



MEMORANDUM

C. L. Max Nikias
President

Robert C. Packard
President's Chair

Malcolm R. Currie Chair
in Technology
and the Humanities

To: Members of the Trojan Family
From: C. L. Max Nikias *C. L. Nikias*
Date: September 13, 2011
Subject: *Fas Regna Trojae*: The Campaign
for the University of Southern California

On September 15, 2011, the University of Southern California will celebrate the launching of a campaign to raise \$6 billion in private support from individual donors, foundations, and corporations. This represents the largest campaign goal ever announced by an American university. We expect to reach or exceed our goal in the next seven years, through hundreds of thousands of gifts of every size.

Indeed, only a campaign of this scale and scope, at this moment in our history, will allow our university community to realize its fullest potential. An enormous amount of planning, preparation, and hard work have taken place behind the scenes in preparation for this fundraising effort. We are deeply impressed and grateful that our USC community has been able to mobilize and launch a campaign of such unprecedented magnitude at a time when most organizations in every economic sector are exercising restraint and caution.

The timing of this fundraising campaign is crucial. As you know, most American universities, whether public or private, have been forced by recent economic trends to scale back academic or other priorities. Some may never reach past levels of excellence again.

While we are mindful of short-term economic uncertainties, this campaign's focus extends beyond the next few months or years. We believe USC can make incredible progress, relative to its peers, by being in a position to ride the crest of the first wave of economic recovery.

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Because of USC's current unprecedented momentum, and because of solid fiscal management and academic planning at this university, the USC academic community's ultimate destination is within reach: Undisputed elite status within higher education. This will enable USC and every member of the Trojan Family to offer leadership in teaching, discovery, and innovation in every discipline. It will allow USC to move to the vanguard in both patient care and the social sciences and humanities. It will enhance USC's edge in artistic creation, technological development, professional practice, and athletic and cultural excellence. And it will allow USC to maximize its presence both locally and globally, setting the standard for community service and global academic outreach and collaboration.

USC enters this public phase of the campaign with enviable momentum. Over the past year, the university has raised a total of \$1 billion—the most of any American university over the course of a single year. In recognition of this unprecedented accomplishment, the Council for Advancement and Support of Education selected USC as a winner of the 2011 Circle of Excellence Award for superior fundraising programs.

By moving forward aggressively now, our academic community can make a decade's progress in just a few years. More importantly, the decade ahead offers the USC community the unique opportunity to not merely rise to the summit of higher education, but to occupy that lofty position for generations to come.

The fundraising campaign's goals and objectives have been developed by trustees, faculty, students, parents, alumni, and staff over the course of this past year, with special leadership provided by Albert Checcio, USC's senior vice president for university advancement, who arrived at USC last year. Mr. Checcio has worked closely with Provost Elizabeth Garrett to ensure that the campaign's efforts will support the academic priorities that were identified by the university community during the drafting of the new Strategic Vision for USC.

There is a future to be created, and there is a distinctive USC approach to such creation—an approach characterized by boldness, a readiness to challenge convention, an instinct for collaborative problem-solving across the arts and sciences, as well as humanities and social sciences, a timeless set of values, and a commitment to opening up new possibilities for human beings and for society as a whole.

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The time has come to bring the USC approach to bear on the deepest issues of the human condition—ranging from scientific advances that extend and improve quality of life to humanistic and cultural endeavors that give life its fullest meaning.

This is indeed the most technologically advanced of ages, yet it is USC's ambition to be one of the world leaders in showing the way to ensuring that it is the most human, and humane, age of all. This campaign will raise the resources we will need to allow us to do just this.

One of our chief obligations, as stewards of this university, is to strengthen its academic foundation for the years ahead. We will seek a significant increase in endowment funds for USC's faculty and students, as well as core educational and research programs. For this reason, at least half of the funds raised in this campaign will be targeted for endowment in perpetuity. USC's endowment is currently ranked 23rd nationally, but it must rank in the top tier of private institutions, if we want our university to be taken seriously by its peers over the long term.

A few essential priorities stand out. Our campaign will support the recruitment and retention of the very best people in the world. For the USC community to be able to guide global change on the scale that we seek, we must attain a critical mass on our University Park Campus and Health Sciences Campus of the most visible and influential faculty superstars from all corners of the globe.

Accordingly, the campaign will support the best work of current faculty, while also bringing them key allies, in the form of transformative faculty colleagues who can supercharge the overall academic community on both campuses. We will see such persons in the arts, sciences, social sciences, humanities, media, medicine, and engineering. And we will pay special attention to transformative figures who can strengthen collaborations between the Health Sciences and the University Park campuses, as the biological and medical sciences revolution, fueled by collaboration with engineering and the physical sciences, gathers momentum.

