

President Anderson's Address to the Board of Trustees, November 2, 2018

On this homecoming weekend, as our alumni come back to Old Tennessee to give thanks for their UT education, I want to welcome you back and give thanks for your leadership and your support of the campuses. Together, we share the work of raising up visionary citizens who are critical AND compassionate thinkers, innovative and entrepreneurial, whose gifts serve not just themselves but a world that desperately needs them. We believe in our students, and for good reasons. Ashlee, who came here on a Pell grant, depended on Smokey's Pantry to make ends meet, and she just won a Tony Award at 24 this year; Justin, now a theologian at Yale, works on reconciliation and our capacity for joy; Avanti, one of our 19 current Fulbright scholars, is in India, improving health care. These Vols and thousands of others are my hope for the future, and the faithful stewardship of their education has been my life's work.

The times ahead are challenging, but UT has a opportunity to model our nation's highest values. It's our shared ideals that make diversity a strength rather than a wedge. *E pluribus unum*: out of many, one. The UTK Faculty Senate recently affirmed three values as guides for our decisions. They are: a culture of respect, the dignity of work, and academic excellence. I encourage you to lead from values as well, not just from financials and data points but from shared ideals with the power to draw us together and move us forward, values like inclusion, integrity, curiosity, community—they're all embedded in VolVision, and they light our path. Every time we can work out clashes of principles and priorities through a fair, values-driven process, we strengthen higher education, and we model for our students how a group of

people can agree on how to be more just, more effective, and more welcoming. How to be a people. We all need to see this lesson in action and practice it daily. Former University of Chicago President Hanna Gray writes about her passion for the University's mission of shaping human character, conduct, and understanding, and yes, for making the policies and processes that enable it. A Jew whose parents fled Nazi Germany, and a female professor in an era when she had to enter department meetings through a side door, Gray was fiercely loyal to the institutions she served, and when she saw they weren't living up to their highest values, she rolled up her sleeves with other professors and administrators to reshape the institution's policy from within.

Shared governance helps us live our values. It also helps us avoid wasteful, unjust, or distracting policies so that we can better serve the state; better educate our students; and do the research that can cure diseases, clean our water, heal our national divides, and preserve our history.

Tennessee is quietly leading the nation in higher education access through Tennessee Promise, the HOPE Scholarship, Drive to 55, and TN Reconnect. What we have the capacity to achieve next could be transformative. The UFC, the council of faculty senate presidents and leaders of each campus, is here to help. We are the elected faculty advisory body to the President as professors who live and serve at UTC, UTK, UTIA, Martin, and Health Science. In the absence of a faculty trustee on the full Board, we're ready to serve you as well any time you need us. So please, keep in touch, do good work, and *let's all thank the folks who brought us this lunch*. **Go**

Vols!