DRAFT: ENDOWING AND INVESTING IN STUDENT ACCESS AND THEIR LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Background: The University has made a significant, multi-year commitment to provide a Jesuit education for those students least able to afford it and most able to benefit from it, in particular, those students who are the first in their families to finish high school and attend college. Examples of this commitment have included:

- The Porter-Billups Leadership Academy, which prepares low income children from local inner-city neighborhoods for college with intensive summer enrichment experiences beginning in the children's fourth grade year;
- Our partnership with Arrupe Jesuit High School, which provides a Jesuit high school education for at-risk, low income students through Arrupe's innovative corporate work program;
- Our summer pre-collegiate workshops for high school students, such as the "Sociology of College Success" course.

Similar efforts to reach out to older, non-traditional learners desiring to complete their education and enter the professions have included creation of our CHOICE program for prospective Nursing students, and our outreach efforts to assist other students who are re-starting their education after initial experiences in area community colleges.

The Challenge: Through the successes of these and similar University projects to prepare these often first-generation learners for college, we have seen our enrollment numbers rise in low-income students. This is a great source of pride for our Regis community, but it brings the challenge of supporting these students financially and personally as they struggle with the costs of attendance, family obligations, and the need for added support services to succeed in a university environment. Reaching the cost of tuition by itself is a major challenge for both the University's financial health and these students, so that they are not burdened by major student loan debt at the beginning of their careers and family lives.

The Vision: A significant increase in giving to Regis, including endowment gifts, to strengthen the University's ability to assist these students to prepare for college, to make their Jesuit education affordable, and to provide the best possible student experience so that these students can make a difference in their communities, churches, professions, and families. Elements of the vision would include:

- Offering more scholarships to students in partner organizations such as Arrupe Jesuit High School, the Porter-Billups Leadership Academy, and other local foundations that serve first generation, low income students of great promise. These students should have the opportunity to become part of the Regis family during their pre-collegiate workshops, and the University should continue to offer them strong transitional courses and mentoring as they adjust to college life;
- Assisting non-traditional learners, including veterans, CHOICE Nursing students, and others hoping to re-start their education through scholarships that allow them to begin their educational experience at Regis;

- Providing stipends for low income students to participate in experiential learning opportunities such as internships, service learning immersions, and mentoring programs;
- Increasing scholarship opportunities for students to participate in signature academic programs such as Honors, Peace/Justice Studies, natural and health sciences, and Religious Studies/Ministry.
- Endowing continuing investments in faculty excellence, such as the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, the Integrative Teaching Institute, learning communities to support first generation students, and similar projects that assist faculty to engage in faculty-student collaborative research, innovative teaching projects and inter-disciplinary teaching teams.

Appendices: Notes on references in the text

- **Arrupe Jesuit High School:** A Jesuit-run high school in north Denver near Regis focusing on providing a college prep education for low income students in the metro area. The school was founded as an initiative of the Jesuits of the Missouri Province, Regis University, and key local community leaders. Modeled on the Cristo Rey network of high schools, Arrupe runs an innovative corporate work program that places students in job teams, each working a day a week in a local business, with the salaries going to the high school to defray a major portion of their educational expenses. Regis University hires some of these students, offers scholarships for them to attend Regis upon graduation, provides pre-collegiate summer workshops for their "rising seniors," offers a first year transitional course for incoming Arrupe grads, and supports the high school in many other ways. Jesuits who work at Regis and Arrupe share the Jesuit House on the Regis campus.
- **Porter-Billups Leadership Academy (PBLA):** A three-week intensive summer learning and leadership academy sponsored by Regis each June for at-risk children from the community. Founded by Regis Head Men's Basketball coach, Lonnie Porter, the PBLA prepares the students for college beginning in the fourth grade through high school, mentors the students throughout their academic year, monitors their academic performance at their local schools, mentors them in college choice decisions, and sponsors scholarships for PBLA grads who want to attend Regis.
- **Integrative Teaching Institute (ITI):** Since 2010, the Regis College Integrative Teaching Institute has mentored faculty in strategies that prepare students to think creatively and critically across disciplines, consider alternate models for complex problems, work collaboratively, and seek solutions in a world characterized by challenging, interdependent issues. Reaching almost two-thirds of the Regis College faculty since its inception through a $250,000 grant from the Keck Foundation, this innovative teaching institute convenes for two weeks each summer for faculty and course-development workshops and advises faculty as they develop their own courses for the Regis College Integrative Core. The ITI has also partnered with the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning at Regis to foster a culture of collaboration and integration across disciplines.
- **Sociology of College Success:** Now completing its third year at Regis following a start-up grant from the Daniels Fund, this summer session course is offered to high school students coming from low income, "first generation" families prior to their senior year to prepare them for the

college admissions process. Participants are typically drawn from partner organizations such as Arrupe Jesuit High School, the Porter-Billups Leadership Academy, and the Denver Scholarship Foundation based on the students' participation in other college prep activities and academic readiness for college level work. Students receive full college credit for an entry level Sociology course that also focuses on the social factors involved in college access and success.

- **"First Generation" Students:** Current term in higher education used to identify at-risk students from low income families whose families have no parents or other significant family members who have attended or successfully completed college. The key risk factor for such students, in addition to growing up in poverty, is the lack of family role models, especially parents, who understand the challenges of higher education and the strategies needed for success. Regis has been focusing on preparing and supporting these students in recent years through programs such as our partnership with Arrupe Jesuit High School and our sponsorship of the Porter-Billups Leadership Academy and the "Sociology of College Success" course.
- **Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning:** The Regis University Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) was established under the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan. The CETL supports faculty teaching and scholarship, promotes best practices in Ignatian pedagogy, and provides resources for ensuring quality across all academic programs and all colleges. CETL accomplishes these goals by bringing faculty together in learning communities to discuss and contextualize the current research on teaching and learning and as a place for our university's professors to share and improve their teaching (this includes partnering with colleges, departments, offices and institutes).
- **CHOICE Nursing Program:** The CHOICE (Connecting Health Occupations with Innovative Curriculum and Experience) Nursing Program provides health care workers with the opportunity to pursue a nursing degree while maintaining full-time employment. The CHOICE Nursing Program offers evening classes, with clinical rotations scheduled primarily on the weekend. Clinical experiences and service learning augment classroom and skills and simulation laboratory experiences. The program is completed within two years (six consecutive semsters).