

Emory University  
State of the University  
October 21, 2004

**Jimin Kim**

Good evening, and welcome. My name is Jimin Kim, and I'm the Student Government Association President. Thank you all for coming tonight. We are honored to have you. This evening we are given the opportunity to hear from our university leader about the state of Emory. We are gathered to appreciate what is great about Emory, critically analyze areas for improvement, and move forward together as a destination university. Tonight marks our seventh annual State of the University address. It is through events like this that we foster tradition, uphold the value of dialogue, and bring together the campus community. Thank you all for being here as citizens of Emory; I hope that we will continue this tradition of active citizenship and open dialogue. Please join me in welcoming our nineteenth president of Emory, President James Wagner.

**James W. Wagner**

Thank you all very much, and Jimin, thank you for the introduction. Yes, the theme of tonight's address is the state of Emory University. Traditionally this address has been delivered in the springtime. But for the current season of Emory, it's appropriate that we give it close to the beginning of our academic year, so that we can consider the challenges and opportunities in front of us. After all, we're in a little different situation than some of our public institutions around the country, who might give a state of the university report at the end of the year to celebrate that they had survived after all. It's been rough for them. We're also in a different situation than, say, a university that is really at the top of its form—a place like Princeton. It's been five, maybe six years in a row that they've been either number one or tied for number one in the *U. S. News* rankings. I still haven't made my traditional phone call to Shirley Tilghman, the current president at Princeton, but I have done that for the past several years just to let her know how disappointed I am that Princeton has shown no improvement.

But Emory is neither at the peak of its form nor in decline or crisis. In fact, if we want to talk very simply about what the state of the university is, I would say it's very good. Certainly it's very good based on some of the conventional measures we use, measures like enrollment. This year the undergraduate enrollment represents some big and positive numbers: the deepest applicant pool that we've ever had, the highest-credentialed undergraduate class, the upswing in Oxford enrollment and at the graduate level, where a new fellowship program has made it easier to recruit top graduate students. In our professional schools, the MBA enrollment remains strong, and the quality has gone up in spite of the fact that around the country many of our sister institutions have had difficulties even filling their MBA classes. Medicine, nursing, public health, theology are all strong.

We could look at other numbers. We could look at research activity. Today's local newspaper reported that external support for research at Emory has exceeded \$350 million for the first time. New proposals for continuing research are on a trajectory to exceed that number for the coming year. And we have just come from a year of unusual success in recruiting top scholars; we are closer to this notion of being a destination university than we had thought, perhaps. Emory Healthcare has turned in a solid year, exceeding its revenue projections and cutting costs. The financial status of the University as a whole is very strong. Our trustees are committed to insuring the brightness of Emory's future. Our top scholars are receiving recognition, as is our staff. Our Facilities Management Division, for instance, won a national award this year. Our athletic program has been nothing short of spectacular. And in technology transfer, Emory has crept into the nation's top ten based on the amount of return from licensing and royalty revenue coming from our inventions. You know, even the food service got a positive review in *The Wheel* from students. This is unusual, and it was not an April Fool's issue.

There are negatives, of course. If we're going to stick with numbers, enrollments weren't rosy everywhere. Some of our executive programs in the business school and in law did not make their targets. Our African-American enrollment at the undergraduate level is flat or even slightly declining over the past couple of years. And our numbers of

Latino/Latina applicants are not rising as they should. And, of course, the *U.S. News* ranking fell from number 18 to number 20. We can't be happy about all those things, but I can tell you that all of those things do have very specific solutions that we are pursuing. So we can be encouraged, if unhappy.

## **Toward Our Vision**

I'd like to go beyond statistics, though, and suggest that Emory is in a moment of its history when it has an opportunity to seek greater fulfillment of its potential, to go beyond the traditional levels of expectation for Emory. By that I mean that Emory has the opportunity to become a great Emory. I don't mean that Emory has a greater potential for coming closer to Princeton or Yale or Stanford or Harvard, but a great opportunity to live into the strengths that we have. We might even go beyond what we have traditionally expected we can do. We are no longer content simply for the future to happen. There are so many conditions that favor Emory's future, I suspect that if we did just let the future happen, it would still be good. But I sense that now we have a will really to work intentionally for the future, a sense of hopeful anticipation.

