

VISION IN ACTION:
LEAD ONSM

A REPORT TO
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

APRIL 2019



Background

Following a retreat in 2017, the Trustees charged the Chancellor to refresh the *Vision in Action* planning process by implementing a new phase of planning titled “*Vision in Action: Lead On.*” Four themes were defined for consideration by the campus community. Simplified, these themes challenged us to:

1. Improve the Academic Profile of the university
2. Enhance the University Endowment
3. Improve the Culture of the Campus in a way that will both inspire our own community and enhance the external perceptions of that community
4. Elevate the Experiences of the Workforce – herein broadly defined to include students, staff and faculty

The response by the TCU community, while not quite a cast of thousands, did involve several hundred folks from the various constituencies of the university. Teams considered each of the four themes and presented their findings in the spring of 2018.

Subsequently the four reports have been studied by a committee charged with delivering a report to the Board of Trustees at their April 2019 meeting. This is that report.

PRELUDE

The Essential TCU

This university has always been driven by the enthusiasm of those who study and work here and the fulsome financial support of those who believe in the mission of higher education and the specific role of TCU in that mission. This sturdy enthusiasm has meant that the university has often punched above its weight – the little engine that could.

Planning in this century has built on the foundations of yesteryear. The TCU campus has grown in both size and splendor. New buildings sprout from the campus with such speed that older alumni may get lost on campus. Academic and athletic successes mount and we have achieved prime destination status for an increasing number of both students and faculty.

However, increasing in size and complexity creates risks of which we must be aware. Two themes will assume great importance in the coming years. First, how we respond to the changing, increasingly diverse, demographics of the nation and in particular Texas, will require sustained strategic thought and action. Secondly, we must counter changing public

and political perceptions of higher education. Many, of various political persuasions, question the relevance, cost and, especially recently, basic fairness of a university education. Regulations may be looming in the mist!

The great driving force of TCU has been the morale of those who work and study here. TCU has always been a place where decency has been a paramount value. Decency and high morale thrive best when camaraderie and good humor are constant companions. Maintaining a warm sense of community requires shared aspirational thought and action in which all can find common cause. TCU should avoid the descent into bureaucracy.

There is no cause to extract gloom from the preceding observations – but there is a need for sustained commitment to exciting ideas and bright unifying actions.

This report presents some of those ideas and suggests pertinent actions. There is, of course, a price tag. Budget sagacity has always been a feature of planning at TCU. Put simply, we have always “cut our coat according to our cloth.” Our conservative (small “c”) stewardship has permitted us to expand our operations in a consistent and integrated way, avoiding dyspeptic moments of budget frenzy.

This strategic approach has revolved around the simple idea that on a rising tide all ships float upwards. Thus, we can mark academic and athletic successes, an extraordinary improvement in facilities, a remarkable emphasis on the quality of the experiences that we offer to our students and, for our workforce, a commitment to enhancement of reward that has not faltered even during a climate of dismal national finances. At the same time, we have been cognizant of the challenges afforded to us by the dramatic and diverse demographic changes that are taking place in the nation and world. We are and will continue to respond to these changes with vigor.

Against this background we offer many recommendations. They come with a variety of price tags and timelines for implementation. Some have a greater priority, or perhaps a greater sense of urgency than others. None of the recommendations is revolutionary, but many are exciting and all, we believe, will improve the essence of this great university. It is a time for this university to be both brave and wise.

GOAL 1

Strengthen the Academic Profile and Reputation of TCU

The academic reputation of the university is of great, perhaps critical, importance in determining whether undergraduate and graduate students, in consultation with parents and counselors, choose to come to us. Similarly, it influences faculty when they make a career covenant. Clearly, the Academic Profile is a key component of a value proposition that is absolutely fundamental to the success of the university. Although it is in part a perception (and thus subject to manipulation), the reality is that, in the end, decisions about commitment to the university, be it by students, faculty, external grant awards or philanthropic support, generally are based on the strength of the Academic Profile.

