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Graduate Education and American Competitiveness

by Paul Tate, Dean in Residence, Council of Graduate Schools

On March 9 the Council of Graduate Schools and Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU) held a joint conference on "Graduate Education and American Competitiveness" in the historic Members' Room of the Library of Congress. The event was attended by graduate deans from seventy of CGS and ORAU member institutions, by the CGS Board of Directors, by members of the staffs of key Congressional leaders, and by the press. The audience was welcomed by Congressman Zach Wamp of Tennessee, and remarks were offered by Congressman Rush Holt of New Jersey and Senator Norm Coleman of Minnesota. Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, who is a former Secretary of Education, gave the keynote address.

Debra Stewart, in her opening remarks, laid out the two core beliefs that motivated the conference: "The first is that America's leadership in research and the innovations forthcoming from research have driven our nation's national pre-eminence and economic competitiveness. The second is that graduate education is the essential element in producing research and innovation going forward."

The Congressional leaders addressing the conference shared the view that research and innovation have been the key factors in America's economic success. "The National Academy of Sciences estimates that half of our new jobs since World War II have come from our technological superiority," Senator Alexander said in his keynote address. Senator Norm Coleman observed that "America's future lies in our intellectual growth and capacity, and in innovation." And Congressman Holt confirmed that our leadership depends on "the impetus and the opportunity for advancement that comes from research and development, whether it's in health, national defense, or the environment."

The second core belief, however--that it is specifically graduate education that has produced our technological superiority--is not so widely understood among Congressional leaders and policy makers. This point was emphasized during the first session by Steve Gunderson, who was for sixteen years a Congressman from Wisconsin and is now Senior Consultant and Managing Director of the Washington office of the Greystone Group, a strategic planning and management consulting firm. Mr. Gunderson encouraged the graduate education community to increase its visibility with key policymakers and stakeholders and to provide information about the valuable role of graduate education, and the research that goes with it, in maintaining and enhancing our national competitiveness.

Both Mr. Gunderson and Congressman Holt emphasized that the

case for the second core belief needs to be made clearly and aggressively, if national policy is to be impacted and a bright American future is to be preserved. How the case might be effectively made was outlined in the second session by Ron Ehrenberg, Director of the Cornell Higher Education Research Institute. Dr. Ehrenberg pointed to the growing body of literature that suggests that economic growth is related to investments in research and development. That such investments produce increases in publications and citations, which are common measures of research productivity, is perhaps not surprising. But studies also show that "holding other factors constant, an increase in the number of science and engineering Ph.D.s is associated with increases in patent applications, increases in university patent applications granted, and increases in non-university patents granted." This is strong evidence of the impact of graduate education on innovation and on economic growth, and can be emphasized by all those who advocate for increased funding for our graduate schools.

Graduate education, however, is not restricted to Ph.D. research. In fact, ninety per cent of graduate degrees awarded in the U.S. are master's degrees. The case also needs to be made, then--and perhaps even more urgently--that master's-level education is a major source of innovation and economic growth. Fortunately, this case is being made strongly, if only implicitly, by the increasing demand by business and industry for graduates with professional master's degrees--graduates with specific skills needed for specific kinds of jobs, acquired through internships and a focused curriculum. And Congressman Holt pointed out that there is already significant interest on Capitol Hill in connecting professional and master's training "in a way that is more outcome-oriented than some of our traditional, broader research-based graduate programs."

Even without a new infusion of federal funding, graduate schools are responding to the need for advanced workforce development by taking initiatives to develop new professional master's programs. In 2002, CGS partnered with the Sloan Foundation to promote the professional science master's degree, and one year later partnered with the Ford Foundation to promote professional degree programs in the humanities and social sciences. With funding from Sloan and Ford, CGS has been able to give 108 grants to 68 different universities for planning and for implementation of new professional master's degrees.

Les Sims, Senior Scholar in Residence and Director of External Grants Programs at CGS, has been directing the CGS effort to advance professional mas-

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ter's degrees. He explained the rationale for the degrees during the third session of the conference: "Twenty-one percent of undergraduate majors in the sciences and twenty-one percent in the social sciences never pursue an advanced degree in their fields, whether it's a master's or a Ph.D. And only about a quarter of them, when they go into the workforce directly from their undergraduate degrees, obtain employment that is directly related to their training in science or social science. We think that is a problem with producing the future workforce." The professional master's degree promises to improve those numbers, Dr. Sims observed, by offering an option other than the Ph.D. degree, which requires a significant commitment of time, and by offering an option that can lead directly to gainful employment including employment in areas of national need. Professional master's degrees also offer the prospect of better participation by minority students, who are better represented at the master's focused institutions that offer professional master's degrees and who are more likely to be attracted to programs that can be completed in a specific amount of time.

