



May 4, 2009

President Davila:

Hello, I'm Robert Davila, president of Gallaudet University. Welcome to *Bob's Vlog*, once again. It's almost the end of the spring semester. The hot weather in Washington, D.C. reminds us that summer is almost here.

This is an exciting and important time in Gallaudet's history. The Board of Trustees recruitment and selection process for the next president is now moving forward. Equally important is the development of our new long range strategic plan for 2010 - 2015. For the past 10 months, I have been sharing information with you, telling you about Gallaudet's future and about the Board of Trustees' decision to establish a joint committee, a trustee/campus task force, to develop a long range strategic plan. This process has been going very well and has involved more than 100 people in the process. This plan will help the Board of Trustees select the next president and will give the trustees and the new president a road map to do things that will ensure Gallaudet has a long, bright, and strong future.

Today, I have asked Board of Trustees member Dr. Lawrence Fleischer to join me, along with Dr. Richard Lytle, a member of my staff and the person to whom I have given the responsibility of coordinating this strategic planning process. Also joining me in a few minutes will be Provost Steve Weiner and Vice President for Administration and Finance Paul Kelly.

Good morning, Larry and Richard. Welcome to *Bob's Vlog*. Larry, I want to thank you very much for your many days and weeks of work on this important process. Your contributions to Gallaudet and its future are very much appreciated and recognized. Larry has participated in weekly video meetings and has flown back and forth to Gallaudet on many occasions to help guide the development of this LRSP. I should mention also that Alyce Slater Reynolds, GUAA president, has also served on this joint committee. Thank you, Alyce, for all the work you have contributed to us. You have helped us in many important ways. Also, Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. Benjamin Soukup has also been very involved in leading this effort. Gallaudet needs everyone to be involved! Another important contributor has been Jeffery Humber, a member of the Board of Trustees, who has also been involved with this. So, as you can see, we have had community, campus, and Board of Trustees involvement to develop this plan. That's really a perfect example of the Team Gallaudet spirit!

I do have a few questions for our visitors which will help our audience out there get a better understanding of the process, what it involves, and what the goals of our efforts will be. This is Richard Lytle.

Richard, I'll start with you. Can you give us a brief summary of the history of this process, how it started, where we are now, and where we are going?

Dr. Richard Lytle:

Sure. Good morning, Bob. First, let me say how proud I am to be working with you, and also with Larry, and with students, faculty, and staff at this important time in Gallaudet's history. I remember last year, when we finished MSCHE accreditation, you began thinking and talking with all of us about what to do in the future and how we would meet the challenges of the world. The world is changing. Will Gallaudet change? You called together small groups to discuss the future of Gallaudet. You brought in speakers to talk about higher education and the changes occurring with universities around the country. Then, in October, the Board, including Larry, established a joint board/campus task force to work on long range strategic planning. So, Larry, it was you, Jeff Humber, Alyce, and others working together with faculty, staff, and some students. A world famous business consultant firm was hired—Booz Allen. They provided their experience and helped us by guiding the process. We collected a lot of data. You know, in the past, Gallaudet sometimes just made decisions, but now we know to collect data, look at the

evidence, and then develop a plan. Through January, February, and March, as you said, maybe more than 100 people were involved in that process of collecting data, analyzing it, and thinking about how Gallaudet could change and improve. Now we have completed that. We have written a draft. It is not finished yet, but it's a draft LRSP. So, we asked students, faculty, alumni, and other people who care about Gallaudet for their ideas and comments. When that is ready, then we will provide it to the board in May for their thoughts and a decision. So, it's a very exciting time.

President Davila:

Thank you, Richard. Really, that is a wonderful summary, and I also want to thank you personally for all the good work you have done supporting all of the effort here. I have a question now for Larry. Larry, can you tell our audience out there why the Board of Trustees believes it is so important for Gallaudet to look into the future and develop plans for the changes that are coming in the future?

Dr. Lawrence Fleischer:

First, I want to thank you for the nice compliment which you stated about me. Also, I want to thank you for encouraging the board to take that forward step. Of course, the board knows that it is responsible to select the president, but that alone is not sufficient. You pushed us to form a vision of the future of Gallaudet. The board did not realize that we are responsible for a vision. For our vision, what we did is like a large picture with a frame around it. It's not a small picture. It's very

large. Then, Booz Allen consultants came in and asked us what goes into this picture frame? They offered their skills and knowledge. Let me think of what a good analogy would be to compare this to – you know it's like Gallaudet is measuring temperature at many different points. Temperature measurements are not enough. You have to add humidity. You have to add wind. You have to add many different tools to help you paint the entire picture. You have to know what the faculty thinks about the future. You have to know what the administration thinks; students and alumni. You have to get all of that information together to create a mosaic. That really helps you to see the big picture. Instead, if you're just looking at the parts, it's hard to see the whole picture. Your guidance has made it possible for all of us to see the whole picture. That also gives us the sense for the direction we take in the future. Now, the picture is very colorful and we can see it is representative of a bright future. That task was an important one for the board – to develop a vision. Of course, we want to see the best for Gallaudet in 2015, in 2020, 2030, 2040, 2050, and beyond. This was an important step. Thank you again for pushing us to do that task.

