

REMARKS

**Provost Timothy D. Sands
GPRI Policy Research for a Changing World
“Grand Challenge” Conference
Tuesday, April 9, 2013**

- Good morning.
- I'm happy to be here to kick off what I know will be an informative day for you...and I hope will be an inspirational one.
 - I know I'm inspired when I see the fascinating work of my peers – I suspect many of you are the same way.
- As you know, Discovery Park was founded on the principle of interdisciplinary research.
 - The labs don't belong to a particular individual; they belong to the research. A team of the best thinkers is assembled depending on the problem they're trying to solve or the challenge they're trying to overcome.
 - This method has proven to be very successful and is becoming the standard for accelerating scientific discovery.
 - The interdisciplinary method is especially important when it comes to what we refer to as the “Grand Challenges” – the areas you're going to discuss today.
- Just as we know the Grand Challenges are not one dimensional in scope, we also know they do not have one, single solution.
 - Such themes as Health, Environment and Energy are complex and influenced by many factors – they require the thinking of many disciplines if we are to overcome the challenges they present.
- And Purdue is uniquely positioned to meet the need with internationally recognized professors, top-ranked graduate programs, and this distinctive framework for interdisciplinary discovery.
- Of the more than 1,500 policy institutes across the United States, including those at other Big Ten universities, very few include core participation from campus experts in science, engineering, and technology.

- GPRI emphasizes connections between science and society.
- The Institute is an active co-sponsor of seminars, forums and programs with dozens of colleges and centers at Purdue.
 - Today you will hear from experts within some of these partner centers.
- Cross-fertilization can be a powerful tool and all that is required of you is to listen and join in the discussion – that’s what this day is for.
- Before I turn the program over to our talented Interim Director of GPRI, Dennis DePew, I’d like to acknowledge some special guests who are with us today.
- These are members of GPRI’s External Advisory Council:
 - **Joann DiGennaro**
President, Center for Excellence in Education
 - **Jim Robb**
Senior Vice President, Enterprise Planning and Development, Northeast Utilities System
 - **Anne M. Schowe**
Retired Vice President, Sun Microsystems, Inc.
 - **Dr. Starnes Walker**
U.S. Fleet Cyber Command/U.S. 10th Fleet U.S. Navy
 - **Dr. Arden Bement, Jr.**
Director Emeritus, Global Policy Research Institute, Purdue University
- Please join me in thanking them for being here.

[[[Lead applause.]]]

- Many of you know that Dennis DePew was an outstanding Dean for our College of Technology for nearly a decade after which he escaped to Ireland for a sabbatical.

- We are delighted that upon his return, he agreed to take on the role of Interim Director for the Global Policy Research Institute where he leads a team of very talented people who carry on the extraordinary work that they and Arden Bement began in 2010.

- Since its inception, GPRI has successfully:
 - Established a beautiful office environment at the Schowe House.
 - Designed a very popular course called Seminar in Global Policy Issues.
 - Created Incentive Award Grants for proposals that catalyze the teaming of social scientists with natural scientists, engineers or technologists to address important problems that can inform pressing public policy issues.
 - To date, 22 projects have been awarded more than \$600,000.
 - Established Faculty Leadership and External Advisory committees – whose members add both insight and credibility to the Institute.

There are many more accomplishments – including many by the Inaugural Director of GPRI, Dr. Arden Bement.

- We owe Arden a special thank you for putting GPRI on its feet. He has accomplished a great amount of work in a short amount of time including taking 17 international trips on behalf of Purdue (and that takes into account two trips to Colombia and one trip to Moscow **after he retired!**)
 - We will always be grateful to you, Arden, for all you have done.