What, then, is the Academic Profile of a university? In essence, it is a measure of the value, both real and perceived, of the academic enterprises that are supported by the university. In other words, it is a measure of the investment (broadly defined) that the university makes in its academic mission, combined with the value of its achievement. If a university wishes to pursue an upward trajectory in the national education debate, it will endeavor to improve its Academic Profile.

Simple quantitative components of the Academic Profile include questions such as:

- How many undergraduate students attend TCU?
- What is their choice of major?
- Similarly, how many graduate students attend TCU and what is their choice of program?
- What are the courses and majors offered at TCU?
- What are the postgraduate offerings of the university?
- How many faculty are employed by the university and in which disciplines are they found?
- Importantly, what are the vectors of change for all of the above?

Beyond these and other bland numerical questions, there is another series of questions that generate qualitative assessment. For example:

- What is the academic pedigree of the students?
- What is the academic pedigree of the faculty?
- What is the quality and quantity of instruction (broadly defined)?
- What is the quality and quantity of scholarship and creativity (broadly defined)?

- How well does the symbiosis between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs support the academic mission?
- What is the value of a TCU degree, (a question that can be addressed from several perspectives)?

The answers to these and many similar questions, except perhaps the last one, can easily be obtained from various university fact books; depending on your purpose, this data may be exciting reading.

However, an even more exciting activity is to consider ways by which the totality of the profile can be strengthened, and the reputation of the university thereby enhanced. The analogy to polishing a diamond to its sparkling full capacity is appropriate here; **it is important to realize that, in the long view, the Academic Profile is the most true and important component of the front door of the university.**

On this assumption, more questions rise to the top of the heap. How much does TCU value its Academic Profile and what is its intellectual and financial commitment to improvement? More philosophically perhaps, how well does the university enable students, faculty and staff achieve their potential in the TCU environment? What is the rate and direction of programmatic growth? Above all, WHY should students and faculty invest their time at TCU?

Part of the answer to the last question is to respond to the daunting list of challenges that our students, and the faculty and staff who teach them, will face in the future. The following list from VIA: Academy of Tomorrow is pertinent:

- An inclusive understanding and appreciation of each other
- A profound understanding of global geography, economics and politics
- A comprehension of science and technology
- An understanding of the dynamics of society
- An understanding of limits and sustainability
- A knowledge of where to acquire trustworthy data in order to be voices of integrity
- A knowledge of where to acquire trustworthy data in order to be voices of integrity
- A deep understanding of their own potential and of their need for contemplative space
- A love of the arts - music, dance, theatre, the spoken and written word

Truth to tell, the Academic Profile of TCU, as compared with national norms, is of upper middle

rank. Certainly, there are students, programs and professors of great brilliance on this campus; conversely, there are areas that need strengthening. That is where we go in the next section of the report. Many of the recommendations are not radical – there is not a widespread sense that the Academic Mission of the university is “broken” – far from the case. However, there are many ways in which the academic enterprise can run more smoothly and function more nimbly in its response to the future.

Recommendations

- **Support and preserve the teacher-scholar model.** TCU views teaching and scholarship as a dynamic, symbiotic interchange in which excellence in each improves both. Both are important in-and-of themselves, but the essence of TCU academic culture is founded on the premise that they are complementary. We recognize that our students benefit strongly from interacting with faculty who actively engage with the world through scholarly activity. We also recognize that a healthy university is a place where our creative scholars can glory in their achievements. The teacher-scholar model is, therefore, that part of our culture of which we are most proud, enabling us to integrate our scholarly activity, our students and our service to society at large. While the teacher-scholar model encompasses all faculty, in practice, it varies by discipline, career stage and the needs of the academic unit.
 - Develop an inclusive definition of the teacher-scholar model through collaborative efforts of the provost, deans and faculty senate
 - Address issues related to faculty teaching, administration, and service loads to provide consistency with the vision of the teacher-scholar model
 - Build on the teacher-scholar cultural vision, expand on ways to reward TCU teacher-scholars and enhance the marketing of TCU scholarship and creativity
 - Allocate budgets and solicit more resources for grants for research and creativity as it relates to the teacher-scholar vision
- **Foster a diverse and inclusive university for all**
 - Recruit and retain more culturally diverse students, faculty and staff
 - Increase dedicated resources focused on diversity, equity and inclusiveness (DEI)
 - Increase the number of endowed student scholarships, particularly for recruiting students with need
 - Invest in our foundation with testing-optional admissions

