

The President's Report

Issue 16 October 2010

On the Road Again!

It is called "presidential outreach," but the University of Louisville's annual autumn trek around Kentucky to visit high schools is the university's version of the three Rs—"The Ramsey, Researchers and Recruiters Road Show."

The 2010 version of UofL's outreach began Sept. 22 with a reception for Governor's Scholars and other talented seniors at the Marion County home of UofL trustee Dr. Salem George Sr. The tour ends in November after President James Ramsey has visited at least 16 high schools and thousands of students across Kentucky.

A typical day on the road with Ramsey includes stops at a couple of high schools where he and a UofL student from that area talk to a large group of juniors and/or seniors. He tells them that they need a college education now more than ever, that they can afford it and that UofL should be on their list of schools to visit because of the academic, research and social opportunities available.



Outreach Tour Stops

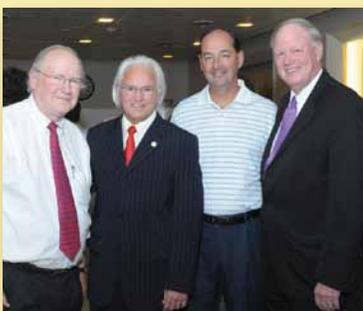
Sept. 22	Lebanon
Sept. 23	Lexington
Sept. 24	Ashland
Oct. 12	Louisville
Oct. 25	Pikeville/Prestonsburg
Oct. 27	Louisville
Oct. 29	Bowling Green
Nov. 4	Northern Kentucky
Nov. 8	Hardin County
Nov. 12	Owensboro



Left: Dr. Laman Gray, a UofL faculty member and surgeon who performed Kentucky's first heart transplant, talks about research with students in a West Carter High School science class as part of the UofL presidential outreach stop in the Ashland area on Sept. 24. During Gray's presentation, students had the opportunity to examine an implantable heart device.

A Message from Dr. Ramsey

Autumn is a time of changing leaves, cooling temperatures and, for me, a good bit of driving. I am in the middle of the University of Louisville's annual presidential outreach tour, an opportunity for me to reach out across the state and talk to students about their futures and the value of a higher education.



From the left, Dr. Laman Gray, State Sen. Walter Blevins, State Rep. Rocky Adkins and Dr. Ramsey.

I find the experience energizing.

The tour gives me a chance to tell high school juniors and seniors that a college degree means a better job, especially in our changing economy. Over the past 10 years, Kentucky has lost about 100,000 manufacturing jobs—good paying jobs that are never coming back. But Kentucky recently has added 45,000 jobs in health care and education, and thousands more in other fields that require college degrees.

I tell these students that they can go to college. They can be successful—and not to let anyone tell them differently. They can afford college, and it will pay dividends for them. A college graduate will earn, on average, \$20,000 more per year than a high school graduate.

I tell them that UofL is on the move. We have 58 high school valedictorians in our current freshman class. The average ACT score of our freshmen is 24.5—well above the state average. Our graduation rate increased about 60 percent over the past 10 years. I tell them about our Rhodes Scholar, Monica Marks, and our record 14 Fulbright Scholars. We have 170 fields of study and a variety of nationally ranked programs.

I tell them we're a big school that feels small, with 19:1 student/faculty ratio, and that our advising programs are second to none. I promise that they will be challenged at UofL. And while I can't assure them that they will be successful, I commit that we will do everything in our power to help them get their degree.

Sincerely,

Grant to help researchers develop **pediatric heart pump**

Researchers at the University of Louisville Cardiovascular Innovation Institute have received more than \$2 million from the National Institutes of Health to further develop an implantable pump that could dramatically improve the lives of patients with single ventricle heart disease.



The disease is a congenital condition in which one chamber of the heart is either missing or underdeveloped, causing an overwhelming burden on the remaining chamber to pump blood effectively.

UofL biomedical engineer Guruprasad Giridharan; Indiana

University pediatric surgeon Dr. Mark Rodefeld; and Purdue University mechanical engineer Steve Frankel, lead the project.

“Single ventricle heart disease is the leading cause of death from any birth defect in the first year of life,” said Giridharan, who is UofL’s principal investigator. “The children usually require three major surgeries in the

first few years of life to re-route blood flow and lighten the workload of the single ventricle, which pumps blood both to the body and lungs.”

The implantable pump is designed to deliver blood to the lungs and assist the single ventricle, improving the child’s circulatory status, he said. This work has the potential to, at a minimum, provide a crutch for patients who are undergoing the current treatment for this condition.

By taking the workload off of the single ventricle, it may be possible to delay subsequent surgery until the patient has improved cardiac function. In some cases, the researchers said, it’s possible that the device may provide patients the support they need to allow their bodies to strengthen and minimize surgeries and use of shunts, which can cause long-term heart and lung dysfunction, neurocognitive deficits and developmental problems.

The recent grant will support the investigators as they work to enhance the design of the pump, especially with regard to its deployment (collapsibility and expandability) inside the blood vessel, Giridharan said.

This project is one of 12 federal- and state-funded grants received over the past three years totaling \$8.8 million to support the work of the Division of Artificial Organs and Mechanical Circulatory Support at the CII. CII is a partnership between UofL and Jewish Hospital.



Playing **political hardball**

The University of Louisville and WHAS-TV co-sponsored three political debates including one for the nationally watched U.S. Senate race between Jack Conway and Rand Paul. The senatorial debate (photo above) Oct. 17 aired nationally on C-SPAN and clips from the event were shown on most national news outlets.

Mark Hebert, UofL’s director of media relations, moderated all three debates. He asked questions submitted by the audience and by WHAS-TV viewers via e-mail. Reporters, including WHAS-TV political editor Joe Arnold, also asked questions.

On Oct. 12, 3rd District U.S. Representative John Yarmuth debated his Republican challenger Todd Lally. On Oct. 14, the race to be the next mayor of Louisville Metro took center stage with Democrat Greg Fischer debating Republican Hal Heiner.



A **Rockin’** Good Time

The first Discover Louisville Festival and ear X-tacy concert on Oct. 12 featured the Grammy-award winning band OK Go. The free outdoor event was designed to introduce UofL students to local businesses while opening Belknap Campus to the community. More than 2,500 fans turned out, and about 30 area businesses set up booths on the perimeter of the oval to showcase their products and services.



Holding a Louisville Slugger, Chris Matthews was ready for some “Hardball” when he brought his MSNBC show “Hardball with Chris Matthews” to the UofL Oval Oct. 18. Matthews interviewed U.S. Senate candidate Jack Conway and 3rd district congressman John Yarmuth. He also talked to students about the issues.

