



Chancellor's Message



Steve Sartori

Chancellor Nancy Cantor delivers her Convocation address to the Class of 2008 in the Carrier Dome.

DURING THIS INAUGURAL YEAR, I INVITE YOU TO JOIN US in a dialogue we're calling "Exploring the Soul of Syracuse." We'll focus on four basic questions:

- What do we mean by "liberal education?"
- What critical societal issues can we tackle?
- How can Syracuse, which served as an arena for the struggle to promote human rights, build on its unique historical landscape?
- In a society where knowledge is power, how should the University serve as a knowledge broker?

My aim for SU is to think big, this year and every year, and to get some things done. Part of this is about what we do. And part is about the energy and boldness with which we do it.

Universities—private as well as public—are a public good because they prepare future citizens, address critical social issues at home and abroad, preserve the cultures of the past while laying the groundwork for the future, and make discoveries that change the world.

As we prepare future citizens, we must ask: What do we mean by a liberal education that prepares students for life and for the professions and addresses the full complexities of our contemporary world?

To address critical social issues—whether it's hunger in Syracuse or genocide in Sudan—we must ask ourselves: Which issues are we best suited to tackle, and how do we collaborate across disciplines and constituencies to make a difference?

In preserving the cultures of the past, we ask how Syracuse can build on its unique historical landscape to contribute to opportunity. In this, we hope to build on efforts already under way, such as the Mary Ann Shaw Center for Public and Community Service and the College of Law's new Center for Indigenous Law, Governance, and Citizenship.

And in making discoveries that change the world—whether in life sciences or in the environmental quality of indoor air—we'll ask ourselves how we should serve appropriately as a knowledge broker in a world that has created staggering returns to higher education and to the "creative class," as best-selling author Richard Florida has called it.

This is not intended to be a sea change for SU, but an emboldening of our ideas and aspirations that will take us from an extraordinary period of our history—in which our ship was internally put right and core values were set out—to new ventures on uncharted waters.

As we begin, I want to assure you that things are moving right. Our ship is seaworthy. We need to take enough pride in what has been created at Syracuse University to get out there and test it. Please join us on that voyage.

Cordially,

Nancy Cantor
Chancellor and President