

**Inaugural Meeting Commission on Women
Conference Center 132
January 29, 1997**

Remarks of Chancellor Gerald L. Bepko

In the life of an institution, there are optimal times for adding ingredients to the complicated mixture that constitutes its culture. IUPUI is no different, except that it is probably more complicated than most institutions. IUPUI has had to struggle over the past 30 years or so with major institutional transformations, such as the physical consolidation of the campus from its various locations around the city, or such as developing broad academic strengths, or creating the essential sense of unity we needed to tie together our previously quite independent schools and units. That sense of unity has only taken firm hold in recent years. We had to become a more coherent academic community before we could turn our full attention to a series of institutional/cultural issues and make advancements in our institutional ethic.

Several years ago, we concluded that it was time for us to examine some of these cultural issues. At the top of our list was the status of women in the IUPUI community. We began two and a half years ago—in August 1994—with the formation of a Task Force on the Status of Women. This coincided with and was related to Kathy Warfel's leadership of the Faculty Council. When the Task Force concluded that an Office for Women should be established, it seemed a natural outgrowth for Kathy to assume the leadership role of the Office for Women. Kathy has served as a symbol of the emergence of women on campus. Although women have previously been president of the Faculty Council, and have served in other key roles, Kathy took the lead in bringing women's issues to the forefront. She is the right person at the right time. Her leadership has helped us conclude that in this complicated institutional chemistry, now is the time for us to make a renewed and concerted effort to address issues of importance to women and to change the culture of the institution forevermore. This means not only redoubling our efforts to make certain that women participate in every part of the university at increasing levels, but it also means changing our character. It means changing the way we think and act. It means changing the institution in a way that will reflect the thoughts and attitudes and philosophies of women to create a new richness. All this is part of the maturation of IUPUI as a leading university community, and we believe your efforts will contribute to a new era of accelerated development for IUPUI as more women take their rightful place in advancing and defining IUPUI.

Author Joline Godfrey has said, "You must remember that what is being re-engineered emerged from an industrial model, created and managed by men. The new paradigm, one based on relationships, partnerships, collaboration, mutuality, moral consequence, and respect, is what women have called normal forever. Your truth, as women, is the new paradigm."

Of course, there have been inspiring events in the world around us, that have encouraged institutional change. A week or so ago, Madeleine Albright became the first woman Secretary of State in the history of our nation. While her diplomatic credentials have often been highlighted, it is also worth noting that she was once a professor of international affairs at Georgetown University. In 1969, when she entered Columbia University to earn her master's and doctorate, she was one of only 15,800 women in the entire country pursuing a first professional degree in any subject. This could be compared at the time with the nearly 150,000 men who were pursuing those degrees. In 1993/94, only 25 years or so later, the number of women pursuing first professional degrees was more than 120,000, nearly eight times as many as when Madeleine Albright studied at Columbia. This is the remarkable difference that has occurred from one generation of women to another.

Four years ago, in our own state of Indiana, Pamela Carter became the first African American woman in the nation to hold the office of state attorney general, and she is a graduate of our law school. She was a student while I was dean at the law school, and I served with pride on her

transition team as she became attorney general. In the year she graduated, 1984, more than 14,000 law degrees were earned by women nationwide. Just 10 years before, in 1973, the year Pam graduated from the University of Michigan with a master's in social work, only 2,100 women had earned law degrees nationwide. In 10 years, the number of women studying law had grown sevenfold. From 1960 to 1993, the percentage of women earning law degrees rose from 2 percent to 42 percent; medical degrees, from 6 percent to 38 percent; and dentistry degrees, from 1 percent to 34 percent.

The gap in educational attainment between men and women has narrowed dramatically, although some patterns persist. For example, at the master's degree level, women are almost three times as likely as men to earn graduate degrees in education and the health professions, but only about one-seventh as likely to earn degrees in engineering. Eight of ten women are in the same job categories as they were in the '50s.

The encouragement we find in some events in the community is matched by the dramatic evidence that our job is far from done. For example, female college graduates earn, on average, salaries that are only 80 percent of their male counterparts. This gap narrows with increasing educational attainment, but it is a gap nevertheless. Only 2.4 percent of the top jobs in corporate America (chair, vice chair, president, CEO) in Fortune 500 companies belong to women. The glass ceiling throughout American society is still in place, or as Anne Jardim wrote last year in *The New Yorker*, "The ceiling isn't glass; it's a very dense layer of men."

The situation is better, if not good, in higher education. Until the 20th century, men presided not only over most of America's colleges, but even over most women's colleges. Yet, the percentage of female presidents of the nation's colleges and universities has more than tripled over the past two decades, from 5 percent to 16 percent. Of 2,903 colleges surveyed by the American Council on Education, women head 453. Among those heading urban universities are Claire Van Ummersen at Cleveland State; Sherry Penney, University of Massachusetts at Boston; Blanche Touhill, University of Missouri in St. Louis; Judith Ramaley, who is shortly leaving Portland State to take the helm at the University of Vermont. And there is our own Erita Hill at IU Kokomo and Hilda Richards at IU Northwest. All of this is improvement, but still not nearly the type of proportional representation that we may someday expect.

At IUPUI, we have our share of disappointments, as reflected in various statistics. While 58.2% of our students are women, only 27% of faculty are women. And women represent only 15% of holders of endowed chairs. There is some evidence that our women faculty teach more and get paid less.

We also have found some data about which we can be pleased. Among our peer institutions, we are the highest in the percentage of our faculty who are women at the full professor and associate professor rank, and we're third of ten at the assistant professor rank. Women earn sabbatical leaves and faculty development grants at a higher rate than men. Forty-five percent of our key leadership staff are women.

However, I don't think we should be caught up in quantifiable perspectives of our institution, alone. We must also be attentive to matters that are harder to measure but that rate high, among women, on the list of problems and barriers. For example, women often cite subtle, environmental factors that hinder their progress, such as unexamined assumptions about women's interests and attitudes or exclusion from informal networks. Several studies have also shown that when women are asked about the primary obstacle to their professional advancement, the most often cited barrier is lack of respect or not being taken seriously. Lani Guinier mentioned this during her presentation at the forum on Issues in Higher Education last fall here on campus. In her study of gender-related distinctions among law students at the University of Pennsylvania, she noted that men feel respected by their professors so they take being respected for granted and tend to speak up more in class. Women too often do not feel respected and cite lack of respect as being

a barrier to their achievements and advancement. They often do not feel that their points of view are taken seriously, or that their contributions are valued. This creates a distraction or a drain of energy which, while not immobilizing, can make an important difference in performance.

We hope that over the next few years the Office for Women, and this newly formed commission will examine all the features of the Task Force Report on the Status of Women and help us advance IUPUI to a position of leadership. One of the essential ingredients for this kind of institutional change is focused, sustained commitment from the leadership of an institution. All of us in the campus administration played a role in writing the following provision as part of the Strategic Directions Charter for the university: "Ensure that women are recruited, appointed, and retained in all areas of the university, and that women students are encouraged to enter all academic fields."

All of us in campus administration support the Task Force on the Status of Women; all of us support the development of the Office for Women; all of us support the development of family friendliness, such as job sharing and the creation of additional child care; all of us agree that there is more work to be done to eliminate hostile environments; and all of us are enthusiastic that we have embarked on this era of positive change. I'm proud to be able to participate in this movement and look forward to reflecting on the progress that we make and celebrating that progress with all of you at the millennium.