The word "buzz" gets used every now and then. There is a buzz on campus, and it's interesting to hear the buzz about Emory in the Atlanta area and nationally. One reason for that buzz is our leadership team—actually a leadership activity that's emerging at all levels. Our leadership team is nearly complete. We added Earl Lewis this year, our provost. Those of you who have had an opportunity to work with Earl know what a wonderful addition he is. And Johnnie Ray joined us this summer as our senior vice president for development and university relations. As you read in this week's *Emory Report*, we'll soon have Mike Mandl back. Add these to Mike Johns, in the health sciences, John Ford in campus Life, and our general counsel, Kent Alexander, and we have a terrific team with high energy, great vision, and great capability. Don't get me wrong: we deeply respect and appreciate how Emory has been positioned by prior administrations, by prior leadership. But I feel especially good, and hope you do too, about the capability of this current group and its determination to build on the great foundation we were given.

Let's get a bit more specific. Emory now is able to point very concretely toward its future using its vision statement. It seems like every time I get behind a microphone I'm reciting the vision statement, and I'm going to do it again. Let me recite it for you just so some of these words are in your head. It says that we envision Emory as "a destination university that's internationally recognized as an inquiry-driven, ethically-engaged, and diverse community, whose members work collaboratively for positive transformation, through creative leadership in teaching, research, scholarship, health care and social action." This vision fits Emory. It's realistic for Emory. For almost every element in that vision statement there is some part of the University that's done it—some area of research that makes Emory a destination; some place where we do practice community well; some division of the University that has been courageous in its leadership.

Still, the vision statement challenges Emory, because not all of Emory has yet lived into that vision, and the statement helps us clearly to articulate goals that we can work to fulfill. Picking it apart just a bit, the vision statement sets aspirations. We aspire to be this destination university. We aspire to be recognized locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally. It defines the nature of the community that we aspire to be—this scholarly community of inquiry that still is focused on ethics and values, including the value of diversity of all sorts. We value different intellectual and political perspectives, different cultural experiences, differences in race, gender, sexual orientation—all of those things being valued as part of what it means to be the kind of great community that we intend to be.

I remind you of this combination of things—of being inquiry-driven, ethically engaged, and diverse—because Emory may be uniquely positioned to combine them as a community. I can think of institutions that do two out of the three. Emory, I think, can do three out of three. Our objective, of course, is to have the kind of community here that, when we leave it as students who graduate or faculty or staff who move on, the experience of community at Emory is such that we would settle for nothing less in another community. A wonderful example of this came up in a meeting the other day. A group of us was discussing students and the culture of Learnlink. Learnlink has become such a prominent feature of students' environment here that, when they leave here and

take a position somewhere and they sit down at their computer and bring up the screen, they're disappointed to find no Learnlink. They wish they could settle for nothing less. That has to be true of their attitudes toward the "why" questions, toward being inquiry driven. It has to be true in the demand to consider right and wrong, not just what's expedient. That has to be true in their insistence on valuing diversity.

### **"Contributing Excellence"**

The vision statement also commits us to being courageous leaders, and to do so through collaboration. This is an odd combination—leading, or competing, by collaborating. Between the lines of our vision statement is something I'd like to explore with you this evening, and that's the notion of excellence as it has to do with competing and transforming the world. Our vision is something we're working toward, but there are some things we can do day by day. One of the first things we can do is to be clear about the kind of excellence we want to practice. We want to practice a meaningful excellence, a contributing excellence, and I'd like you to work with me on that phrase for just a moment: "contributing excellence." There are some other kinds of excellence, inferior kinds of excellence. Contributing excellence advances whatever it touches. It changes the way other people think. It changes the way other people do things. Other kinds of excellence, like competitive excellence, are fine, but one can be a competitive winner, exhibit competitive excellence, and still fall short of contributing excellence.

My favorite example of this distinction is Dick Fosbury. It was the 1968 Olympics, and Dick Fosbury was the high jumper who broke all the rules. He ran up to the bar like everybody else, but instead of going over the bar forward, the way most of us were taught in high school, he went over the bar backwards. It was humorous to watch. People called it the "Fosbury flop." Now it turns out that he was competitively excellent. He won the gold medal. But more important is that, to this day, everybody goes over the bar using the Fosbury flop. He changed the way other people think, the way other people do things. That is contributing excellence.

