

Good morning.

Thank you for joining us on Founders Day.

Before I begin, I want to recognize my wife, Dr. Dominique Belanger. She has been my partner and source of support, advice, and common sense during my adventure in higher education administration – I am truly blessed.

I also want to recognize Chattanooga Mayor Andy Berke. You are a great partner and give meaning to the words “public servant.”

I cannot imagine a better location for today’s event – I will have more to say about the venue at the end of my remarks, but as we gather on Chamberlain Field, we are honored to have several members of the Chamberlain Family join us. Would Morrow Chamberlain, his wife Sue, and Nan Smith and her husband Gil please stand.

I know it is hot, and I will be quick.

130 years ago, the founders of Chattanooga University opened the doors to an institution that they hoped would provide “first class facilities at the lowest possible cost; a school of the people, good enough for anyone to attend.”

On Founders Day, September 15, 1886 – exactly 130 years ago – enrollment was 177 students. Today, enrollment for Fall 2016 is 11,533 students! This represents a 1.3% increase over last year.

The early images of our institution capture a sense of blending academics and people as a catalyst for community, disseminating knowledge to better the lives of many. We continue adding more detail to these images, providing an excellent education and connecting with community.

In 1969, UC became part of the University of Tennessee System, and the university has grown and prospered since then. We have come a long way in 130 years. UT President Joe DiPietro and Trustees John Foy, Vicky Gregg, Susan Davidson, and Rachel Smith have joined us today. Please stand and be recognized.

Three years ago when I began as chancellor, our educational journey together focused on two principles with deep roots in our institution: achieving student success and building community relationships and connections.

As educators and administrators, we ignite the flame of learning that lights up questions of curiosity and leads to exploration. Learning becomes an adventure into the unknown. Encouraging students to be creative, to think outside of a particular discipline and to gaze broadly across a vast universe of knowledge is why a liberal arts approach is at the core of the academic experience at UTC.

We educate students to be good citizens of our society. Our students apply classroom knowledge to real-world problems in our community and region. As a university community we embrace and acknowledge

our responsibility to add benefit to the quality of life for all Tennesseans.

Over the years, people have been our foundation – the driving force for our institution. At the heart of everything we do are great men and women – faculty, staff, students, alumni, friends, and partners - the people who are UTC are passionate, dedicated, and visionaries who know our job will never be finished.

We stand on the shoulders of those who have come before us. We benefit from their knowledge, experience and even failures. This is certainly true for me – I stand on the shoulders of the Chancellors before me, building on their accomplishments, seeking their advice and help on a regular basis. It is a pleasure to have former Chancellors Fred Obear and Bill Stacy with us today. Thank you for all you have done and continue to do for UTC.

The UC Foundation is an important part of UTC. The members of the UCF Board make a huge difference in what we are able to do as a campus. Thank you for all you do.

As we have matured as an institution, we embrace meaningful traditions while at the same time challenging the status quo, seeking innovative and entrepreneurial solutions.

We have great traditions and we are building new ones - I want to share one new tradition at UTC, our Blue Ribbon Award Program, which recognizes staff for outstanding service.

Our most recent Blue Ribbon Award winners are seated down front. Would you, and all past recipients, please stand as we acknowledge your outstanding service? These people go that extra mile, take the additional time to do things right and sweat the details. Thank you for all you do for your university.

The quality and diversity of our faculty is the linchpin that enriches our teaching and student learning. It transforms incoming freshmen and upper classmen into well-prepared graduates who realize there is nothing they cannot achieve.

Every day our faculty, as individuals and in teams, stimulate our students to think, both inside and outside of the classroom, challenging them to question and at the same time be willing to listen to divergent points of view.

At UTC our focus is students. They are the reason we exist as an institution. We are constantly striving to serve our students better as we drive to excellence as an institution.

Each of us at UTC has one of the most important jobs in the world. We impact the future each and every day. We have the future of our society on our campus. We prepare tomorrow's leaders, who will navigate through the challenges facing our world.

We celebrate the achievements of our students. It is a pleasure to welcome our Rhodes Scholar, Robert Fisher, who has joined us today.

Robert will return to Oxford for a second Masters Degree next week. What an outstanding young man, and a great success story.

