A year ago, in addressing this same gathering, I challenged us all to Share U.T. El Paso's Dream. I stated that perhaps more than any other institutions in our society, universities are places where dreams do come true, and I suggested that daring to dream and sharing our individual and collective dreams will create an environment beneficial to us all, and lead to opportunities that, perhaps even in our wildest dreams, might not today seem possible.

In reviewing last year's remarks, I was struck by how many of the specific objectives I outlined then have already been attained, many of them far ahead of schedule. I believe there is a twofold reason for our success.

First, we have understood, accepted, and articulated our institutional mission more clearly than ever before. We know ourselves, our strengths...and our weaknesses..., and we are able to build from that solid knowledge base.

Second, we have dared to dream the grand dream, to envision U.T. El Paso as a unique institution capable of great strides in its own development and worthy of serving as an example to other universities that will face the major demographic shifts that are occurring in U.S. society today.

I am pleased indeed to be able to say that last year's dreams may in fact have been too modest. U.T. El Paso has made great progress in achieving its long-range goals, and in the process, we are attracting major national attention and support. U.T. El Paso is clearly on the move!

Let's begin by talking about our students, the real reason we are all here. Although sometimes we may lose sight of this most important point, there is no question that the only reason all of us are here on this campus -- and the basis for our state funding -- is to serve a group of students who have chosen to pursue their educational aspirations with us. Whatever our position or responsibilities on the campus, we must remember that we are here to create conditions conducive to our students' success.

Enrollments this fall have increased significantly. Although we have not yet reached the official census day, our headcount enrollment for Fall 1988 now stands at 15,049 students, nearly 1,000 more than last year. Credit hours, upon which our formula funding for the 1989-91 biennium will be based, are also substantially higher than last year; projections at this
time estimate an increase of over 7%. Enrollment increases are observed at all levels, freshman, upper-division and graduate, and in almost all program areas.

These increases are gratifying, for they suggest that the quality of U.T. El Paso's programs is becoming better known, and that the image of this University has, through the efforts of so many of you, improved significantly.

Beto Lopez, Lupe Mendez, and Barbara Nehring in the Office of Undergraduate Recruitment and Scholarships deserve special credit for our success in attracting new students to U.T. El Paso, and many of you, especially Richard Aranda and Diana Guerrero, have worked with Beto in the Early Awareness Program that encourages young people in middle and high schools to begin planning early to pursue their education, and ensures that their parents are not misinformed nor intimidated by the financial implications of a university education. In fact, this outreach program to young people in the El Paso area is so successful that is has been named one of 18 exemplary programs nationally selected by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education.

But, we are not merely recruiting more students. We are also recruiting more and more outstanding students, who, despite offers from major universities throughout the United States, have chosen to attend U.T. El Paso. Nearly 70% of the students who now enter U.T. El Paso are ranked in the upper half of their high school graduating classes, up from 50% 20 years ago;

- 41% of entering freshmen today are from the upper quarter of their high school graduating classes;

- Valedictorians and salutatorians, those students who achieve the highest scholastic standing in their high schools, are increasingly choosing U.T. El Paso over other institutions that aggressively recruit them;

- And, thanks to the generosity of so many individuals and businesses that believe in U.T. El Paso, we are increasingly able to offer these outstanding students highly competitive scholarships.

- What is perhaps even more exciting is that 80% of the students to whom we offered scholarships this year accepted them and are attending U.T. El Paso this fall; just a few years ago, our scholarship acceptance rate was only 50%.

I recently had the pleasure to attend a LULAC luncheon at which 67 scholarships were awarded to promising high school graduates in the El Paso 0002.0.0
area. I was truly impressed with the commitment to El Paso's future that these scholarships represented, and I was particularly gratified that 35 of these young people had declared their intention to attend U.T. El Paso.

Of the others, 2 planned to attend New Mexico State,
3 the El Paso Community College,
2 Texas Tech, and
2 or 3 to U.T. Austin and Texas A&M.

The remainder were off to Columbia, Stanford, Harvard, Yale, Notre Dame and other fine institutions. Although I hope that we will continue to attract ever greater numbers of these outstanding students, I am not disconsolate in knowing that if they didn't choose to attend UTEP, they nonetheless chose well! And, if this is the context in which we have begun to compete, we can be proud indeed of our record.

