
University Community Address
by Rick Hurley, Acting President
4 p.m. Wednesday, April 14, 2010
George Washington Hall, Dodd Auditorium

Friends, colleagues, fellow members of the UMW family:
Thank you for joining me this afternoon.

First, I want to express my deep and sincere thanks for all of the many good wishes and expressions of support that I have received from throughout the University of Mary Washington community. Your outpouring of kindness has really touched my heart, and I am so thankful. I know I could not be standing here before you today without your support.

I am humbled, and truly grateful for the opportunity to serve UMW as its ninth president, beginning July 1. I promise that I will do my best never to let you down and to serve this office in a way that will make us all proud to be part of UMW. I want to express my appreciation to the Rector and members of the Board of Visitors for entrusting me with this awesome responsibility, and I intend to work diligently to justify their confidence.

This is a great university! Those of us who know and love Mary Washington realize what a very special place this is. We have a proud and honorable history, we are currently recognized as one of the leading public universities in Virginia, and we have a bright future ahead.

I am honored to have the opportunity to help lead this university forward toward new levels of recognition and distinction. I am so proud to be a part of UMW, and I hope everyone here feels that same sense of pride.

I believe that the University of Mary Washington is such a great place because of its people. From our remarkably accomplished and caring faculty—gifted teachers and scholars who provide our students with cutting-edge, relevant, world-class educational experiences—to our dedicated administrators and office staff who support the educational enterprise and work to meet the needs of our students—to those remarkable individuals who proudly care for our beautiful facilities and grounds—everyone here at UMW is important, and you are valued for your contributions. To make a great university, it takes all of us, working together toward a common purpose. Even though we may have different jobs or work on different campuses, we are all part of the same UMW family—we are truly “one university.”

As I prepare to step into the role of president, I hope, first and foremost, to bring to UMW a sense of stability. I realize that the leadership changes over the last few years have been difficult for many of us, but now we need to look to the future. I pledge to do my best to provide a calm, steady hand at the helm for the next several years—as long as I am able and as long as I am seen as doing a good job.

I must tell you that I am very, very excited to have been given this opportunity. I bring to the job extensive administrative experience gained over a long career in higher education, a good understanding of the workings of state government and UMW’s vital role as one of Virginia’s premier public universities, a tremendous level of admiration and respect for those who have

made this institution great, unbounded energy and deep commitment to advancing UMW forward, and incredible passion and enthusiasm for all this university stands for, as well as appreciation for the people who call Mary Washington their own—students, faculty, staff, alumni, and friends.

As president, you will find me to be the same Rick Hurley you have come to know over my years at UMW—I expect to be visible and engaged—on campus, in the greater regional community, in the halls of government in Richmond, in the media, and with alumni, supporters, and friends of the university. I am approachable and open. You will see me at many university events, in the dining hall, or strolling down Campus Walk. I will place a high premium on communication, continually attempting to ensure that the university community knows what’s going on and why decisions are being made.

I’ve been asked what my immediate goals are as president, and I have responded that, for now, I want us all to come together as a community, bring the current semester to a successful conclusion, and celebrate the end of the academic year with a great commencement ceremony. In the coming months, after I officially assume the role of president, you will hear more about my own vision and aspirations for the future of UMW. I can assure you that my goals will be formulated in an open and collaborative manner. You will find me receptive to new ideas, responsive to input from throughout the university community, and deliberative in my decision making. As we move forward together, it will be vitally important to talk with one another, share ideas, stimulate creativity, and in doing so, to develop the best environment for our students.

This is an exciting time for our university, and I can affirm to you that many of the initiatives already underway will continue to move forward under my presidency. Much good work has been done by many of you in this room and others, and I want to see that good work advance. Here are a few examples:

- We will forge ahead with the establishment of the new colleges of business and education, along with the new division of professional development and regional engagement. This organizational structure, which was approved by the Board of Visitors last Friday, will provide an essential framework for our continual drive for academic excellence. And, of course, at the heart of our enterprise will remain our exceptional college of arts and sciences, with its commitment to liberal learning and extraordinary teaching and scholarship.
- We will move toward completion and opening of several new construction and renovation projects. Phase I of the exciting new Eagle Village project and the Anderson Center will both provide additional offerings to support the needs and enhance the experience of our students. The Monroe Hall project will provide us with much needed and more functional academic space, and we will soon take the first step toward improving our on-campus residence facilities, with the Randolph and Mason renovation project.
- We will continue to move forward on our initiatives to become a more diverse community and to ensure that we are an inclusive university. While we have made progress in recent years, in order to fulfill our destiny as a truly great university, we must

build upon those successes and continue our efforts to enhance and embrace diversity in all of its many facets.

- We will continue our efforts to provide excellent service to our students and all those we serve. Our customer service initiative that we have embarked upon is essential if our students are to have the best possible experience while they are here at UMW and to ensure that they become loyal and supportive alumni once they leave us.
- As many of you may know, we are nearing completion of a new campus master plan. The development of that plan, which is still underway, has involved input from a wide variety of UMW stakeholders and will continue to do so. Once completed, it will provide a road map to the future development of facilities on all of our campuses.
- And, of course, we will be moving aggressively to prepare for the reaffirmation of our accreditation by SACS in 2013. As we proceed with development of our Quality Enhancement Plan and our Compliance Certification, we will need all elements of the university community to be fully engaged in the process.

For now, as I prepare to embark upon a new presidency, I hope that we will all take some time to reflect upon what it means to be part of the University of Mary Washington community. We need to come together to recognize what a unique and special place this is, and we need to celebrate our successes. Others have looked at Mary Washington and have taken note of our achievements, as evidenced by our appearance in respected national publications, rankings, and guidebooks.

As we move forward, we need to continue to tell our stories—the stories of our wonderful students, outstanding faculty and programs, and successful alumni. We should not hold back, but proudly tell all that UMW offers a unique educational experience, grounded in liberal learning and preparing students—undergraduate and graduate students alike—to make a real difference in the world.

In conclusion, on behalf of myself and my wonderful wife, Rose, I want to again express deep and sincere gratitude for all of your support and your good wishes. I am honored to have the opportunity to serve you as your president, and I look forward to the exciting next chapter in the proud tradition of the University of Mary Washington!

Thank you!