Dear Friends of the University,

We’ve reached a crossroads in our great university’s life. Two paths lie before us—one merely sustains our present, while the other transforms our future. The time has come to make our choice.

Though we are Alabama’s first university—our state’s flagship—we must not fixate on past accomplishments, but instead focus on a vision to become one of the premier universities in the nation. We cannot be satisfied with merely bordering on greatness when true greatness lies ahead of us.

Our vision is to become the “university of choice for the best and brightest.” People—students, faculty, staff and alumni—are the heart of this university. They are the greatest of the four cornerstones of our vision. The other cornerstones—programs, facilities, and resources—will equip our students not only to compete in the world, but to preserve and change it for the better.

By bringing together academics and research, this university creates a synergy that benefits not only the students, but the entire state of Alabama. We intend to become—we will become—a tier one research university.

To make our vision a reality, we have created a bold new plan that includes the most aggressive goals and ambitious objectives we have ever set forth. Remember, we have no interest in merely maintaining the status quo. The University of Alabama is not about being average.

As we walk the Capstone today, we enjoy the shade of trees we did not plant, the music of chimes we did not build, and the benefit of programs we did not initiate. However, it’s now our time and responsibility to provide for the future. It’s time to plant trees whose shade we will not enjoy and to support the education of young men and women yet to be born.

Now is the time for us to choose. And we choose to transform the future.

Dr. Robert E. Witt
President