Our focus on students means finding ways to make the basics easier for them.

Our new Mocs One Center – the One Stop Shop for student services – removes some of the stress. One parent recently wrote: “The Mocs One Center is a great idea, and it works! You can actually talk to a person and get an answer!” Well done to Yancy Freeman and his team.

The College of Business’s Joseph F. Decosimo Student Success Center, led by Sue Culpepper, helps students be successful. The charge: Academically prepared; Business-world ready.

Our students excel. These are a few numbers:

- **Graduation rates are up 9.2% from 2010 to 2016.**
- **Retention for first to second year is 73.5% for students returning to UTC with an additional 13% of students transferring to another four-year university for an overall 86.5% first to second year retention rate.**
- **Enrollment from 2010 to 2016 rose over 6%.**

These positive trends are the result of a quality faculty, a dedicated staff, and students achieving success; all of our oars pulling in the same direction – forward.

While things look bright in our future, this is the time to work even harder to make UTC one of the top regional universities in the south. Our journey to excellence means not resting on our laurels.

We are preparing our students for life in a world that is very small and very diverse. How do we teach diversity? By serving as a role model and embracing it in all that we do.

Learning to ask questions and to observe, to inquire and to listen and to respect the opinions of others; those are lessons in diversity.

Goal 4 in our strategic plan states: “to embrace diversity and inclusion as a path to excellence and societal change.” Fulfilling this goal is multi-dimensional; not just top down but also bottom up. All of us have to claim ownership so the words spelled out in our plan become the actions that drive our behavior. This is a welcoming campus; let’s all ensure sure that is how we are seen and known.

Knowledge is both diverse and inclusive. Achieving excellence requires diversity and inclusion.

Our Multicultural Center is holding a series of discussions this year. The first on September 20th from 7-9 PM will deal with diversity and the presidential election. On October 4th, we will hold a campus town

hall meeting on “What Does Diversity Mean at UTC?” This will also take place in the Multicultural Center at 7PM.

Our academic signature is being defined, and there are difficult choices to make. The goal is to channel finite resources to maximize student outcomes and community impact. To do so, we must eliminate unnecessary overhead, concentrate on students, focus on excellence, and leverage our partnerships.

Our early founders had high expectations. Today, we continue to live up to their vision to impact our community.

I believe their hopes are our reality.

We are forging connections to our community – literally by:

- **Developing student housing on Vine Street in partnership with UNUM’s planned retail and apartment development.**
- **Designing a new Intramural Sports Complex adjacent to Engel Stadium.**
- **Planning a Health Sciences Building on Third Street in partnership with UT Health Sciences and Erlanger that will house our new joint Physician’s Assistant Program.**
- **Engaging with the City of Chattanooga to imagine a dynamic Patten Parkway with a direct connection to the Mapp Building and our business innovation and continuing education programs.**

Our words have to mirror our actions. That is the measurement of success. I believe they do; for example:

- **Building bridges with our education partners both K-12 and post-secondary at Chattanooga State, Cleveland State, and Motlow State with transfer pathway options to ease institutional transitions.**
- **Reaching out to those who serve and protect our country and developing business-world ready veterans with skills to compete in the civilian world.**
- **Joining the Family Friendly Workplace Challenge of Mayor Andy Berke.**
- **Supporting Hamilton County Mayor Jim Coppinger's education initiatives such as Pathways for Prosperity.**

As we chart the path ahead, our energy is directed to the four-year experience and learning that occurs both inside and outside the classroom. Student participation in research, scholarship and creative activities is part of who we are. Chattanooga and Southeast Tennessee are the laboratory where our students work with faculty, staff, and business partners to apply classroom knowledge to real world problems that make them job ready.

UTC has an opportunity to round out its research agenda in the health science field, leveraging our partnership with the UT School of

Medicine and healthcare organizations in our community with our own health science programs.

Our wellness initiative will bring many disciplines together and rely on data analytics to develop the best possible options for a healthy life.

Modeling and simulation are coupled to data analytics. That means leveraging our SimCenter and Ph.D. programs in Computational Science and Engineering and tying them to healthcare impact, as well as other initiatives such as managing the electric grid, aerospace, and computational fluid dynamics.