At Emory we've got to practice contributing excellence, and I think we can practice it at every level with every constituency. Think at the individual level. We can

practice contributing excellence by recognizing that individual interactions between friends and colleagues represent an opportunity for mentorship—not just one-ups-manship, but an opportunity to change each other, if only by example. We can practice this kind of contributing excellence by recognizing the power and the responsibility of the teacher in the classroom to change the way students think and to change what they do, what they learn and how they learn. We can practice this contributing excellence by recognizing the difference between mere employment and vocation. Vocation is what we're *called* to do. We practice contributing excellence when we recognize the difference between being called to community rather than to mere coexistence. We practice contributing excellence when we recognize the difference being called to pursue valuable research and not just lucrative research; when we're called to professionalism in our staff roles and not just adequacy; or when we're called to craftsmanship in the things we do in facilities and grounds, and not just superficial expediency; when we're called to provide wellness in health, not just survival. I think contributing excellence can be owned and must be owned at all levels at Emory, and it will advance us.

### **Importance of Partnerships**

I want to give one other example. Contributing excellence can be practiced also in recognizing the importance of partnership. Partnership on campus is this business of helping Emory to move from the old model of being a *multi*-versity to being a true *uni*versity. You've heard me say this before. Let me remind you that the multi-versity is for us the misguided notion that we can be a great institution simply by growing tall silos—you know, a silo in medicine and a silo in arts and sciences and a silo in athletics and a silo in public health. And then, simply because we all occupy roughly the same space and all park in the same parking garage, we call ourselves a university. No, there are very, very few examples of a successful multi-versity. Probably Harvard is a marvelous multi-versity. But that model is not and can't be Emory's model. Emory's model has to be one of university.

Now I'm not talking about shattering and tearing down the silos. Quite frankly, I'm talking about making sure our silos can get ever taller, because they buttress and bridge each other. Because of this connectedness, we can build our silos higher. Developing off-campus partnerships means deepening the sorts of relationships we already have with places like Georgia Tech and the CDC and Grady Hospital and the V. A. Medical Center. It means deepening our relationships with the Druid Hills community and with the City of Atlanta, and even with our own Carter Center. It also means seeking new partnerships to help buttress what we're trying to do. And, if we're going to be honest about this, it means critically evaluating the benefit of continuing in some of the nonproductive partnerships we have.

Now clearly Emory must exercise this meaningful, this contributing, excellence today and every day, even as it pursues its vision for tomorrow. In other words, let's not wait for tomorrow.

### **Questions Needing Answers**

Speaking of not waiting for tomorrow, there are other things we can be doing and will be doing in the coming year, and that's what I'd like to touch on next. In general, what we will be doing and are doing now is seeking to answer three questions: Who are we? Where can we contribute through our courageous leadership? And how can we make all this happen? The answers to these questions may evoke some ugly thoughts at first, in that they seem to talk about the commercialization of Emory. That is not at all what I'm advocating, but it's important to borrow some language from the commercial sector sometimes. Answering that first question, who are we, is an exercise that our commercial counterparts would call "branding." I like the way Johnnie Ray defines that. He says branding isn't about commercial logos or name recognition based on a color scheme or a jingle, but real branding is about a promise. When people say, I graduated from Emory, I want to work for you, is there an inherent promise heard by the potential employer? The name Emory says something about quality, something about values, something about character and integrity. Have we articulated that clearly? Or when we

look to recruit high school students, what does the name Emory mean? What does it mean about being a destination community?

The second question is, where can we contribute? There's only a finite amount of energy and resources in the universe. So it is important that we pick places where we can have impact with our finite sources. In what places is Emory best positioned to contribute its scholarship and its research. How can Emory best make a difference as a special community among the major research universities? What should Emory's local impact be, and what should Emory's international impact be? How, for example, should we be steered by the resources available to us in the Carter Center? How can we contribute?

The third question is, how can we get to where we're going? Most of you are aware, because many of you have already begun to participate in it, that we are in strategic planning. We've established this vision statement. Now what will be the highways that will move us toward that? That's one of the ways we will answer how. Master planning for our campus community is another one of those "hows." What is the optimum use of the physical resources we have? What additional facilities do we need? What modifications do we need to make to our existing facilities? And the third answer to how we are going to reach our vision is that we must get the resources to move forward. How are we going to reassess the available resources we have now to get started on a strategic plan, and what sort of campaign for more resources will take place? At this time next year we hope to be very clear about the potential magnitude of a financial campaign and a timetable to help sustain our progress.

The details of the answers to these three questions must be sought collectively. Where Emory needs to go, up an ever-steepening slope, dictates that we cannot get there by dragging any part of our community against their will. Instead, our clarity of direction and purpose must be understood and owned by everybody. Therefore, these planning processes that we're talking about are, must be, and always will be open and inclusive, in order to sweep in and insure the greatest degree of ownership.