President Davila:

Thank you, Larry, for your compliments. But, as I have said before, and everyone here agrees, this has been a Team Gallaudet effort. Nevertheless, I agree with what you have said. Gallaudet itself is at a crossroads and facing its future now. Higher education is changing all over the world. Our students are more diverse and are looking for a

more competitive advantage so that they can get jobs, have a good future and a wonderful life. They aspire to that. Students want high quality education programs that are responsive to a changing globalization of the economies all over the world. Many students are looking for online learning, for example. Deaf and hard of hearing students want the same opportunities that are offered to all students in all of the other universities, too. They need that, and clearly Gallaudet must be prepared to meet those needs later on.

I really want to thank both of you for joining this program, for sharing your perspectives, and adding more information for the benefit of our audience. Thank you very much for joining me today.

Dr. Lawrence Fleischer:

Wonderful. My pleasure.

Dr. Richard Lytle:

My pleasure. Thank you.

Dr. Larry Fleischer and Dr. Richard Lytle:

Thank you.

President Davila:

I am now joined by two other officers of this University. We have here Provost Steve Weiner and Vice President Paul Kelly. Thank you for joining me. I have some questions for you, also. I'll start with you, Steve.

As you know, we have goals intended to help increase enrollment at Gallaudet, improve graduation and retention rates, improve academic programs, and strengthen our outreach and research programs. Can you tell our audience about some of the plans you are considering as you move forward with the implementation of this plan?

Dr. Steve Weiner:

Bob, first, I would like to thank you for the wonderful opportunity to work with you and Team Gallaudet. Really, I am excited about the long range strategic plan because it gives us the road map that we needed. As you know, when I started working here, we talked about the importance of bringing in students who have a reasonable chance of success and persisting here. Toward that end, we did just that. Also, we started to build opportunities to support those students so that they can persist and graduate. We are still in the initial stages. More importantly, with the establishment of the Office of Institutional Research and academic planning, we now have the data to tell us where we need to improve and where we need to go. That data really helps us drive along the right path. For example, I realized the need to improve our recruitment of students from both traditional and non-

traditional bases. We've given professors the opportunity to assess their instruction and student learning. And, we've now begun to look at the research related to VL2, Visual Language, Visual Learning. Many things are happening. It's a very exciting time, really. What is more amazing is the fact that we had MSCHE accreditation reaffirmed, which means we are on the right track, but we are not finished. The LRSP will help us continue on the right track so that Gallaudet succeeds in the years to come.

President Davila:

Thank you, Steve. That was really a wonderful response. This is what makes living and working here at Gallaudet so exciting. Thank you for that and for everything you do.

Now to a question for Paul Kelly. As you know, another goal is to make sure we have sufficient resources to meet all of the goals we have established for the future. You know that the public, including American taxpayers and deaf people all over the country, expect that Gallaudet will use its resources wisely and do a good job. Can you tell us about the changes we may need to make to ensure that our budget is responsive to these needs?

Mr. Paul Kelly:

Sure. Thank you, Bob. I also appreciate the opportunity to work with you on this exciting strategic plan. It's a wonderful opportunity for Gallaudet. Probably the thing to say about the budget is that

historically Gallaudet's budget was really more of an incremental process. Each year we add a few programs and receive a little more money. But right now, the budget situation is not a great one. The federal government is challenged with the deficit and there is not a lot of growth in non-federal revenue. So, what that means for the University is that we will have to reexamine our priorities and decide which programs are the most important. Then, over time, we'll have to reallocate money within the budget to support the top priority programs. It looks like the top priorities will be recruitment and retention of students. So that's probably where the money will be going in the short term. Then, over time, we expect to grow the non-federal revenue through the Sixth Street project and growth in research and other activities. Another thing we plan to do in the new process is to provide what we're calling "seed money" for exciting, new short-term programs. And when those programs show that they can help to recruit students or provide innovative ideas to the community, we will continue to support them. So, there will be significant changes in the way we do business, absolutely.

President Davila:

That's an impressive and wise planning concept. Thank you, Paul. I want to take the opportunity to thank our visitors to this program this morning. That includes Larry, Steve, Paul, and Richard. I want to thank them for helping us share with our audience out there the plans that Gallaudet is doing. I really encourage everyone out there to learn more about Gallaudet's LRSP for 2010 - 2015. You can get more

information by going to the Town Hall meetings or by visiting the [vision2020.gallaudet.edu](http://vision2020.gallaudet.edu) website, where all the information you might be interested in reading is available, or you can send us an email and ask for specific information that you are not able to find in other ways.

This is really an exciting time at Gallaudet University, and this plan will help us to maintain an outstanding University – not only for students who are here now, but also for students who come to our University in the future. Really, we are here to serve all eligible and deserving young deaf and hard of hearing students. So, I want to thank everyone again for joining me and thank you for being with us during this program. If there are any questions or if there is more information you need, you know where to contact us.

Thank you very much. So long!