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MESSAGE FROM CHANCELLOR KANG

November is often when people contemplate what they are thankful for in their lives. A recent and very significant event has campus leadership and all those who support UC Merced's mission and vision, expressing many thanks.

As you may have heard, when state legislators passed California's 2010-11 budget last month, it included $102.5 million in funding for our campus. This is wonderful news, and a clear sign that legislators recognize UC Merced's important role in the region in raising the bar for educational attainment and developing long-term economic diversification while expanding access to the UC system for students throughout the state.

Like our sister campuses, UC Merced has had to manage its increasing needs with limited resources. As a result, we carried out our best efforts to do "more with less." Our campus community stepped up to the plate and made difficult decisions along with personal sacrifices. By doing so, you all have helped this campus weather the worst economic downturn California has experienced in recent history. I cannot begin to fully express my gratitude and most sincere thanks for everyone's patience and dedication.

I must also acknowledge the unwavering support our campus has received from state legislators, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and the UC Office of the President.

To recap, of the $102.5 million earmarked for UC Merced, $81 million will be used to build the new Science and Engineering II building, $10 million for operations, $6.5 million for infrastructure and site development and $5 million in supplemental operating funds. These critically needed funds – along with the scheduled opening of the Social Science and Management Building in Fall 2011 will help ease our need for additional space.

While the state budget funds will assist with our physical expansion, the funding commitment from UCOP will allow UC Merced to implement the top goals outlined in our three-year plan. Those priorities include:

- Growing enrollment by 600 students annually through 2013
- Hiring more faculty and staff
- Building graduate enrollment to 7 percent

Again, I am deeply appreciative of the strong and continued support of our campus and am heartened by the Legislature's renewed commitment to higher education. Moreover, I thank you for your hard work and for displaying a true "can do" spirit.

I invite you to contact me and share your ideas and suggestions in person or via e-mail to chancellor@ucmerced.edu. I will be listening.

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