## Reaching Constituencies

Now let me be even more specific about what I think needs to be done, by looking at three constituencies; our faculty, our staff, and our students. Let's start with the faculty. What are the things that need to happen to insure that Emory will be a destination university and show courageous leadership in its scholarship and in its research? First, we need recruiting packages to make sure we're able to continue to bring top faculty here. We should examine internal initiative funds in order to restart or boost faculty already here. We have to be certain that we have competitive salaries, that we have up-to-date classrooms, laboratories, and libraries. We must be serious and intentional about professional development, as Earl Lewis very recently said—not just the development that brings the assistant professor to the rank of associate with tenure and then full professor, but beyond that, getting people to chaired professorships and national awards and memberships in the national academies.

For our staff, to be this destination university we're talking about, to have the kind of community that we want, we need to be certain that we offer fair pay, that we have creative means to thank and reward excellence in performance, that we have benefits that assure that Emory is a caring employer.

For students, we need to make Emory more visible. It's time to raise awareness of Emory. Emory needs to be more financially accessible, and we need to evaluate our financial aid in strategic and compassionate ways. And, of course, fund raising will give us additional flexibility to do that.

For all of our constituencies—faculty, staff, students, and alums—we need to understand and remind ourselves always that community is not a static condition. It's not something that one accomplishes or achieves. Community is about relationships between people. Nobody says in a relationship between people, we've achieved marriage, or we've achieved friendship. Those relationships require constant energy and continuous input for them to be successful, and the same is true for community. We must be in a *practice* of community. Statistically, we are a diverse collection of people, but we have work to do to become a diverse *community* of people.

Let me say a few more words about our students before closing. Those students, especially those freshmen in the audience this evening, are fully aware, and the rest of you should be aware, that this will be the first freshman class admitted to Emory that is required to be on campus through its sophomore year. The students who will enjoy the so-called “sophomore experience” will benefit from the sort of intensive programming that we already give to our freshmen. And for that, the sophomore experience is being developed this year.

Other enriching programs are planned. The Religious Life Center will encourage authentic practice of the several religious traditions we have on campus. It will also allow for spiritual exploration in an authentic way within our great diversity.

### **Celebrating Community**

Moving from spirit to tradition, I can't tell you how many alums and students come to me and say, what can we do to work on tradition, on community spirit—how many ball teams can we add? Indeed, spirit and tradition will have something to do with athletics, but there are other things at Emory around which we can build spirit and tradition. We need to pay attention to those. We need to have somebody who wakes up every day and does that. We've asked Gary Hauk to accept a new role as vice president and deputy to the president, and part of his responsibility now is to get up every morning and consider tradition, consider what it means to build spirit as a community.

And as a community we need to learn a little better to celebrate and support effort and accomplishment. Our faculty win numerous awards, for instance. We need to acknowledge those things and celebrate them. We need to celebrate around the great successes of our athletic program. In fact, Betsy Stephenson, our new athletic director, intends to help do that. We need always to engage and debate easily over issues. On this point, I applaud the SGA for planning the Classroom on the Quad this week. We need to do more of this in more meaningful ways, and we will.

Finally I would like to challenge us to develop more of a mentoring culture. Mentoring, at least as it has evolved in modern vernacular, conveys the sense that the mentor has some ownership of the success of the one being mentored. What an interesting community it will be when we have not just faculty mentoring graduate students and post-docs, and post-docs mentoring seniors, but when we have seniors mentoring freshmen. There's a lot we can learn from our Oxford campus about a mentoring tradition.

In summary, Emory finds itself, I believe, very well positioned in a very favorable environment: well positioned to grow further to be fully Emory; well positioned to stretch beyond the traditional expectations for Emory. Emory has adopted a vision statement that reflects our position and our opportunity. It is formulating a strategic plan to advance us toward that vision. It is scouring existing revenue and resources to be able to launch the plan without delay, and it is putting together an Office of Development and University Relations in anticipation of a campaign to sustain our strategic plan. And all of this, of course, is in addition to the ongoing activities where, every day, we practice contributing excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, health care, and social action.