One of our top priorities is to raise endowment funds for student scholarships—to bolster USC's ability to recruit the world's very best student talent. USC already hosts what I believe is the world's most broadly gifted student body—with top young scientists and storytellers and artists and humanists and engineers and

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social scientists working unusually closely to create an academic environment that crackles with intellectual and cultural electricity.

Yet unlike at other organizations, a preeminent university's obligation does not extend merely to the next fiscal quarter or even to the next several years, but for generations to come. Only by ensuring the continued excellence of our students and faculty can USC enter into the pantheon of world-class universities that shape our world.

My wife Niki and I met with more than 4,000 of USC's most active alumni and parents at nine different receptions across the country during my first year in office, and we were moved profoundly by their dedication to their university. Their passion and enthusiasm, and their readiness to be a part of USC's great journey forward, cannot be equaled at any other university. This represents a magnificent advantage for USC.

This campaign has been designed to capitalize on this, as well as to actively engage every single member of the Trojan Family. There are numerous ways in which you can advance the campaign, whether you represent the alumni, parents, faculty, students, staff, or friends of the university. All gifts, of every size, will be crucial to USC's success.

We ask that every member of our Trojan Family make his or her own bold statement of support. USC has had unprecedented success in the past year in raising significant donations that drew worldwide attention. It is both humbling and inspiring to consider that many of these gifts represent significant portions of the net worth of individuals and foundations.

USC would not be in the position it now enjoys if not for the attention that it earned through the generosity of Dana and David Dornsife, Julie and John Mork, and the W. M. Keck Foundation. The Dornsifes' \$200 million gift last March invigorated the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, which is nothing less than the heart of our academic enterprise. The Morks modeled a determination, through their \$110 million gift to endow undergraduate scholarships last April, to make a world-class USC education accessible to worthy persons from every walk of life. And the Keck Foundation put a historic exclamation mark on USC's academic year with a \$150 million gift that would allow USC to build the best academic medical enterprise in the Pacific Rim.

We are also grateful to two USC trustees who stepped forward last fall at my inauguration to offer a powerful public endorsement of USC's ambitions and potential. Wallis Annenberg offered a \$50 million gift to allow the USC Annenberg School of Communication and Journalism to build a world-class facility that will symbolize journalism's momentous new era. And Ming Hsieh offered a \$50 million gift to support trailblazing research in the field of nanoscience for cancer.

During the course of this year, another 176 different donors offered gifts between \$250,000 and \$25 million. Just as remarkably, 874 people contributed gifts between \$25,000 and \$100,000.

And there is a still-larger story to be told about the combined reach of the Trojan Family. A loud and compelling statement was made by Trojan Family members and friends who gave, as they were able, at other levels. At the gift level of \$25,000 and below, some 105,000 individuals gave an impressive \$44 million last year.

By serving as endorsements of the university's mission by a broad constituency, the smaller gifts also serve as seeds for the mega-gifts that USC has been fortunate to receive. In short, the passion behind every gift of every size makes a statement that amplifies the Trojan Family's collective voice.

During this campaign, USC's schools will pay special attention to donors who may not be in a position to make historic, nine-figure gifts, but who may be able to make substantial \$1 million gifts. Each such gift is sufficient to endow a student scholarship in perpetuity. Consider that USC has more than a quarter-million alumni from Los Angeles to Hong Kong to Mumbai to London to New York to Dallas, many of whom have gone on to enormous success and who credit USC for that success. If one thousand such persons gave \$1 million each toward scholarships, USC would reach its lofty goal of \$1 billion in student endowment.

Recall the words from Virgil's *Aeneid* that are inscribed at the base of our famed Tommy Trojan statue, foretelling *fas regna trojae*, which translates to "the destined reign of Troy." For almost a century, the USC community has been associated with the indomitable spirit of the Trojans, with the unconquerable optimism and determination of the people of Troy, which found its fulfillment in the legendary tale of the establishment of a New Troy—the city of Rome.

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It was said, “A thousand roads all lead to Rome.” As the world tilts from the Atlantic toward the Pacific, and as Southern California emerges as the most influential American hub for the Age of the Pacific, all roads can lead to USC, which serves as the cultural and artistic wellspring and scientific and economic engine for this great region.

Many have observed that USC has a chance now to make history. This is close to the mark—but the Trojan Family is characterized less by an intention to make history than by an intention to make the future. And in this spirit may we now go forward and write USC’s most glorious chapter together.

cc: USC Board of Trustees
Elizabeth Garrett
Al Checcio
Robert Abeles
Todd Dickey
Tom Sayles
Pat Haden
Lisa Mazzocco