What a full house we have tonight! It is good to see all of you. Thank you for returning to celebrate our distinguished alumni.

Let me begin by offering my congratulations to our two new Distinguished Alumni, Mrs. Dawn Franks and Mr. David King, and to our Distinguished Young Alumni, Mr. Michael Wysocki. I gave him his diploma some years ago and here he is. Maybe I’m getting older. As President Reagan once said, “There are three ages in life—there’s youth, middle age, and “Hey, you’re looking great!” I’m glad so many of you said I was looking great when I came in.

Okay. I’m not the main speaker tonight. I’m looking forward to hearing from Ken Hall, too. I was told simply to update our returning alumni and friends on what has changed on campus in the last 10 to 15 years—assuming many of you have not returned in a long time—and to do so quickly. Wow! Talk about the impossible.

Remember those speed talkers who give you the equivalent of fine print at the end of radio commercials? Here goes.

**Enrollment:**
- Moved from 3,000 to record 7,500 students;

**New Buildings, Equivalent Renovations and Acquisitions include:**
- Herrington Patriot Center; with
- Maytee Fisch Basketball Arena; and
- Jean Lancaster Health Science Wing;
- Braithwaite Nursing Building;
- $20 mil Student Center Renovation;
- $22 million Student Center Addition;
- Patriot Village Apartment complex;
- Ornelas Hall Dorm;
- Fine Arts Complex;
- Ratliff Engineering Building North…and South;
- TxAire Research Houses 1 and 2;
- Irwin Baseball Field;
- Suddenlink Softball Field; which together with the field-house, make up UT Tyler Ballpark;
• Perkins/Citizens 1st Bank Soccer Complex;
• 17 acres behind Ornelas Activity Center;
• 35 acres across Old Omen for new recreation fields;
• Garland Hall (Longview Campus);
• Mathis Hall (Palestine Campus);
• Plus the two satellite 50-acre campuses themselves.
• Spence Fountain and Plaza;
• Riter Carillon, Tower and Plaza;
• Braithwaite Gardens;
• Muntz Water Garden;
• Nursing building expansion;
• Biology building expansion;
• Ornelas Activity Center acquisition.

Whew! We’ve been busy. Your university campus is much different than it was a few years ago.

And there are four more “difference makers” under way right now—actually there are 7 or 8, but no one can stand hearing about all of them at once.

1. **Houston Engineering Program**—We have partnered with three Houston community colleges with 150,000 students to build the nation’s first, accredited 2+2 engineering program. This program, in west Houston, has taken off and is on track to be one of the largest engineering schools in the state.

2. Just days from now, work will begin on **W. T. Brookshire Hall**—future home of the new **Ben and Maytee Fisch College of Pharmacy**. The first pharmacy students will start in 2015. This building will be a landmark facility.

3. In addition, we will break ground on a new $6.5 million Music Wing, which will be added to the Cowan Center. This added space will allow for a symphonic band and a future orchestra, as well as an expanded vocal music program.

4. And finally, we will soon break ground for a new Alumni House. An icon for our campus, this building will allow us to honor our alumni, give us needed space for reunions, special events, and recruiting outstanding faculty, or just meeting on campus for a lunch.
We are determined to make this a true showpiece for our campus. We want to build something warm and welcoming that will not only give our alumni a home, but also serve as the first look visitors get when they come to our campus.

This new facility will be built in our most prominent location—the circle drive as you arrive at the main entrance. So when you arrive, the first thing you will see will be the alumni house.

There are plenty of ways for you to help us build this project, and if you give Alumni Director Brittany Childs a call I’m sure she’ll let you know what you can do.

Each of you is part of a growing force that has weight both here in Tyler and beyond. We thank you for all you do to show the community how this university produces excellent students who make a difference. Much of what you have just seen would not be possible without your support. Thank you for allowing me to be with you tonight.