

July 16, 2009

To the Purdue Family:

This date holds special meaning for me. On July 16, 1969, I watched with the rest of the world as a Saturn V rocket launched a trio of Apollo 11 astronauts for the first mission to the moon's surface. As I saw Neil Armstrong step onto the moon a few days later, it changed my life. I knew then that I wanted to be an astrophysicist. That decision ultimately led me to become the 11th president of Purdue University – the distinguished alma mater of Neil Armstrong. I became president on July 16, 2007. That was more than a happy coincidence.

Today, as I mark my second anniversary as the leader of our great university, I want to thank all of you – our extraordinary students, faculty, staff, alumni, trustees, and community – for the successes we have enjoyed together. And I want to hear from you on how we can do even better in the coming year.

Your vision and ideas gave us our New Synergies strategic plan and your hard work now is ensuring its implementation. We are making significant progress on our goals of Launching Tomorrow's Leaders, Discovery with Delivery, and Meeting Global Challenges.

Our students, faculty and staff show time and again that they are made of the right stuff. Everyone pulled together as we weathered a tough economic year. I am proud that we kept our workforce virtually intact; we could not have done that without fiscal discipline and sacrifices from you that helped to protect the quality education we provide our students.

During our time together, we have advanced Purdue's reputation as a great value for a top-flight education and as one of the premier universities in the world. More and more of our faculty researchers are being recognized for amazing discoveries that address world challenges – from hunger to climate change. We now have 26 members of national academies, two World Food Prize recipients and a Nobel Laureate at Purdue. And this is just a beginning.

Purdue continues to grow in stature because of the efforts of our entire Purdue family. I have been deeply touched by the loyalty and support of our alumni. And I have been heartened by the confidence placed in our work by Purdue's board of trustees.

When my husband Chris Foster and I arrived here, we were delighted by the hospitality from a great university and a great community. We are truly at home here, and we are proud to be members of the Purdue family.

For me, coming to Purdue was a dream come true. With your help, we're making sure that everyone who comes to our university feels the same way.

Let's make our third year together the best yet!

Sincerely,



France A. Córdova  
President