### **Open and Respectful Communication**

In closing, I want to mention one final concern. I'm enthusiastic about the future of Emory. I hope that shows. But I have a concern. Just about everything I've talked about—bridging silos, working in partnerships, developing community—has at its root the need for a better practice of communications in our community and on our campus. In fact, I would go so far to say that effective communication will be the key to Emory's accelerated success. There's a lot of effort wasted here in constraint, in people keeping themselves from communicating. And there's also a lot of energy wasted on unnecessary outrage and response to that outrage. I think it comes from a confusion about the appropriate roles of politeness, civility, and respect.

Politeness and civility are essential, of course. They are essential to academic freedom, because if I am not sufficiently civil or polite, and I run you out of the room, I

have cut off communication. And I have limited my own academic freedom as well as yours. So I respect politeness and civility.

But when politeness and civility come from some artificial standard of social correctness, it can get in the way. There is an artificial threshold we set for ourselves, that unless my irritation level exceeds this threshold, I won't tell you how I honestly feel. But boy, when it does exceed that threshold, the first time you hear from me will be in a shout of outrage rather than in an argument or discussion. I told a group the other day that in this first year of my presidency, I probably heard the word "outrage" more times than I had in any other year in my life. And there were a lot of issues. We had issues regarding racist vocabulary, academic freedom, political balance, and even nationalism and Zionism. "I'm outraged," people would say. I would say, why didn't you talk to me when you were just "angry"?

What I'm appealing for is an open and respectful communication. In fact, I would suggest that there is a disrespect if I fail to communicate with you simply because I have this artificially raised threshold of social correctness or civility

With open and respectful communication, with courageous, risk-taking leadership at all levels of the university, with the resources that Emory is already blessed with and will secure in campaign activity, we as a community really have very few excuses for not achieving our vision, for not practicing contributing excellence and leadership.

It's been a wonderful first year for me. I have learned so much. You have been patient instructors and teachers, and I look forward to another exciting year ahead working with you. Thank you for being Emory. Thank you for your willingness to move forward in these directions. I pledge to you my very best and the very best of the administration to work with you to help pursue our vision through these important steps and in the coming year. Thank you all for coming this evening.

### Questions and Answers

**Q:** Hi, President Wagner. I'm Jamar Brown, a junior in the college and vice president of the Student Government Association. The SGA very generally

serves as a liaison between the students and the administration to inform the administration about the student perspective. What are some ways that the SGA and students generally—can help Emory become a destination university?

Wagner

There is a range of roles. In fact, it would be an interesting challenge for the SGA to catalog all of them, but let's take just a few of them. First of all, the students are really the ones in the front lines. They can give us feedback on the effectiveness of learning here. You know, there certainly is a difference between great presentation and learning. Some would say there's a difference between teaching and learning. Certainly there's a difference between lecturing and learning. Feedback from our students would help us assure better learning.

We have begun to use some survey instruments on the kind of community we have here. We've joined with Princeton and five other universities to poll students about racial climate and about the campus climate in general. We want these data to get a baseline of where Emory's state of community is. We've been disappointed, very frankly, in the response to that survey and will be sending out a reminder letter. So one of the things SGA can do is to remind our students that they are a part of this, just as the premise of your question said, and that we do need to hear back from them.

I think also of some of the extracurricular things that go on here—not just social but extracurricular academic programs that can be given priority by the SGA. You can use the vision statement in SGA as the President's Cabinet uses the vision statement. When we make a move, or when somebody proposes a good idea, we measure it against the vision statement about being a destination and ask whether it's a good idea, whether it's not just "good enough," but "great." Is it one that really advances us toward being the kind of university we want to be? Actively rolling up your sleeves to use the vision statement and encouraging student feedback, particularly when we're trying to take the temperature of the community, would be some terrific roles for the SGA.

**Q:** My name is Zoe Donaldson. I'm a second-year graduate student in the neuroscience program, and I was very pleased to hear that you want to see more recognition of our faculty who have received awards. I would ask that you extend that to students as well. Within our program at least two students have been awarded very prestigious national awards in the last year, and one of the things that I've done is institute the *Neuroscience Graduate Program Newsletter* to publicize such awards. But my question for you is on a larger scale: what forums do you think we should be using as a community to recognize people who have won awards?

**Wagner**

Your point is very well taken. We should be recognizing anyone in our community who brings distinction to Emory. We held up the staff when they received that prestigious national award last spring in Facilities Management. We certainly should hold up the students. We should take full advantage of the existing media, the *Emory Report*, *Emory Wheel*, the website, and that sort of thing. But I would also like to see celebration. There are some things singular enough that we should celebrate them. When very special fellowships or scholarships or post-docs are won by our students, our departments, and divisions should be encouraged to host parties. And of course as our faculty gain admission into the Institute of Medicine, the National Academy of Sciences, and so on, we should have celebrations around those.