- Create a university-wide testing center
- Facilitate consistent approaches to cultural and global awareness
- Provide faculty training to foster an inclusive learning environment
- **Promote academic excellence and elevate TCU's academic profile and reputation through focused and dynamic academic planning**
 - Leverage the Medical School and establish a plan to integrate and connect the Medical School with other disciplines
 - Communicate and educate the campus community on the progress and activities of the Medical School
 - Pursue a long-term academic strategic plan driven by qualitative and quantitative data whereby the university can base its decisions to support, expand or create new academic programs
 - Build a new university-wide data warehouse with accessible dashboards whereby quantitative and qualitative data can guide goal setting, program adjustment and graduate program growth
 - Provide resources and distribute them in a manner that allows prestigious programs to develop and continue to flourish
 - Evaluate the progress of the university by comparing specific programs at TCU to specific aspirant programs, rather than aspirant universities
 - Reduce reliance on adjunct and contingent faculty by increasing the number of full-time faculty
 - Enhance resources and infrastructure for faculty scholarship and creative activity
 - Increase staff support to allow faculty to prioritize teaching and scholarship
 - Where appropriate, introduce college-specific bachelor's degree majors that are academically more robust than the current Bachelor of General Studies degree
 - Continue to build momentum by resource allocation to prepare students to compete for national awards of distinction
- **Provide a highly engaging and inclusive TCU student experience**
 - Enhance the classroom experience by hiring more full-time faculty to achieve optimal class sizes in all schools/colleges

- Create more office and classroom space to support additional faculty and smaller class sizes
 - Reimagine and redesign academic advising
 - Increase participation in high-impact educational practices
 - Create TCU Summer Bridge programs
 - Increase course offerings in the 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. time period while ensuring that classes required for majors are available in this time period
 - Improve research and mentorship incentives at TCU for undergraduate and graduate students
 - Continue to enhance graduate studies through growth of selective programs
 - Plan to fund more cross and interdisciplinary minors and projects
 - Create opportunities for distinction by increasing interdisciplinary courses and collaborations
 - Remain competitive in the Big 12 and position TCU in the upper echelon of athletic prominence as a means of leveraging and elevating academic prominence
- **Encourage student success through an integrated and holistic student-support model**
 - Create a Student Success Center
 - Analyze the transfer admission processes to better predict student success
 - Identify and implement best practices for meeting the academic and co-curricular needs of transfer students and veterans
- **Recruit and retain a diverse world-class workforce**
 - Focus on organizational planning and development of our faculty and staff
 - Increase university-wide leadership training for all faculty and professional staff in succession planning
 - Improve career preparedness by actively encouraging all faculty and staff to seek professional-development opportunities
- **Tell the compelling stories of TCU and its students, faculty and staff**
 - Continue to leverage the academic achievements of each college to enhance TCU's academic reputation
 - Embed Marketing and Communication personnel across university colleges/schools and units who can manage academic storytelling

GOAL 2

Strengthen the Endowment

The Endowment: an essential bulwark that helps us to transcend mediocrity

Throughout the nearly 150-year history of the university, TCU has owed a very great deal to those who have invested their philanthropic resources in our great enterprise. Individual stories of generosity are legion and indeed help to define the deep character of the university. Many of the buildings that we enjoy and the programs that instruct carry the names of folk, great and small, who have trusted us to light the torch of knowledge for generations past, present and yet to come.

