March 8, 2013

Dear Mines Community:

We are announcing today the start of a strategic planning cycle for the campus. Our last strategic plan was formally adopted in 2004 and this plan was intended to cover the period from 2004 until 2014. We have updated and added implementation steps to the plan since its adoption; these updates have helped keep the campus moving forward in a dynamic and changing world. It is now time to re-engage the broader campus community in a discussion about our shared future and collectively plot the strategic direction of the campus. This conversation needs to invite participation from all employees, across all ranks, and include faculty, staff, student leadership, and alumni.

Since the adoption of the current strategic plan in 2004, much has happened to the higher education landscape and much has happened to Mines. In 2004 we were financially vulnerable, we were entering a period of declining state support, our graduate enrollment was in slow decline, our undergraduate admission profile was flat, and our capital infrastructure needed serious attention. In the ensuing decade, we have watched public higher education funding continue to decline both in Colorado and the US; during this same period we have experienced very significant difficulties in both the public and private sectors of our economy. The world of higher education became more intensely competitive not only in terms of academic rank and recognition but also in raw financial terms. In spite of these very significant factors, we find ourselves today in a changed institution. Our balance sheet is strong, demand for our degrees has driven dramatic improvements in our undergraduate population, research has grown and become even more embedded in the fabric of the campus, graduate and undergraduate enrollment has increased significantly, we have made significant progress on our capital infrastructure needs, and in spite of very uncertain times for higher education, our future is bright. There are a multitude of reasons for this transformation and many, many individuals have played significant roles in fostering this change at Mines.

As we look forward to the coming years, we will continue to be strongly influenced by the external world and we will have to carefully plot a course that supports excellence in all that we do and produces long-term sustainability for the institution. Just as you contributed to Mines’ past success, you are critical to Mines’ future success. We will hold a series of forums that will be used to gather input from the campus on our overall strategic direction. These forums will be moderated by two third party facilitators that we have engaged specifically for this purpose, who will collect and analyze your thoughts and ideas for use in our strategic planning process. Our strong hope is that we see broad campus involvement at these forums from faculty, staff, and student leadership. You will receive information on how to sign up for one of the four forums right after spring break along with links to “pre-forum” reading material. The dates and times for the forums are:

Wednesday, March 27, 2013 at 5:15 PM
Thursday, March 28, 2013 at 9:30 AM
Wednesday, April 3, 2013 at 1:30 PM
Thursday, April 4, 2013 at 1:00 PM

Thanks in advance for your part in making our strategic planning process a great success for Mines. And finally, as always, thanks to the faculty, students, and staff on the campus for all that you do for Mines.

All the Best!

M. W. Scoggins, President
T. E. Parker, Provost