But, U.T. El Paso's student body reflects a broad range of previous experiences and talents: from an increasing number of National Merit Scholars to students who are not well prepared for university-level work. Some have argued that the underprepared students should not be admitted. This is not a position that can be easily defended in our context.

When you consider the fact that in El Paso County today, an estimated 45% of the young people drop out of school before earning a high school diploma, those students who come to us with aspirations for a university degree are true survivors of a system that has permitted the squandering of half of the human talent in this community.

We, then, have an obligation to do all that we can to provide a real educational opportunity to those who have persevered. That doesn't mean, of course, that all of these students will graduate, but it does mean that they deserve a chance to pursue their aspirations as far as their talents and motivations will lead them. To deny admission to a student based upon an SAT score -- in which, by the way, we have little confidence as a predictor of achievement -- would be to betray our mission to create opportunities for the residents of this region. Instead, we must create programs which respond to our students' needs and provide them the support necessary to enhance their chances for success.

You are familiar with some of these student support programs and of the enormous success they have achieved. The Study Skills and Tutorial Services Program, under Nancy Wood's able direction, has achieved a statewide reputation as a model for student retention.

The newly established Academic Advising Center, whose development has been the result of outstanding work by Bob Webking and the other faculty advisors, has also begun to have a positive effect on retention. Bob Webking has also been heavily involved in preparing U.T. El Paso for the Texas Academic Skills program, the basic skills test and remediation program.
mandated during the last session of the Texas Legislature. Barbara Prater and the Retention Council, whose formation I announced a year ago, have worked particularly effectively to develop remediation strategies associated with TASP.

And, I am pleased to report that we have just been notified that the Academic Advising Center has received a 1988 Certificate of Merit from the ACT National Recognition Program for outstanding student support. As the U.T. El Paso story begins to be known, such recognition should become more frequent, for in many ways we are creating models that will be emulated by other universities in the years ahead.

But, retention is not only a responsibility of designated offices or programs. Retention is a responsibility we all share. The campus climate, the attitudes that you and I express to students, both verbally and non-verbally, either build their confidence and encourage them, or increase their self-doubt and defeat them.

Remember that an estimated 80% of our students are the first in their families to attend college; almost all commute from their parents' or their own homes; and they have major family and financial obligations. Their families and friends who share their lives may have high aspirations for their success, but they may not know how to create conditions for them to succeed. That is our responsibility, and all of us play a role.

A faculty member's encouraging word and sincere interest in a student's progress can often mean more than a grade on a homework assignment or test. A sympathetic ear or a kind word from a staff member may provide the extra boost that many of our students need.

And, I know that as more of us understand and accept U.T. El Paso's students as they are — rather than recasting them in our image of traditional college students — more of us will become responsive to them. Non-traditional students require — and deserve — non-traditional strategies.

Still, there are disappointing episodes which reflect a lack of sensitivity and which remind us that we must continue to work to fulfill our mission. I recently learned of a wheelchair-bound student whose Fall 1988 schedule was carefully designed to enable her to take three classes in succession in the Liberal Arts Building. After the first day of class, the faculty member responsible for one of the three classes decided that she didn't want to walk across campus to teach in the Liberal Arts Building, so she changed the class location to Hudspeth Hall. Thinking that this faculty member must have been unaware of the disabled student's dependence on the class' location in Liberal Arts, the Dean of Students' office called to ask for cooperation in holding the class in Liberal Arts. The faculty member responded that her own convenience took priority.
The Dean of Students and the Department Chairman are still trying to resolve what should have never become a problem.

Such incidents are undoubtedly rare, but they do remind us that we can certainly do better.

Retention is sometimes mistakenly confused with lowering standards. In fact, retention should reinforce standards, since students who are encouraged to succeed, and who have increasing self-confidence to succeed, will likely be more successful in meeting the standards set by faculty in their classes. And, if the true measure of the success of this and any other university is the quality of its graduates, we must do all that we can to ensure that the academic quality of our programs is not compromised.

It is here that U.T. El Paso can be especially proud. At the undergraduate level, our students are provided opportunities to interact with faculty in classroom and laboratory settings that rival those in prestigious teaching-oriented colleges and far exceed those at larger, heavily research-oriented institutions where greater reliance is placed on graduate assistants for undergraduate, particularly lower-division teaching duties. And, such experiences do indeed appear to prepare our graduates well:

- Our pre-professional students are admitted to medical, dental, veterinary, and law schools at rates comparable to or better than those of students enrolled at other major institutions in the State.