But you know, there are other things that don't happen that frequently that we still can celebrate. In Europe there is an old tradition that when faculty get promoted to full professor, they give an inaugural professorial lecture. It's cap and gown stuff, given at the level of *National Geographic* or *Nova*, so that the general public can understand it. These ceremonies that honor scholarship provide an opportunity to bring people together to celebrate our successes. I'd

like to see us think creatively about these things. I'm not sure Emory can be accused of celebrating too much just yet.

**Q:** President Wagner, Eric Rangus from Public Affairs, and I am writing this down, sir. You mentioned in your speech that one of the faculty goals is professional development, but you did not say professional development was a goal for staff. I have only anecdotal information about this, but one issue is internal promotion. Some staff people say that it is very difficult to be promoted to another job at Emory. I'm just curious, is something like this related to professional development, or do you have any other comments on it?

**Wagner**

I do. Remember what we mean by being a destination university. When we talk about being a destination university attracting top faculty, top researchers, and top students who make Emory their first choice, we also want really to get to the place where Emory jobs and the Emory paycheck are coveted by staff. We talk about attracting, but of course retention is also a measure of what it means to be a destination university. Now we don't want to retain students for too many years, but everybody else we want to retain. Very integrally linked with what it will mean to be a destination university for staff will be programs for professional development. Our Human Resources Division has had those discussions. To be honest with you, however, I don't know enough about the retention and development programs already in place. So I'll go back and ask those questions.

**Q:** I'm Bruce Knauff, Directory of Emory College's Institute for Comparative and International Studies. One thing that you didn't really mention was the Board of Trustees, and I was wondering in terms of your plans for the University and also contributing excellence, what role you see the Board of Trustees taking now, and what you think its role could, should, and will be in relation to the

comprehensive campaign and the other dimensions of really making Emory a destination university.

### Wagner

Thank you. You're right that the trustees are an important constituency. I'm very encouraged by our trustees. I'm encouraged in the following way. They have adopted our vision; they see the vision for the University. They also see that to achieve that vision, their horizons need to change, and they are changing their horizons. They are paying more attention to what it means not just to be a regional university.

I'll share something with you about campaign notions that goes back to the period when I interviewed here. A group of trustees interviewing me asked what I thought the trustee role would be in moving forward, because this was important in their thinking about a new president. They all said, we need to go that next step and many steps thereafter. I said, well, it seems to be the case that in universities with successful campaigns, the trustees have either given or gotten a third of the campaign goal. So we can do the math—on a \$1.5 billion goal, that's \$500 million. And I asked, can you do that? They went around the room, and it was great—they were just indignant that I would even ask that question, because of course we can do it they said, and here's why, here's why, here's why. And they got around to the end of the table and one of the trustees said, but of course you have to give us a good reason to do this. We have to have a vision that we believe, we have to have a strategic plan that we believe is sound, and, yep, then we will certainly help put gas in the car to go down that highway toward the vision statement. I'm feeling very good about that.

**Q:** Hi, President Wagner. I'm Jaclyn Barbarow, the editor of the *Emory Voice*, which, as you know, is what hopefully will soon be Emory's queer student newspaper. This could be a yes or no question, so I'm going to tack a "why" or

“why not” onto it. When you alluded to partnerships that may need to be re-evaluated, are you including the Druid Hills Golf Club on that list?

Wagner

No, because there's not a partnership that exists with the Druid Hills Golf Club. For those of you who don't follow local issues, an important segment of our community has raised concerns that the Druid Hills Golf Club is not as progressive as Emory is about the sort of benefits that it offers domestic partners, including homosexual domestic partners. The question directed to me and to the President's Office is, what can Emory do to push this? There are Emory administrators and Emory faculty members who belong to the Druid Hills Golf Club, but all of the monies paid by our faculty and our administrators to belong to the club or any other club is their own private money. Now, just to be really transparent about this, in recruiting packages for some of our executives, there is an upfront allowance given with the intention that that allowance would be used to join a business club, a country club, an entertainment club. But the decision of which club to join is entirely theirs, and there's no check written by Emory University to the Piedmont Driving Club or the Commerce Club or the Druid Hills Golf Club. The one exception I want to tell you about is me. Druid Hills offers the University president a complimentary membership. That means that the president does not have to pay the initiation fee, but I do personally pay the dues.