Business start-up, innovation and entrepreneurship are centered in the College of Business, but will impact programs across the entire campus. The key is acknowledging the impact already seen from students in our College of Business and figuring out how to spur more innovative startups.

UTC is the institution that teaches the teachers who are in the classrooms of our public schools. We are prepared to meet the challenge of educating the next generation.

UTC Education graduates know the greatest opportunity to make a difference in someone's life is as a great teacher. Our new School of Education Director, Dr. Renee Murley, is working in partnership with the Hamilton County School System to develop a national model for teacher preparedness and improved student performance.

Interdisciplinary teams following problems to solutions, looking across the silos of disciplines to apply knowledge to improve our community. Ann Yoachim, our Director of Civic Engagement, is ensuring we listen to, and partner with, our community as we plan our course ahead.

We hope the University of Tennessee system is proud of UTC and what we bring to the system. Our difference is found in the classroom and extended through applied research. We prepare students to fulfill the needs of today and be the generators of solutions for the unknown challenges of tomorrow.

Everett Edward Hale, an American author and historian, said: “I am one, but I am only one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. Because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.”

Each of us is a source of power in the cause for education. Each of us, standing as one, but working together, committed to achievement. Connecting.

The catalyst that influences a community on the move: this is the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Thank you.

And now for the official opening of CHAMBERLAIN FIELD!!

Today is a day to celebrate our past, who we are, and where we are going. What better place to be than on Chamberlain Field, transformed from a field of athletic achievement into a campus hub that knits our community into a cohesive body. A symbol of where we have been, and a signature of where we are going.

Where at one time stood concrete bleachers that brought campus and community together now sits a blue and gold Power C.

About two years ago, I was walking across campus with our athletic director, David Blackburn. We struck up a conversation with Nathan Harlan that quickly turned to issues of student pride in UTC and campus traditions.

Nathan told us that the campus and the surrounding downtown area needed more Power C branding. He became a founding member of an ad hoc committee of students that meets with me a couple of times each semester to discuss whatever is on their mind.

Nathan suggested the Power C on the hill off Oak Street. The Power C also stands as a lasting reminder that one person can make a difference. Nathan, please stand and let us recognize you.

There are members of our university's football teams that played on this field with us. Coaches, Athletic Directors, the sons of Scrappy

Moore – our beloved, famous, football coach – and members of Coach Wilkes family are with us; please stand and be recognized.

Members of the Chamberlain family have already been acknowledged. These people, these families, are woven into the fabric of UTC. Thank you so much for being with us today.

Why is Chamberlain Field a model of community connections?

- **The stadium upgrades in 1922 were a Kiwanis Club project.**
- **The project fundraising was led by George H. Patten, Morrow Chamberlain and Silas Williams. These are familiar names.**

Now the field serves as a connector between buildings -new and those with a little age - and public art - on our campus:

- **Between Lupton Hall, our former library, and the new Library.**
- **Between Northern Blue by John Henry, generously donated by John Marek at the Bretske Building, and the Watcher, created by Jim Collins and donated by Ruth Holmberg.**

At our 80th anniversary, The University of Chattanooga was described as “a living university with a heritage of traditions and a band of loyal associates who strive to carry the goals of eight decades forward in the modern world.”

At we celebrate our 130th year anniversary, Chamberlin Field is an active and vital part of UTC.

Now, I would like to introduce Mr. Bucky Wolford, a UTC graduate who played on Chamberlin field and a tireless champion of UTC. In addition to running a successful business, he is the Chair of the UC Foundation. Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Bucky Wolford.

Bucky Wolford Remarks

And now, I ask Bucky Wolford to join me at the C, and I also invite current coach and former player Russ Huseman, all of our former football players and coaches, the Chamberlain Family, Scrappy Moore's sons, Scrappy Jr. and David, and the Wilkes family, to join Vice Chancellor and Athletic Director David Blackburn to cut the ribbon to formally open Chamberlain Field.

After we finish with this, I ask that our trustees, leadership and elected officials stay around for a few pictures – we promise to be quick. Please join us for birthday cake by the Chamberlain Pavilion.

Thank you for coming. This has been a special day for UTC, and we appreciate you sharing it with us.