- 8 U.T. El Paso students were selected as recipients of the National Consortium of Graduate Degrees for Minorities in Engineering fellowships, worth approximately $25,000 each. The only institution in the United States with more winners of these prestigious national fellowships was M I T.

- Of 105 Harry S Truman scholarships awarded nationally, a U.T. El Paso student has received one in each of the past two years. The competition for these scholarships is extremely keen. Only two other Texas universities have had consecutive scholarship winners in the past two years -- Rice University and Southern Methodist University -- both private institutions.

- Of 20 Summer Internship offers extended nationally to graduate students in Business by the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., three recipients were from U.T. El Paso.

- For the past 5 years, 95% or more of UTEP Nursing students taking
the State Board examination passed it on the first attempt. This year, 100% of our Nursing students who took the State Board exam for the first time, passed it.

These and many other examples point to a record in which we can all take pride. U.T. El Paso provides quality educational programs, and the value we add to students' lives between the time they are admitted and the day they graduate is recorded in their achievements during their years with us and as our alumni.

Another measure of program quality is accreditation, particularly in professional program areas. In addition to ongoing accreditation in Engineering, Education, Nursing and Allied Health, Music and Chemistry, I am pleased to report that U.T. El Paso achieved a major goal during the past year with accreditation of our Computer Science program. We are one of only three universities in Texas, and 65 nationally, that have met the very stringent standards for accreditation in Computer Science. Steve Riter and the Computer Science faculty are to be commended for the excellence that this program accreditation reflects.

On our agenda for this year is the accreditation review of the College of Business Administration; the self-study document has been submitted, and Dean Ron Hasty, Associate Dean Elba Brown-Collier and the College of Business Administration faculty have worked tirelessly to ensure that all accreditation criteria have been met.

Looking toward the future, accreditation of our Social Work program will be a priority, and the program's new director, David Iacono-Harris, will receive our support as he pursues that goal.

The most critical factor in ensuring the success of our academic programs is the quality of the faculty we recruit and retain. Here, too, we can be justifiably proud of U.T. El Paso's accomplishments. We continue to recruit outstanding faculty whose degrees and previous academic experience represent the finest research universities in the United States.

These faculty members are increasingly attracted to U.T. El Paso by the excitement of our institutional mission and by the enhanced research environment we have been able to establish through both extramural funding and the Permanent University Fund of the University of Texas System.

A special PUF allocation will soon enable us to renovate the Old Library Building into a teaching-research facility for the Geological Sciences Department. Once Geology faculty are relocated to the new facility, space they vacate will be renovated to create more modern research facilities for Physics and Chemistry. The acquisition of research equipment has helped faculty become more competitive in the quest for extramural funding.
Library holdings, especially in those areas of program expansion, are a priority, and PUF allocations each year are committed to the acquisition of materials supportive of our program aspirations, particularly at the graduate level. Serials holdings present a special problem as subscription prices continue to rise far beyond normal inflation rates; so serious has the problem become nationally that library directors are increasingly seeking alternative methods to provide these essential resources.

Inter-institutional cooperative efforts continue to offer some hope for relief from skyrocketing journals costs, and Bob Seal is working with colleagues in Las Cruces, in the U.T. System, and throughout the country to respond to faculty and student library needs. The Library's new automated catalog and circulation functions greatly facilitate users' access to our collections and, in the near future, to collections at other institutions as well.

Faculty and professional staff accomplishments at U.T. El Paso continue to be impressive. The past year has been a particularly good one. With strong support from the Office of Sponsored Projects, U.T. El Paso faculty have generated increased extramural support for their research and teaching efforts.

-- For example, Andy Bernat and his colleagues in the Computer Science Department recently received a planning grant from the National Science Foundation to develop a center for research in computer and information science.

-- Numerous faculty members in Engineering and Science, including Eppie Rael, David Nemir, Andy Swift, Diane Doser, Randy Keller, and Art Bronson, have received research support from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation, NASA, and other federal agencies.

-- Rachelle Thiewes of the Art Department is the recipient of a highly prestigious individual artist grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.

-- Marie Barker, in the College of Education, received a major grant from the Department of Education for the training of bilingual education teachers.

-- Faculty and professional staff members' work is appearing with greater frequency and in increasingly prestigious publications; if you have had a chance to review it, I think you will agreed that the Faculty/Professional Staff Publications List is an impressive document.