The stewards of this generosity are entrusted with more than just the management of resources. Their success is essential to the growth of our university and the financial emancipation of the budget from an excessive dependence on student tuition. The demographics of the future demand that we take serious thought on the nature, value and growth of the endowment in allowing us to support a balanced and academically distinguished academic enterprise.

Over the past twenty years or so, we have invested heavily in sundry buildings that have dramatically improved the landscape of the campus in both physical and metaphysical ways. First appearances do indeed count in helping to establish the attractiveness of our campus; there are undoubtedly more improvements and projects that will require our attention. Much of our fabric and operations are entailed and will require constant and consistent financial maintenance in the years to come.

In addition to the visual feast on display across so much of the campus, it is critical to our continuing success to ensure that the actions of the university highlight a vision that will excite us all. This quest, as espoused by the impressive goals of the current advancement campaign, emphasizes support in three distinct areas: scholarships, endowed faculty and programs.

Ever since the original VIA planning, the university has been concerned by the issue of decreasing high school graduation rates. That trend has accelerated since the great recession of 2008-2010 as more and more folk question both the cost and benefit of

higher education. In the years ahead, TCU will need to focus on the absolute necessity of attracting classes that are capable of sustaining the financial operations of the university. In tandem with this, it is essential that we build up the **scholarship** component of the endowment and thus enrich the diversity of the student body in a financially realistic way.

Within most academic circles, the greatest panache accorded to a university is the quality of the faculty present on the campus. At their best, **endowed faculty** can illuminate entire programs of scholarship; they can open nature's secrets; they can excite great young minds; they can have a catalytic effect on entire departments.

When all the dust has settled, the attraction of the university will depend upon the perceived and real value of the degrees that TCU awards. This is dependent on a combination of student success, faculty flair, first-rate facilities and prestigious programs. Deep financial support is essential if our various programs are to grow and meet their potential. The **Endowment of Programs** at department, college or school level can help to elevate our educational enterprise in so many ways and is a critical counterweight to possible budget shortfalls. It also frees imaginations, as evidenced by success of programs strengthened by the recent endowments of the Honors College, the College of Fine Arts, the Institute for Child Development and the Ralph Lowe Energy Management Program.

Recommendations

- **Demystify the endowment**
 - Enhance education and communication across the TCU community on the purposes, uses and mechanics of the endowment
 - Advancement and endowment leaders should update the Cabinet, Provost Council, Faculty Senate, Staff Assembly and Student Government once a year
 - Leverage the university's web presence with updated materials and easier access
 - Educate students and parents on how the endowment provides them with access to high quality education and opportunity
- **Build a culture of philanthropy to grow student scholarships and endowed faculty**
 - Increase funding for philanthropy to support research, scholarship and creative activities
 - Increase the number of endowed faculty positions, including setting a goal campus-wide for the optimum percentage of faculty on endowed lines

- **Foster a diverse and inclusive university for all**
 - Continue to attract a wider pool of trustees and donors, nationally and internationally, in line with the growing reputation and global aspirations of TCU
 - Increase endowed scholarship support to create a more ethnically, socio-economically, and geographically diverse student population that better prepares all students to relate to the global community in their lives and careers
- **Provide a highly engaging and inclusive TCU student experience**
 - Increase awareness of and access to funding for student participation in Study Abroad and other opportunities to enhance cultural and global awareness
 - Increase awareness of and access to funding for student participation in unpaid or low paying internships
- **Encourage student success through an integrated and holistic student-support model**
 - Increase funding for an integrated student-success model, inclusive of academic advising, career services and disability services
- **Tell the compelling stories of TCU and its students, faculty and staff**
 - Develop more vehicles to tell the story of endowed scholarships changing student's lives through opportunity and access to quality education
 - Educate the community on the nature of endowed positions
 - Increase recognition and spotlight on the institution's "celebrity" faculty and staff

GOAL 3

Strengthen the TCU Experience and Campus Culture

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are three concepts that currently excite strong passions

on the TCU campus. During the series of town hall meetings that addressed the four framing goals discussed in this report, each of the four meetings and subsequent reports emphasized DEI. This was particularly the case with Goal #3 which dealt with, amongst other things, the culture of the university.

