’ powers of creativity, imagination, and leadership.<sup>ix</sup> In fact, I am convinced that Utica College must make a part of its core purpose the preparation of students to take their place in what Florida calls the Creative Class, but which I would expand to all creative individuals in any profession – individuals who create new ideas, new technology, and new creative content, and who “engage in complex problem solving that involves a great deal of independent judgment and requires high levels of education.”<sup>x</sup> To do less, I think, would forsake our commitment to fostering learning in an increasingly global society. And it would forsake our drive to become one of this nation’s finest small universities – to aspire to what Jim Collins defines as “greatness” in his widely read book, *Good to Great*.<sup>xi</sup>

As I conclude this talk, I want to share Richard Florida’s concluding remarks. I find them inspiring and also challenging to old ways of thinking about society and education. Florida poses several questions for reflection.

*“...What do we really want? What kind of life – and what kind of society – do we want to bequeath to coming generations?”*

*This is not something we can leave to the vagaries of chance, to the decisions of political leaders or even to the most forward-looking public policy. Nor is it a question that the Creative Class can any longer afford to ignore – unaware of its considerable power or even its own existence. To purposefully address it we must harness all of our intelligence, our energy and most important our awareness. The task of building a truly creative society [and I would add ‘College’] is not a game of solitaire. This game, we play as a team.”<sup>xii</sup>*

To return to my opening statements about the Achieve campaign, I mentioned that raising \$21 million is an extraordinary achievement, but we still have a long way to go. That \$21 million takes us through the second phase of the Science and Technology Project – the CIMIP building – but we need to raise the money for the final phase – a critically needed new facility for our natural science programs. Let me tell you something about that video you saw earlier. Do you remember me telling you that at the gala, we announced that \$20,700,000 had been raised, and that one day later we were at \$21 million? That video inspired one of our trustees – a UC graduate, I might add – to make a \$250,000 gift. That trustee is what Thomas Friedman calls a “dreamer in action,” someone who “wakes up each morning and not only imagines that things can be better but also acts on that imagination every day.”

In other words, that trustee is a leader.

As we head into the remaining three years of the Achieve campaign, we will be looking for new leaders, for individuals who not only imagine that things can be better, but who also act on that imagination. For everyone here this evening and for everyone throughout the world who has made a commitment to the campaign – who has acted on imagination and commitment – I thank you on behalf of our current and future students. You are setting an important philanthropic example for others. You are new leaders for a new era in the College’s history.

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<sup>i</sup> Comments by Erika Eckman, Utica College Management major, in “Achieve: A New Dream, A New Era,” campaign video, 2007.

<sup>ii</sup> Thomas L. Friedman, *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), pp. 468, 469.

<sup>iii</sup> Comments by Attia Nasar, Utica College Public Relations major, in “Achieve: A New Dream, A New Era,” campaign video, 2007.

<sup>iv</sup> Andrea Leskes, “Leading through a Perfect Storm,” *Liberal Education*, vol. 92, no. 1 (Winter 2006), p. 28.

<sup>v</sup> Leskes, pp. 30-31.

<sup>vi</sup> Leskes, p. 33.

<sup>vii</sup> Jack Meacham & Larry G. Gaff, “Learning Goals in Mission Statements: Implications for Educational Leadership,” *Liberal Education*, vol. 92, no. 1 (Winter 2006), p. 10.

<sup>viii</sup> Meacham & Gaff, p.10.

<sup>ix</sup> Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

<sup>x</sup> Florida, p. 8.

<sup>xi</sup> Jim Collins, *Good to Great* (New York: Harper Business, 2001).

<sup>xii</sup> Florida, pp. 325-326.



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