Another way of improving the numbers of workers with advanced degrees, and thereby improving America's competitiveness, is to increase the productivity in doctoral programs. Currently, only about fifty percent of students entering Ph.D. programs actually complete their degrees. (By contrast, in the U.K., across all fields, about two-thirds of Ph.D. students complete their degrees.) Moreover, minorities and women complete at lower rates than men. Domestic U.S. students also complete at lower rates than international students. And if we add to these grim statistics the fact that science and engineering have for some time been the least attractive fields for domestic students, the attrition in doctoral education can be seen to be genuinely alarming.

Daniel Denecke, Director of Best Practices at CGS, described the current efforts in the graduate community to decrease attrition and improve completion rates in Ph.D. programs. With help from grants from Pfizer, Inc., and the Ford Foundation, CGS has provided awards to twenty-one universities to track completion and attrition rates and to measure the impact on these rates of strategies that they are taking for improvement. Such strategies include on-campus pre-admission interviews to ensure a fit between program and student; moving beyond the dependency of doctoral students on a single advisor; reducing the teaching loads of doctoral students; offering special scholarship programs for students with family needs; and providing more research experience earlier in a student's doctoral path. "By addressing the attrition problem," Dr. Denecke said, "graduate deans are conscious that they are not only improving the lives of students and managing their budgets more effectively and more efficiently, but they are also filling a national need for enhanced research productivity."

Following Dr. Denecke on the program, Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, Vice Chancellor for Graduate Studies at UCLA and currently NSF/CGS Dean in Residence, pointed out that though there is currently an "upsurge of interest in and attention to graduate education," both among policy makers and university administrators, the interest and attention are "not yet commensurate with [the] importance [of graduate education] to our society and our economy." Dr. Mitchell-Kernan emphasized not just the need, but the unmitigated urgency of improved productivity in our graduate programs. She cited a commission established by the University of California Board of Regents, whose report, revealingly titled "Innovation and Prosperity at Risk: Investing in Graduate Education to Sustain California's Future," concluded, in Dr. Mitchell Kernan's words, "that the university was failing to provide enough graduate students to ensure the state's leadership

in science, technology and culture, and to keep pace with the projected growth in undergraduate enrollment." Similar conclusions can be drawn regarding the nation as a whole.

The single, most compelling reason that the current attention being given to graduate education, however encouraging, is not commensurate with social and economic realities, is that in spite of our efforts, competition from abroad has dramatically eroded America's former pre-eminence in doctoral education, particularly in programs in science and engineering. Virtually every speaker at the conference, in one way or another, stated that international competition in graduate education threatens American world-wide leadership in research and innovation and therefore threatens American prosperity. Speakers noted not just the much-heralded build-up of graduate institutions in China and in Pacific Rim countries, but the efforts in Europe aimed at integration and cooperation in both undergraduate and graduate education, collectively referred to as the "Bologna Process."

To offer a European perspective on the Bologna Process specifically, and on international competition generally, CGS invited Sybille Reichert, a strategic planning specialist for the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, as the first speaker in the fourth and last session. Dr. Reichert reported that "research training is now becoming the new focus of European higher education reform debate." Part of the motivation for this debate, she said, were issues of recognition of degrees and transferability of credit across borders, associated mainly with the new mobility of the European workforce. But there is also a concentration on excellence in the arena of research, which is recognized in Europe as necessary for economic competition.

Many graduate deans in the U.S. already understand that the Bologna Process will produce more uniformity in European degrees, which will largely be categorized into three-year bachelor's degrees, two-year master's degrees, and doctoral degrees taking three years after the master's. But graduate deans may not understand that the reform taking place is not just a reshuffling of academic credits and a re-labeling of educational stages. Europeans are reviewing their curricula in an attempt to match the needs of the workforce, reviewing the way they teach in order to improve instruction and move toward competence-based learning, and trying to increase research productivity, because they understand clearly the connection between research productivity and economic growth. European higher education, then, is undergoing a massive transformation, and part of the purpose of this transformation is to compete with the U.S.

Dr. Reichert pointed out several of the ways European graduate education could already be said to have surpassed its American counterpart. In the first place, Europe is now producing more Ph.D. graduates than the U.S. And it is producing more peer-reviewed publications, though it still lags behind somewhat in citations--a fact that draws attention of policy makers there. A recent ranking by the *Times Higher Education Supplement*, though of course subject to the shortcomings of all ranking systems, looked at data from the international research universities listed in the top 200. It placed 25 U.S. institutions and only 19 European universities in the top third, but 86 European universities were in this top 200, as opposed to only 62 U.S. institutions. Dr. Reichert observed that the rankings would probably have been very different only five or ten years ago.