While TCU, with its strong Christian heritage, has always promoted strong ethical values and principled secular behavior, the current passion is aligned with a national upsurge in concerns about the basic fairness of values held in this country. The ongoing national debate unites the dialogues of race and gender, with their themes of privilege, wealth disparity and unequal opportunity, in a way that is of particular appeal to young folk in higher education. It is important to recognize that the debate cuts across conventional academic boundaries and thus predicates a broad-based response by the university. The university, through direct action by the Chancellor, Cabinet members, Student Affairs staff and many faculty, has responded thoughtfully and strategically to the challenge.

In this report we have considered suggestions from all four thematic reports. One thing that should be emphasized is that DEI is a complex composite in which the three component words do not have equal value. Diversity is an attractive numerical concept no doubt, but it is but a precursor to Equity, which is itself a platform for Inclusion. **An inclusive TCU will be a place where all are welcome and no one is excluded on any rational basis – it will be a happy, healthy place with a deep soul.**

Recommendations

- **Foster a diverse and inclusive university for all**

- Every unit should implement a DEI Plan that aligns with the university's DEI Strategic Plan and guides that unit's efforts in diversity hiring, training, retention and inclusion
- Each college/school within the university should have both a Faculty Diversity Advocate and a diversity committee that guides college/school DEI efforts, including development and implementation of a college/school specific DEI plan
- Non-college units should have a diversity committee that guides DEI efforts, including development and implementation of a unit-specific DEI plan
- Increase participation at events that teach about other cultures and expand our students' thoughts and experiences
- Provide diversity, equity and inclusion training for faculty and staff such as: Faculty Bystander Intervention Program

- training, Safe/Brave Space Training and Culturally Responsive staff training
- Increase support for international and non-English speaking students and their families
- Better serve the needs of under-represented populations in the community by identifying additional program resources
- Promote volunteer and internship opportunities that emphasize culture and inclusion
- Create a student task force that includes a diverse group representing a rich variety of perspectives and is charged with advising the provost and academic deans on issues of culturally responsive teaching
- Utilize academic departments with culturally inclusive curricula as resources to support inclusion efforts with faculty
- Develop a TCU infrastructure and programmatic experiences that promote cultural connectedness and a welcoming campus climate for diverse populations
- Develop a comprehensive intentional dialogue program with adequate institutional resources (financial and staffing)
- Encourage diversity programming and inclusive practices of all student organizations, including fraternity and sorority life organizations

- **Provide a highly engaging and inclusive TCU student experience**

- Invest in engagement technology/software to publicize and organize events and activities in a more efficient and connected manner
- Communicate the culture of the campus through a website that is constantly updated and dynamic
- Build a more robust social media presence—highlighting user-generated content on the homepage of the website
- Provide “virtual classroom” videos and virtual classroom/building/dorm tours
- Increase the quantity of visual staff, including photographers, videographers and web developers
- Develop a calendaring system that is intuitive, easy to upload to, and provides a one-stop shop for all campus events with filtering capabilities
- Create a Student Center that serves as a central hub for engagement