-- And, U.T. El Paso faculty members continue to be in demand as speakers and as visiting faculty at other institutions.
There are some who state that losing a faculty member, temporarily or permanently, represents a weakness at U.T. El Paso. I would like to suggest that, although we clearly prefer not to lose our outstanding faculty to other institutions, the fact that they are being recruited for visiting or even permanent positions suggests that they and UTEP are increasingly visible nationally.

Although it is clearly stressful to compete with other institutions for our talented faculty, and it is often painful when we lose in that competition, I would far prefer to be in a position where our faculty are increasingly attractive to other institutions than to have a faculty so undistinguished as to fail to attract anyone's attention!

The quality of UTEP's faculty and its academic programs has enabled us to proceed toward our goal to gain approval for additional doctoral programs. Two programs, in Electrical Engineering and Psychology, were approved this year by the U.T. System Board of Regents, and both will likely be considered during 1988-89 by the Coordinating Board. We are confident that the Coordinating Board will recognize that these programs represent an excellent match between this university's strengths and the human and economic development needs of this region.

Other academic programs in planning stages include doctorates in Materials Science and in Education, and Master's degrees in Manufacturing Engineering, Special Education, and Developmental Education. With a growing enrollment and an increasingly strong faculty, approval of such programs should not present major problems.

U.T. El Paso is also enjoying unprecedented support from the El Paso community. The number of individuals, civic groups, businesses, and industries interested in helping U.T. El Paso achieve its aspirations has increased as this university accepts its partnership with this community. Noteworthy is the fact that we are second only to U.T. Austin among academic components in the U.T. System in both scholarship endowments and endowed faculty positions.

As mentioned earlier, we have developed close working relationships with area school districts and with the El Paso Community College. It might interest you to know that new transfers from the Community College have increased to nearly 500 this year, compared to less than 300 three years ago, largely, it appears, through efforts to facilitate such transfers through collaboration between UTEP and EPCC faculty and staff. Transfer guides, which explicitly spell out degree plans, are one of the very successful products of such efforts.

The Manufacturing Consortium in the College of Engineering, numerous projects in the College of Nursing and Allied Health, the Institute for Manufacturing and Materials Management, the Centennial Museum, programs in the fine arts, and -- certainly not to be overlooked -- our highly

0008.0.0
successful athletic program, all contribute to the renewed sense of pride and the growing partnership between El Paso and its university.

And, UTEP's community extends beyond the boundaries of El Paso, for we continue to be committed to creating higher education opportunities, especially at the graduate level, for our neighbors in northern Mexico. During the past year, we have signed several inter-institutional agreements with universities and technological institutes in the State of Chihuahua, and, in a major recent development, we participated together with the Autonomous University of Chihuahua in the signing of an agreement between the governors of Texas and Chihuahua. Mexican-student enrollment also continues to grow, with 555 students registered this fall.

U.T. El Paso has begun the celebration this year of its 75th Anniversary. As we prepare for the second 75 years, we have a new institutional self-confidence, a growing awareness that we really are special.

Obviously, if we are dreaming properly, our agenda is full of new challenges, and the opportunities become ever more exciting --

-- doctoral programs, computer laboratories, research facilities, telephone registration, centers of research excellence --

all of this and more can be ours if we believe in ourselves and in our dreams.

For too long, U.T. El Paso, and the El Paso community more generally, have been too hesitant to dream, fearing rejection and disappointment. With the enormous strides we have made over the past year, we have shown that that reluctance is no longer justifiable.

With our many assets, we can dare to dream, and expect our dreams to come true. Moreover, dreaming can be contagious, and with more and more of us dreaming and sharing our dreams, we not only have a greater chance of making those dreams come true; we also build our confidence to set our sights even higher.

Our assets and our opportunities are numerous and real. The only limitation on our future is our willingness and ability to build upon them with our creativity and self-confidence.

Needless to say, this has been an extraordinary year for me both personally and professionally...and a busy one! In fact, when I heard the announcement at the first football game that John Harvey had broken the UTEP record for yards rushing, I realized that I had failed to turn in my stats!

There have been a few low moments, to be sure, but they have indeed been very few. I have derived enormous satisfaction from the progress U.T. El
Paso has made and particular joy in your accomplishments. For it is you, through your commitment to excellence and to this university and its mission, who will ultimately determine how far our dreams will lead us.

I thank all of you for believing in yourselves and in your dreams, and, especially, for believing in UTEP and its aspirations. Together, our dreams will keep us going.