Graduate education and research in the U.S. is impacted in another way by international competition. Nearly one-half of Ph.D. degrees in science and engineering awarded in the U.S. are awarded to international students, mostly from China and India, and as the numbers of these students attending universities in Europe, Australia, and in their own countries has increased, the number attending American universities has been

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Data Sources: What Are the Three Most Pressing Issues on Your Desk?

by Heath Brown, Director of Research and Policy Analysis and Maria Doulis, Research Assistant

In leading a graduate school, graduate deans continuously must confront changing economic, political, and institutional factors. Balancing the needs of faculty, students, and administrators -- as well as a variety of stakeholders in the local and business communities -- means that the daily agenda of a graduate dean is likely to change greatly from semester to semester or even from week to week.

For CGS to stay current with these changing trends, we conduct periodic surveys to better understand what are the three most pressing issues on graduate deans desks. We have just completed the latest survey and this article summarizes the major findings.

Over a hundred and twenty deans responded to the most recent survey. The responses were then coded according to the substance of the comments, and those comments were then grouped into broader categories reflecting general concerns such as diversity, research, program development and graduate school management. Our analysis (See Table 1) revealed that the three pressing issues confronting deans responding to the survey this year are: 1) finding funding for graduate students; 2) dealing with issues surrounding international students; and 3) managing enrollment.

Graduate Student Stipends, Assistantships, Fellowships

The most pressing issue is finding the resources to competitively fund graduate student stipends, fellowships and assistantships. Nearly two-thirds of deans responded that this was a concern. In a time of declining state support in many parts of the country, providing financial support becomes a key factor to attract the most qualified and talented students to an institution. Over twenty percent specifically cited adequately funding assistantships for teaching, research or other purposes as an urgent concern. One respondent summarized these concerns as: "finding the financial resources to increase Graduate Assistant stipends both strategically in the University's high quality programs and overall for GAs in general."

In 2003 and 2004, securing funding for graduate students was the second most pressing issue, while in 2001 and 2002, it was, just as this year, the issue of chief importance.

International Student Issues

Last year, CGS documented a decline in applications, admission and first-time enrollment by international students in U.S. graduate schools. This year, CGS discovered that the declines in applications from international students were continuing. These findings were validated by the fact that half of all responding deans cited issues surrounding the enrollment of international students as a pressing concern. More specifically, 27 percent cited declining international applications or enrollment as a problem, in addition to 15 percent who stated SEVIS, Visas Mantis or other immigration issues continued to be of concern. Another 8 percent mentioned other problems related to international students, most notably securing financial resources to

encourage their enrollment. These factors have coalesced into a widespread concern among deans about how to, as one respondent put it, "maintain the university as the first choice of highly qualified international students."

Enrollment Management

Enrollment management was the third issue of greatest importance to graduate deans. Within that group, over 40 percent of respondents described issues such as maintaining enrollment and applications as pressing concerns, and 14 percent cited recruitment of students and marketing of graduate programs specifically. Examples of specific difficulties mentioned include "managing controlled growth in the size of doctoral programs" and "increasing quality of graduate enrollment of U.S. born students in Engineering and Science."

Enrollment management has been a major issue in the past and clearly continues to be a priority today.

Other Issues

Other issues that figured prominently on the agenda of graduate deans this year were graduate school management, providing adequate student services, ensuring diversity, and coping with budget issues, with approximately 20 percent of responding deans listing each of these concerns. One respondent articulated the challenge of underrepresented groups in their school as being one of "creating

a more diverse faculty, student body, and administrative leadership staff in graduate education." It is noteworthy that over the last several years, diversity issues have become increasingly important, moving from the 9th most important issue in 2002 through 2004 up to the 5th most important in 2005. Conversely, dealing with budget issues has fallen from the dominant issue the last two years to the fifth most important this year. Additional issues centered on program development and assessment, management information systems, completion and time-to-degree, research and faculty.

Private versus Public Institutions

It is clear that the environments faced by graduate deans in public and private institutions are quite unique. Funding and budgetary differences are understandably reasons that we might expect graduate deans in public and private institutions to report different pressing issues. We examined responses according to various institutional variables to assess more precisely whether all types of institutions were generally experiencing the same concerns or whether certain issues were particular to certain types of institutions.