- Highlight and leverage Fine Arts, Neeley, Medical School and other lecture series events and improved signage on campus
 - Elevate the TCU website to reflect the community and culture and utilize as a recruitment and engagement tool
 - Provide culturally responsive teaching throughout the campus to develop a culture of equality and enhance student engagement and faculty development
 - Increase the number of academic events and/or academic components for students in the week before fall classes begin
 - Increase resources for TCU's Extended Education
 - Enhance the integration of international students inside and outside of the classroom
 - Appoint an ad hoc Committee to systematically examine the impact of Greek Life culture at TCU, including the timing of fraternity and sorority recruitment
 - Regard athletics as a front porch to the university with multiple front doors, and ensure athletics responsibility and accountability to the campus
- **Encourage student success through an integrated and holistic student-support model**
 - Enhance training for counselors and advisors to address mental health, social, emotional, academic, and career needs of students, as well as to connect students to resources that meet their specific needs
 - Enhance training for staff who address issues of sexual harassment, sexual assault, discrimination, sexual orientation, medical issues and similar issues
 - Create an integrated student services model to connect the career center, the advising office and the disabilities services office to provide better and more holistic service to students
 - **Catalyze a culture of connection within TCU**
 - Create a mentorship program for newly hired faculty and staff
 - Facilitate interest groups among faculty and staff
 - Create a faculty and/or staff center for formal and informal events and meetings to enhance engagement
 - **Tell the compelling stories of TCU and its students, faculty and staff**
 - Host town halls and similar forums across campus to exchange information with all stakeholders
- Recognize the outstanding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts of all student organizations, including fraternity and sorority life organizations
 - Recognize the outstanding Diversity, Equity and Inclusion efforts of faculty and staff

GOAL 4

Strengthen the TCU Workforce

A Commitment to the culture of Texas Christian University

A determination by all, that each student who entrusts themselves to our guidance, each faculty who serves as a teacher and a scholar, and each person who underpins the various operations of this university, will encounter a diverse and stimulating community, profoundly dedicated to civility, respect, gratitude and inclusiveness.

Recommendations

- **Promote student success through an integrated and holistic student-support model**
 - Streamline and centralize the reporting process for the collection and storage of post-graduation-related data for undergraduate and graduate programs
 - Increase alumni participation in the collection of data post-graduation
 - Improve student perceptions and increase student participation with the Career Center for professional and career development
 - Support and enhance informal faculty mentoring, career preparation and community/employer connection, and link with the Career Center wherever possible
 - Maximize alumni and other beneficial TCU connections for post-graduation employment, mentoring, community/ employer connection and internships
 - Establish a career and professional development class/seminar in each major or college
 - Duplicate best practices within the Alcon Career Center in other schools and colleges at TCU

- Evaluate whether the Career Center has adequate resources and staffing
- Improve graduate preparation programs
- Research TCU best practices in experiential and work-integrated learning opportunities

- **Recruit and retain a world-class workforce**
 - Focus on organizational planning and development of our faculty and staff
 - Improve faculty and staff recruiting and hiring
 - Implement an exit interview process
 - Constantly evaluate the competitiveness and sustainability of compensation and benefits
 - Enhance work/life balance by implementing alternatives to the traditional work schedule
 - Explore the costs/benefits of providing onsite childcare
 - Provide additional leadership development and management training and offer online professional development classes
 - Establish a framework and processes for career advancement
 - Develop management transition plans where needed
 - Consider leadership/professional development rotations for employees
 - Create a phased retirement process and develop a process to assist with retirement planning
 - Continue to educate faculty and staff about retirement processes and policies
 - Address the needs of adjunct and part-time personnel for competitive compensation, support and/or benefits
 - Establish a culture that supports succession planning including addressing concerns for faculty and staff about promotions
 - Provide more information and advice about medical supplemental insurance plans to better inform retirees
 - Provide fitness program benefits, such as Silver Sneakers, for those who cannot utilize the TCU campus recreation center
 - Create an Ombuds office for the university's staff and faculty

- **Tell the compelling stories of TCU and its students, faculty and staff**
 - Improve communication on diversity with the campus community and increase opportunities for both formal and informal mentoring

POSTLUDE

Good Neighbors: The University OF Fort Worth

For many years TCU has sought to build robust relationships with the community of Fort Worth. Our long-term goal is to merit being considered “The University OF Fort Worth” (as opposed to the university that just happens to be geographically located in Fort Worth). To succeed in this mission, we must strive to be both relevant and of service to our great city.