The issue of same sex privileges arose there last November. The club has been challenged, because at this time it does not offer exactly the same benefits for domestic partners and designated partners as it does for married partners. So young couples who decide not to be married do not have the inheritance privilege. Geriatric couples who don't want to get married for tax and inheritance reasons similarly are denied inheritance privileges. If one is a member and dies, the designated partner does not inherit the membership. It seems to me the unfairness comes from the fact that the young heterosexual couple and the old

heterosexual couple could get married if they wanted to, but the laws of this state don't allow homosexual couples to be married.

When the issue emerged, I ceased using my membership. I continued paying dues last November but did not use the club. I had two conversations with the president of the club, I spoke with the aggrieved parties, I spoke with the President's Commission on LGBT concerns. I resumed using the club in August. In fact, the complainants also use the club and enjoy it and intend to continue using the club. They see it as a good and fairly progressive club among other clubs in the region, but they see that it could be much better if it adopted the sort of policies that Emory has. But there really is not a partnership there. There are some Emory events that take place there, but there is no special relationship between Druid Hills Golf Club and Emory, except for the president's complimentary membership.

**Q:** My name is Andrea Casson and I'm an alum of the College and the business school. When you talk about community, I think of our extended community. We're fortunate in Atlanta to have a very high, if not uniquely high, concentration of Fortune 500 businesses, and of course the small businesses that grow up around those. Do you have any plans to incorporate our business community in your vision, understanding that these businesses employ our graduates?

**Wagner**

Absolutely. But we're not going to get to where we're going so long as we keep calling it "my vision." It's Emory's vision. And if it doesn't become Emory's vision, we'd better find one that can.

Your point is very well taken. Coincidentally, we've been interviewing candidates for the business school dean. One of the criteria I talk to each of the candidates about is partnerships with business. You may remember that it was a year ago in November, a year ago next month, that the *Wall Street Journal*

identified the Goizueta School as a “hidden gem.” One of the “dings” they had on the Goizueta School is that it had not yet taken full advantage of forming partnerships with local corporations. So one of the interview questions is, what are your plans, what is your history, have you been able to do this? I think that is probably one of the most logical entry points to business partnerships.

Now other entry points are through technology transfer and intellectual property management. Emory is fortunate in having an aggressive program of commercializing pharmaceuticals and some medical appliances, and we are now in the top ten universities in the nation for royalty return and license return.

A third way of engaging business is through my membership on the board of the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. There we’re working on common issues—for example, transportation. So we’re partnering in those ways as well. But I think I will look especially to our new dean of the Goizueta School to help lead us in more partnership.

**Q:** George Jones, Biology. Jim, I hope you will allow me the luxury of folding two questions into one, but they are related. The first is, can you give us some idea of what your own priorities are for the comprehensive campaign? And can you also tell us a little bit about how you intend to connect the strategic planning process to setting priorities for the comprehensive campaign?

### Wagner

Thanks, George. That’s a great question. Yes, I think I can give you some sense of that. You’ve caught the language, and I thank you for that: “comprehensive financial campaign.” Many universities are launching, or are in the midst of, “capital campaigns.” We’re playing a word game for the following reason. Most people associate the words “capital campaign” with bricks and mortar and facilities. But there’s intellectual capital, and there are other kinds of capital. We’ve chosen, George, to use the little play on words, to use comprehensive, because programs must be our priority.

And how will those programs manifest themselves in the campaign? In endowed professorships, in endowed scholarship money and endowed fellowship money, in endowed operating funds for units that don't have tuition income or research, like the library or some of our centers. Now in that effort of endowing programs and making those our top priority in the comprehensive campaign, it will necessarily be the case, that to advance the program, you know, by golly we're going to need to renovate such and such a wing or build such and such a building. It's not that our campaign will be devoid of raising money for buildings, but they will be an offshoot directly linked to the programs that we're raising money for.

And I think now you can see where I'm going to the second part of your question. Those programs—what is it that Emory is going to put on the top of the heap? Is it internationalization in the Third World, is it aging, is it a rekindling of liberal arts and humanities. When we start identifying those programs, then we'll know what endowed professorships, scholarships, fellowships, etc., to raise, and then we will determine what kind of construction would need to take place.

**Q:** President Wagner, I'm Jan Gleason, from Public Affairs. I read through the thirteen opportunity committee reports that are on the strategic planning website, and one thing that really struck me was when someone said, Emory is too nice to be great, because to be great you've got to have edginess. It kind of made me think, well maybe that means you've got to make hard decisions. I'm wondering if you took that comment in the same way, and if you think it meant hard decisions, what are some of the hard decisions you think Emory needs to make?

