I have always looked forward to the opportunity for self-assessment that Shared Vision provides. Each year, this report testifies to the remarkable achievement of San Diego State University’s faculty, staff and students.

The annual Shared Vision reports have documented our success in attaining five goals identified by our campus community a decade ago. They are:

- Academic excellence
- Diversity and social justice
- A learning-centered approach to education
- A global outlook
- Wise use of resources

Although more work remains to be done in each of these areas, we can say with pride that the five principles you identified a decade ago are now hallmarks of San Diego State’s identity and reputation at the onset of the 21st century.

Stephen L. Weber

"San Diego State University is a strong, vibrant, caring university, committed to serving its students, San Diego, the region, and the world through excellent academic programs, symbiotic community outreach, and an open, informed, and caring campus community. The journey will require not only our common sense of purpose, but our energy, patience, and continued focus in the years ahead."

Shared Vision, September 1998
In academic excellence:

In 2007, San Diego State’s fall application pool was the third highest in the nation. This year, applications for the fall semester again broke records at 62,213; nearly 50,000 of the applicants were first-time freshmen. When you crafted our original Shared Vision document 10 years ago, SDSU had about 25,000 applications.

SDSU’s six-year graduation rate has risen an extraordinary 17.6 percentage points in five years. Slightly more than 55 percent of full-time freshmen enrolled in 2001 graduated in six or fewer years, compared with 38 percent of full-time freshmen enrolled in 1996. Our students are more talented and motivated than ever.

In diversity:

In 1997, students of color received 33.6 percent of SDSU bachelor’s degrees, 18.6 percent of master’s degrees and 14.2 percent of doctoral degrees. Ten years later, students of color comprised 40.9 percent of our bachelor degree recipients, 26.1 percent of our master’s degree recipients and 15.3 percent of our doctoral degree recipients. It is no surprise that SDSU ranks 20th among American universities for ethnic diversity and 11th in the nation for bachelor’s degrees conferred on students of color.

SDSU is a recognized leader in initiatives to improve urban K-12 education. The City Heights Educational Collaborative and Compact for Success are programs that positively impact the academic achievement of underserved students in the San Diego community. Beyond that, our National Center for Urban School Transformation is helping demographically challenged urban schools become models of educational achievement.

Twenty five percent of our tenure/tenure track faculty now describe themselves as persons of color, compared with 16 percent a decade ago; 40 percent of tenure/tenure track faculty are women, up from 28 percent a decade ago.
In learning-centeredness:

For two consecutive years, SDSU has been ranked the No. 1 most productive research university among schools with 14 or fewer Ph.D. programs, based on the Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index compiled by Academic Analytics.

The Carnegie Foundation designates SDSU a “Research University” with high research activity, a designation shared with George Washington University, Syracuse University and the University of Oregon.

SDSU offers 85 bachelor’s degrees, 75 master’s degrees and 16 doctorates (up from 14 last year) in courses of study that directly benefit the San Diego community, such as nursing, public health, biotechnology, hospitality and tourism management, construction engineering and educational leadership. The Student Research Symposium, inaugurated in 2008, is an opportunity for students to present original research, scholarship and creative activities to faculty and peers.

In the international arena:

SDSU now ranks No. 2 among universities of its type nationwide, and No. 1 in California, for students studying abroad as part of their college experience, according to the Institute of International Education.

More than 1,600 students go abroad every year to study in 44 different countries, a 700 percent increase from 1996.

In wise use of resources:

As state support for SDSU has fallen from 40 percent to 28 percent in the last decade, we have focused on increasing private giving. Since 1996, our generous donors have contributed more than $550 million to SDSU, and with careful stewardship, we have leveraged their gifts into an endowment exceeding $120 million. Compare that with our 1995-1996 endowment of $17.5 million.

During the past decade, more than $600 million in construction and major renovations have transformed the campus – and that does not include the SDSU trolley station. The BioScience Center, Coastal Waters Lab, College of Arts and Letters, Chemical Sciences Laboratory, College of Extended Studies addition, Calpulli Center for student wellness, Cuicacalli Residence Hall, the Prospective Students Center, Aztec Athletic Center, Aztec Recreation Center, the Aquaplex, Sports Deck, Tennis and Softball Center, Cox Arena, Fraternity Row, the Cogeneration Plant, Pedestrian Bridge and the SDSU Children’s Center are among our state-of-the-art facilities constructed since 1997.
The Road Ahead

When we view San Diego State’s accomplishments through the lens of the last decade, the value of our Shared Vision becomes clear. I am convinced that your decision to define a Shared Vision with specific, achievable goals enabled San Diego State to become the great university it is today. Thank you to those who participated in the original Shared Vision initiative and those who embraced it as they joined the SDSU community.

Now, after a decade of transformation, it is time to embark on a new journey. Where do we go from here? What kind of future do we envision for San Diego State University?

In the last year, we have asked these questions of SDSU faculty, staff, alumni and friends. From this process has emerged a vision of what our university can be. Once again, you have lifted our sights and aimed for excellence.

It is clear that San Diego State is on the way to becoming a top 10 urban research university.

The urban research university we envision is not just a major university located in a metropolitan area. Rather, it works for the diverse peoples of our urban area in the same way that land-grant universities once worked for rural Americans.

A great urban research university partners with the community. It builds effective communication channels and community infrastructure to address issues such as health and human services, poverty and public safety; quality education for all children; sustainability and the environment; social services; arts, culture and historic preservation; and training the workforce for a knowledge-based, innovative economy.

A great urban research university attracts the best and brightest faculty, staff and students, who, in turn, bring their talents to bear on devising real solutions to real problems.

Last summer, we took an important step toward becoming a great urban research university. The comprehensive campaign we launched then identifies seven key initiatives that will challenge SDSU’s greatness while making our community and our world a better place. These multidisciplinary initiatives are:

- Advancing Public Health and Well Being
- Creating a Sustainable Future
- Transforming Urban Education
- Enriching the Economy for Business and Industry
- Bridging Communities Through Arts and Culture
- The Aztec Promise: Student Support
- The New Frontier: Imperial Valley Campus

San Diego State stands on the threshold of greatness. While honoring our past, we embrace our future as a catalyst for profound innovation and progress.

When all is said and done, that is what greatness is about – and that is the road SDSU now travels.