Many of the activities that mark this or any other university are esoteric with respect to the civic communities in which they live. The trains of thought that bring joy to geologists or mathematicians are often seen to be mysterious and (perhaps) unimportant. On the other hand, other university enterprises are generally valued and can serve to define the “front door” of the campus. At their best, these enterprises allow the broader community to feel a sense of pride and ownership. At TCU the success of our athletic programs — particularly football — has brought us a great deal of acclaim and positive notoriety— not just within the Fort Worth area but also nationally. Clearly, as our history shows, athletic success can be a transitory thing. Equally clearly, we must make the necessary strategic and financial decisions to ensure that we are always competitive within a major (Power Five) athletic conference.

Academic front door contributors at TCU certainly include the College of Fine Arts. TCU students and faculty in the performing arts have enviable local, national and, in some cases, international reputations. Critical to the growth of the performing arts will be the provision of robust and competitive scholarships in order to attract students of the highest quality. Completion of planned Fine Arts facilities (some complete or at least well underway) will be another significant step.

In addition, the relatively new but formidable John V. Roach Honors College has built on the preexisting Honors Program to become a chosen destination for many of the brightest students entering the campus. The college has been very successful in expanding its base to include the Neeley Fellows and students from the pre-health program. It casts an eclectic appeal to many of our students who do not want their patterns of discovery to be constrained within a single discipline.

Many of our colleges and departments have grown “into” Fort Worth, establishing liaisons of importance at various levels. Our Nursing and Health Science Departments, indeed the entire Harris College footprint, reaches out into Fort Worth and surrounding areas. Similarly, the College of Education performs yeoman service in educating young people who hopefully will graduate as fully-fledged young citizens. The Biology and Environmental Science Departments are developing robust research relationships with the Botanical Research Institute of Texas, whilst the Monnig Meteorite Gallery attracts more than 16,000 K-12 students in the Metroplex each year. In this respect, Nona Batiste, gallery educator, deserves the commendation of us all.

Another imposing front door, just beginning to open, is provided by the TCU-UNTHSC allopathic medical school, an entity that will welcome its first students in the fall of 2019. To quote Chancellor Victor J. Boschini, Jr. on our receipt of initial accreditation:

“This marks a great day for three institutions: TCU, UNTHSC and Fort Worth. The School of Medicine has taken the lead on transforming our universities and the health care community (of Fort Worth). We are proud and thrilled to partner with UNTHSC in this endeavor.”

Clearly TCU has departed from the image of an isolated, privileged ivory tower, snugly located on a few acres of prairie in southwest Fort Worth. We are knowingly and purposefully embracing a larger role in society, while continuing to reverence the time-honored values that brought us to this place and will guide us as we face the future with confidence.

Tales of the Frogs

Each of the four reports discussed above expressed a wish that TCU share the compelling stories of its successes with a wider audience (both internal and external) than it does at present. Clearly, we do this with some considerable flair with respect to triumphs in the major sports of football, baseball and basketball. Unequivocally, our successes in these areas have brought major recognition to our campus.

However, in the great ongoing narrative of TCU, stories of other successes abound. These stories involve academic and student themes, as well as alumni and simple human interest. These tales are as much part of this university as bricks and mortar, the core curriculum, science labs and the BLUU. They merit collecting and some of them should be revered for they define us.

Next Steps

This report is presented to the Board of Trustees as a sequential act in the development of *Vision in Action: Lead On*. The University Administration readily accepts this report and pleasantly notes that many recommended actions are aligned with, and will further enhance, initiatives already underway. Over the summer, administrative units will utilize the plan to inform and guide their respective operations. Additionally, we will implement the strategic plan in alignment with annual budgeting and assessment and will report progress to the Trustees at their November 2019 board meeting. Finally, we will develop a dashboard to inform the community of progress towards achieving the strategic plan and will present a first draft of this dashboard to the Trustees in their April 2020 board meeting.