Comparing responses between private and public institutions, the same three issues -- graduate student funding, international students and enrollment management--ranked as the top three concerns for both types of institutions. While the percentage of public and private institutions

table 1

What are the three most pressing issues on your desk?					
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	rank	rank	rank	rank	rank
Graduate student stipends, assistantships, fellowships	1	1	2	2	1
International students - enrollment, visa issues, SEVIS, funding	10	9	5	4	2
Enrollment management	3	5	3	6	3
Grad school management - planning, fundraising, recruitment	2	3	4	3	4
Student services - health benefits, career counseling	6	7	7	7	5
Diversity - student and faculty	7	9	9	9	5
Dealing with budget issues	-	2	1	1	5

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Federal Relations Update

by Patricia H. McAllister, Director of Government Relations and Public Affairs

The Council of Graduate Schools has established a new weekly electronic Government Relations communication to provide members with more frequent and current information on federal government relations and public affairs. The following reviews initiatives undertaken at the state level that highlight the importance of investments in graduate education and its role in promoting innovation and prosperity.

Alabama

The Economic Impact of Graduate Education on the State of Alabama was released in November 2001. Sponsored by the Alabama Council of Graduate Deans, the report reviewed findings from surveys and analyses that examined the role and potential of graduate education in Alabama. The audience for the report included policy makers and business and community leaders. The report found that graduate education programs make a significant contribution to the economy and quality of life in the state and that there is a strong demand for employees with graduate degrees. Further, investment in graduate education provides an immediate payoff to the state. Over eighty percent of recent alumni of graduate degree programs from Alabama universities were professionally employed in Alabama and contribute directly to the economy and quality of life.

This project also included interviews with graduate deans from peer institutions in neighboring states. Graduate deans from successful programs throughout the southeast underscored the necessity for graduate programs to partner with their respective communities in assessing emerging needs and providing rapid and effective responses to those needs. Recommendations included the following:

- Increased collaboration among graduate schools in the state to encourage inter-university graduate school partnerships in marketing graduate programs state-wide, in communicating with state decision-makers, and in strengthening relationships with potential clients and supporters.
- Promoting a unified public affairs and governmental relations program based upon the adoption of a "K-20" approach to education in America.
- Encouraging graduate programs to increase and strengthen partnerships with the business, service and commercial sectors.

The project also produced a brochure titled "Graduate Education in Alabama: The Key to a Successful Alabama in the 21st Century." For a copy of the full report go to: http://www.grad.auburn.edu/general/economic_impact_source_document.html.

California

The University of California has had a sustained focus on graduate education since the release of Innovation and Prosperity at Risk in 2001. The report was produced by the Commission on the Growth and Support of Graduate Education that was comprised of a distinguished set of academic leaders including Claudia Mitchell-Kernan, Vice Chancellor, Graduate Studies and Dean, Graduate Division, UCLA and now the CGS/NSF Dean in Residence. This report made a compelling case that tied California's future strength to graduate education, noting the link between discovery, innovation, research and graduate education. California, like many other states, has experienced a disinvestment in graduate education. Disinvestment compounded with increasing competition from other states has weakened graduate education in CA.

The Commission recommended a series of initiatives designed to

strengthen graduate education with the goal of increasing graduate enrollments at UC institutions in critical fields by 11,000 by 2010. Key to accomplishing this goal are expanded graduate outreach programs, affordable housing and more competitive financial support for students and a solid academic foundation. The report noted the need for additional support from the federal government, state government, industry, foundations and private donors.

In January of this year, a presentation on the Importance of Graduate Education to California and to the University of California was provided to the UC Board of Regents and included an update on what has happened since the 2001 report. Between 1998 and 2003 UC graduate enrollment increased by 20% from 30,000 to 36,000 students. During that same time period the net stipend per UC doctoral students increased by 12% from \$12,600 to \$14,100. In spite of these positive developments, the view remains that California's innovation and prosperity are still at risk because the proportion of UC graduate and doctoral students has remained flat because undergraduate enrollments grew at nearly the same rate.

Concerns about attracting top students to UC graduate programs remain strong due to inadequate financial support, growing barriers for international students, and the need to grow the pipeline of domestic students prepared for graduate study at UC. Compared to other similar research universities, UC has a much lower percentage of graduate enrollment and there is a growing gap between California job growth and the supply of skilled workers.