**Wagner**

You know, there were two similar phrases that found their way into the first draft of the research plan that was under development during the time I was being recruited. One line was that Emory is too good to be great. The second line

was that Emory in its research programs must always be pursuing valuable research, and not just lucrative research. In other words, it must be good.

Jan, I reject the notion that goodness and greatness are incompatible. That's why in our vision statement, the first two elements emphasize being inquiry driven and ethically engaged. Emory has the opportunity, it seems to me, to show that good guys can finish first. Twentieth is where we are ranked out of what, 3,941 institutions? That's not bad, but we're not yet fully Emory, and I think fully Emory can be better.

Having said that, it takes hard decisions to do good. Hard decision-making isn't just relegated to that realm of leadership that's about cutting and slashing and burning and clawing your way to the top. I'd like to suggest to you some of the hard decisions we've made about challenges to our community with regard to racism, with regard to Mary Robinson speaking at our commencement, with regard to how we've addressed Mike Mandl's illness and recovery. Those were hard decisions. And we'll have other hard decisions to make. Should we really continue to support what we do in aging and aging research at Wesley Woods, even though it perennially loses money? It's a hard decision. And the answer is yes, we should. And because we do so, we are a leader. We're a big-time leader. When this country wakes up to the fact all of us are aging and starts putting money into care for the aging, we'll be out in front and should be the very first to be fueled.

So Jan, I hear what you're saying. I hope that that kind of phrase isn't offered as an expression of timidity, that maybe we don't want to try to be great as an excuse: "we're just too good to be great." I hope, instead, that we turn that around and understand that we will be great because we're good. I think we can.

I'm very excited, and I'll tell you what—that's really the reason I came last year. It wasn't a good year for me to move and to leave Debbie and our daughter in Cleveland. In fact, I told the search committee no, for that very reason. And then this is what got under my skin. The goodness and greatness. Or, as Jim Laney used to say, educating the mind and the heart. There's something really

special about a place that can do that, a place that's a major research university. So I'm sorry to just attack the premise of your question without really answering, but that's what I've done. You and George can talk to me later.

**Q:** Good evening, Mr. President. This is my first town hall meeting, so if I ask a trite question, excuse me. I'm a sophomore advisor in Longstreet Hall, one of the freshman halls. You talk very passionately about building a community here at Emory. I don't know who to attribute the second-year experience to, the idea and implementation of the idea, but I would have to say unfortunately I've had more than one freshman upset about the sophomore experience. I'm wondering what you can tell me, so I can remedy their worries, because I try to tell them that this is about building community and keeping them on campus and really having the tradition here at Emory. I'm wondering if you could supplement that.

### Wagner

Wow. I think you told them the right things. You know, there's such a desire, particularly early on, for freshmen to exercise freedom. "I'm free, I don't have rules, I don't have to stay here next year if I don't want to, and I'd just as soon not be here this year." In the end you probably know we shiver most violently in the first two weeks of each academic year, as freshmen discover the balance between freedom and responsibility and very sadly often suffer the consequence of irresponsible exercise of freedom.

I'm not sure I can tell you more than you've said. It is about building community. It turns out that the majority of our sophomores actually do stay on campus. The difference will be only about 400 students out of more than 1200. Our notion is to help demonstrate community more fully in the first two years with these sorts of policies and then to entice community beyond that in the second two years with spaces like the Clairmont Campus and with programs for juniors and seniors. I think you're answering exactly right. There's no magic thing that you haven't considered. It really isn't about more money. In fact, it will be just about cost-neutral for us, because we do need to beef up some of the dining

facilities and what-not to do that. It really is for the sake of community. Most of our freshmen have a wonderful freshman experience and then just turn loose in sophomore year and land on their feet somehow, but without the same level of excitement about being in a community. We think it's very, very valuable for our students, as part of the educational experience, to continue to feel that sense of community.

Thank you all for your questions. My e-mail address is just wagner@emory.edu. Students, you know there is a weekly student office hour. We break it up into three 20-minute segments, so you've got to get your thoughts in really crisp order. But every week we've got time to listen to students. So let's please have this feedback. I look forward to coming back to you next year. It's valuable to talk about our future and not just retrospectively about our past. Jimin, thank you for introducing me and for hosting this evening, and thank you all for coming.