



## PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

BY STAN LIBERTY

---

*President, Kettering University*

Readers who have had the opportunity to meet me know that I am “bullish” on Kettering and optimistic about the future of the great lakes region. I realize there are still difficult times ahead, but I also know this region is rich in assets, which if properly mobilized and applied will contribute significantly to a bright socio-economic future for the region.

At Kettering we have developed new mission and vision statements, and we are close to completing work on a new strategic plan for the institution. The Board will act on these in June 2007, so the associated documents are still officially in draft form. After approval they will be made public on our website. Although these new statements and strategic plan represent change, they do not abandon the traditional values of this institution. They only enhance and augment them.

Here is a glimpse of some of the language in the new mission and vision statements that relate to my remarks above. The draft mission statement contains the following language: “Kettering University achieves its mission by: Engaging collaborative partnerships that contribute to the prosperity of our region and society.” The draft vision statement contains the following: “Kettering University will be preeminent: Regionally as a contributor to economic growth and enhancement of the quality of life.”

Recently I served on a panel and made a presentation at the Great Lakes Manufacturing Forum in Toronto, Canada. This was a great opportunity for me to describe Kettering as a regional asset and share my thoughts on the future of manufacturing and the regional economy. I would like to share some excerpts from those remarks to further illustrate the linkage between our new mission/vision and the future of this region.

“... Regional collaboration . . . is a key to a bright socio-economic future for the region but it is also a significant challenge . . . I am optimistic because I have a secret weapon. Every day, as president of a preeminent professional cooperative education institution, I observe students who are integrating work-based learning with classroom and laboratory learning, and rapidly developing the skills and knowledge essential to the infusion of innovation into the products and processes that will sustain our competitiveness in the knowledge economy... Yes, manufacturing is changing . . . there are products and processes out there in the not too distant future that we haven't yet imagined. We in higher education have to prepare our students for jobs that don't yet exist and to manage processes and design products that haven't yet been conceptualized.

. . . I want to emphasize my belief that the successful construction of a new economy in this region is going to be based substantially on a strong commitment, with an accompanying shift in the culture of the region, to science and technology-based entrepreneurship. A key to accelerating this phenomenon is to find ways to increase technology transfer from higher education to the private sector and from within current industry. The annual expenditures on research and development in this region are very substantial, and you know that there is a lot of protected intellectual property being generated within that R&D machine that is not related to core business objectives. That IP should not sit on the shelf. It should be the basis for spin-out companies that will attract investment, create jobs and diversify the regional economy.

The region is also rich in higher educational assets with large quantities of intellectual capital and scientific and technological infrastructure. But these assets historically have underperformed when it comes to technology transfer and business enterprise formation. That will change. But it won't happen at the pace we need without a lot of collaborative effort and partnering among government, industry and education.”

We are also extremely grateful to the many alumni and friends who support us through financial contributions each year. This issue serves as the annual report on the many contributions that support our students and campus. Thank you for your generosity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Liberty". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.