

April 12, 2005

Dr. Elson S. Floyd
President
University of Missouri System
5100 Rockhill Road
Kansas City, MO 64110

Dear Dr. Floyd,

The Greater Kansas City Community Foundation is involved in a number of initiatives aimed at supporting and improving both economic growth in the Kansas City area and the quality of life of its citizens. We believe that the availability of strong higher education resources in the community is an essential element of progress in these areas. We believe that to be a truly great city, Kansas City must have a great urban university.

The University of Missouri at Kansas City (UMKC) is the largest public institution of higher education based in Kansas City and the only research university. The Community Foundation will support a formal study to better inform the civic community of Kansas City in its support of higher education and, in particular, UMKC. We also want to help develop strategic options to ensure the most promising future for UMKC.

We believe that this effort can be significantly advanced by a Blue Ribbon Task Force of outside, nationally recognized experts in higher education who can examine UMKC and the role it can and should play in the future of our community. This study will be a synthesis of local expertise with a national perspective. The Blue Ribbon Task Force will meet with and include the thoughts and opinions of many interested parties, including the UMKC faculty and students, other charitable foundations in Greater Kansas City, the Civic Council, the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce, UMKC Trustees, representatives of the University of Missouri system, and the local media.

Dr. Benno Schmidt, Jr., chairman of the board of the City University of New York and former president of Yale University, has agreed to chair this task force and will be joined by national education and urban development leaders including:

April 12, 2005

Page 2

- Dr. James J. Duderstadt, president emeritus of the University of Michigan
- Dr. Richard Atkinson, former president of the University of California state system
- Kurt Schmoke, dean of Howard Law School and former Mayor of Baltimore
- Sara Martinez Tucker, president and CEO of the National Hispanic Scholarship Fund
- Farris Womack, former CFO of the University of North Carolina and University of Michigan

We are prepared to support the work of this task force with expert consultants and opinion surveys, as needed.

We envision that the study will look at UMKC's many strengths, its current mission in the University of Missouri system, its role in the Kansas City community, and the "best practices" of other, similarly situated public and private, urban universities around the country. It is our hope that such an effort will result in a clearer understanding of the importance of a vital urban university in our community, and how other communities have supported their urban universities.

We propose that the parameters and scope of the study include consideration of the following:

- Models of great urban universities in other cities;
- UMKC's recent, current and potential role in Kansas City;
- UMKC's relation to and support from other higher educational centers in our community (i.e. – Metropolitan Community Colleges, University of Kansas, etc.);
- Recommendations to the Kansas City civic and philanthropic communities to support the future of UMKC; and,
- Recommendations on how the state of Missouri can support a great urban university in Kansas City.

The Community Foundation does not expect this study to be a review of campus administration or internal operations; that is the purview of the Chancellor, the University of Missouri President and its Curators. It is also not a review of the performance of the University System or its President. Rather, we will be able to understand and highlight best practices from other communities that could strengthen UMKC in the future by having a Blue Ribbon Task Force of outside, nationally renowned experts listen and glean insight from a wide range of local stakeholders.

April 12, 2005

Page 3

We expect that this study can be completed in time to support the University System in its search for a new Chancellor at UMKC. We seek your advice and counsel as to how we share the information we gather with the Chancellor's search committee and with you as the final decision maker. At a minimum, the results will certainly be available for thoughtful consideration by the new chancellor. In addition, we feel this study can be of use to Governor Matt Blunt's Government Reform Commission as it evaluates the role of state government in higher education.

Here is the tentative schedule of the project with key milestones:

Date	Milestone	Status
April 5	Meet with Dr. Elson Floyd to outline project	Complete
April 11	Proposed project is endorsed by UMKC Trustees	Complete
April 13	Dr. Benno Schmidt meets with Dr. Elson Floyd and Governor Blunt	Scheduled
May 2-5:	Task force members meet with UMKC faculty, staff, students and community stakeholders in small group meetings and forums	
May 18-20	Task force members meet with UMKC faculty, staff, students and community stakeholders in small group meetings and forums	
May 20	Dr. Benno Schmidt outlines project focus to the Government Reform Commission	
May 26	Dr. Benno Schmidt speaks at the UMKC Trustee Dinner	
June 7-9	Final visit of Task Force to meet with UMKC faculty, staff, students and community stakeholders in small group meetings and forums	
June 24	Preliminary findings reported to the Government Reform Commission and the Chancellor Search Committee	
August	Final report delivered to UMKC faculty, staff, students and the community	

April 12, 2005

Page 4

We look forward to clarifying any questions you have regarding the project and the roles and responsibilities during our meeting on Wednesday, April 13. Here are some preliminary thoughts regarding role of the Chancellor's office to help guide our conversation on Wednesday:

- The Chancellor's office serves as a conduit and advisor on inter-university communications. This includes facilitating mass communications, surveys as needed, updates on the project, and announcements of open forums.
- The Chancellor's office designates a representative of the university to support the recruitment and planning of small group interviews with faculty, staff and students. Our hope, especially this time of year, is that we can leverage existing meetings of students, faculty or staff. We look forward to your advice.
- The Chancellor's office is available to provide context to the panel through conversations, available data at UMKC and information about the University.

We are very excited to support this study and believe it will help UMKC continue its growth as a great urban university. We have assembled a task force that has the breadth and experience to listen to a wide range of views and arrive at solid recommendations for local action. We appreciate and look forward to your continued support of this effort.

Sincerely,

Larry Jacob
Senior Vice President

cc: Mary Larson Diaz