

Chancellor Roger Brown's Remarks
125th Anniversary Celebration Launch Event
UC – Chattanooga Room
March 1, 2011

Good afternoon! I am so happy to see so many of you here with us today.

We are here to celebrate an important milestone in the life of this campus. It's not every institution that can claim to be 125 years old. In our community, Coca Cola Bottling Company isn't quite there. Provident Life and Insurance, now Unum in our community, isn't quite there. Of the major institutions and companies in Chattanooga, only several churches, the local newspaper, and a few businesses have reached this milestone.

We've all heard the story. 125 years ago, a reporter described Old Main, the campus's first structure, by writing, "This institution is a light set upon a hill, in a literal as well as a figurative sense. It is lighted throughout with gas, and when it is illuminated in the evening, it is truly a light upon a hill, a thing of real beauty." When he wrote these words, he created an

enduring legacy of the Chattanooga campus as a beacon of opportunity for the region.

With the commitment and dedication of each and every one of you, we withhold that tradition today. An university is not the brick and mortar that hold the classrooms and labs. A university is people. Faculty members who value their roles as teaching scholars—mentors to young minds and eager learners.

Administrators and staff members who support students in their endeavors. Students who come to live and learn. And alumni and friends, who carry on the traditions of the past and lead us into the future.

So today, as we celebrate 125 years of achievement on this campus, take a bow. Pat yourselves on the back. And take a moment to reflect on what you have done to make this campus better, and what we will be called upon to do to ensure its strength in the future.

Recently, UTC announced plans to join the Top 5 public universities in the South. That's a big challenge, but I have no doubt we can get there. We have a firm foundation upon which

to build toward that goal, and everyone in this room will be part of the effort to attain our aspirations.

I want to close with a reading from that first Matriculation Day, September 15, 1886. These are the words of Dr. Richard Rust, representing the Freedmen's Aid Society. In his address to the new students and faculty of Chattanooga University, Dr. Rust said, "This is called a university. We have named the child ahead. We call it Chattanooga University, not for any individual, but for a young, thriving, enterprising, zealous city. And let us hope that the same zeal and energy that had made the city for which it is named, will also make this institution a thriving, energetic and zealous power in the cause of education." Our city is still thriving, enterprising, and zealous, and so is our campus. We achieve great accomplishments here every day, and I thank each of you for your contributions.

We aren't finished yet. Together, we shall achieve.

And now it is my great pleasure to introduce the co-chairs of our 125th anniversary and ask them to offer a few comments.

My wife, Dr. Carolyn Thompson, and Provost Phil Oldham's wife, Ms. Kari Oldham.

(Dr. Carolyn Thompson and Ms. Kari Oldham speak)

As Carolyn and Kari said, we are looking forward to a year of celebration and reflection on the 125 years of achievement of this campus. An important element of this will be a celebration of African American achievement, to coincide with UT Knoxville's 50th anniversary of desegregation. Our campus has a rich heritage of African American achievement, and we look forward to a series of events highlighting this significant part of our heritage.

We have many committees working to plan events, and if you are interested in serving or helping, please let Chuck or Terry know and I'm sure they can put you to work.

I'd like to invite Fred and Ruth Obear, and Bill and Sue Stacy, and representatives from our student and faculty and staff leadership to join us here for a special salute to UTC.

Thank you everyone for coming. Please enjoy yourselves. This party is because of you! I hope many of you can join us today at 2 p.m. outside Founders Hall as we celebrate another important achievement—our campus designation as a urban arboretum.

Thank you.