Next steps outlined in the report in the effort to enhance UC graduate education and California's competitiveness include:

- Assessing long-term needs more fully
- Improving the balance between undergraduate and graduate enrollments
- Developing new strategies for improving graduate student support
- Encouraging full participation of talented California students
- Attracting a greater proportion of under-represented students
- Strengthening national and international competitiveness of graduate programs
- Examining best practices in graduate preparation for both traditional and non-traditional post-graduate employment

Copies of the full reports and presentations are available at:
http://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/factsheets/graded011905_files/frame.htm
<http://www.ucop.edu/services/innovation.pdf>

Florida

Following the Council of Graduate Schools/Oakridge Research Associated Universities Legislative Conference in March in Washington, DC., the Council of Florida Graduate Deans decided to publish a newsletter to share with their state legislators and administrators. The first issue of the newsletter, released in May 2005, contains stories about graduate students, research they are conducting and how their work contributes to the state's economy. To obtain a copy of the newsletter, contact Patricia Bishop, Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of Central Florida. Email: pbishop@mail.ucf.edu.

Massachusetts

In March 2005, the State Senate Task Force on Public Higher Education released

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declaring graduate student funding as a priority was similar; a greater percentage of public institutions cited international students (52 percent of public versus 41 percent of private institutions) and enrollment management (44 percent of public versus 32 percent of private institutions) as concerns. For private institutions, graduate school management also ranked third, with 32 percent of deans reporting this issue, compared to only 17 percent of deans at public institutions. Higher percentages of respondents at private institutions also reported student services, program assessment, review and accreditation, and faculty issues as matters of importance compared to deans from public institutions. On the other hand, dealing with budget issues, including cuts in state aid, was an issue of greater significance to deans at public institutions, for whom the issue ranked fourth.

Conclusion and Implications

From a purely intellectual perspective, these results provide an interesting view into the often complex daily life of a graduate dean. But the responses to this survey also help CGS make many critical decisions. They inform decisions regarding the topics and speakers for Annual Meeting plenary and concurrent sessions, as well as for the Summer Workshop. The findings also inform the emerging government relations agenda. For instance, demonstrating that graduate support and international student issues are the two most pressing issues for graduate deans, allows CGS to advocate more convincingly for public policies that promote better student support and a more reasonable set of visa policies for international students. For these reasons, we greatly appreciate the high response to this survey and encourage you to continue to provide us with such valuable information about the pressing issues on your desk.

Professional Science Master's (PSM) and Professional Master's (PMA) Implementation Grants Announced

With support from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation and the Ford Foundation, CGS has named 27 member institutions as recipients of two-year Professional Master's Implementation Project awards. These new awards are a continuation of the CGS professional master's initiatives. The CGS/PSM project began in 2002 with a grant from the Sloan Foundation to extend the PSM initiative in science and mathematics to master's focused institutions; and the CGS/PMA project began in 2003 with a grant from the Ford Foundation to promote professionalization of master's degrees in the humanities and social sciences.

Institutions receiving these new Implementation Awards were selected from among CGS member institutions that had earlier received PSM or PMA Planning Grants where planning activities indicated the need and feasibility for the proposed programs. These awards add 37 professional master's programs to the 17 previously created with CGS grants to CGS member institutions. Included among the award institutions are several minority-serving institutions, including HBCU and HSI universities.

The CGS Professional Master's projects promote creation of a new type of master's degree designed to prepare graduates from diverse backgrounds for entry-level professional positions in business, government, or non-profit (BGN) employment sectors. These programs are developed collaboratively by faculty and external advisory boards (including persons from the appropriate employment sectors) and include advanced course work that is typically highly interdisciplinary, an introduction to business principles, legal and/or regulatory issues related to the targeted employment sector, activities that build the capacity to work in teams and that develop high-level communication and technical skills, and an internship in a BGN environment.

The 10 institutions receiving CGS/Sloan awards to implement 11 new PSM programs are:

Alabama A&M University - Applied Statistics
California State University, Stanislaus - Genetic Counseling
College of St. Rose - Computational Mathematics
George Washington University - Molecular Biotechnology
Southern University - Radiation and Environmental Health
Towson University - Forensic Science
University of Houston, Clear Lake - Applied Physics

University of North Carolina, Wilmington - Computer Information Systems

University of Northern Iowa - 2 programs: Applied Physics and Industrial Mathematics

Western Carolina University - Science Entrepreneurship

The 18 institutions receiving CGS/Ford awards to implement 26 new PMA programs are:

American University - Professional Sociology
Appalachian State University - Public History
Buffalo State College - Community Health Promotion
Claremont Graduate University - 3 programs: Arts & Cultural Management, Museum Studies, and Archival Studies
Cleveland State University - International Relations
Eastern Michigan University - Human Language Technology
Indiana University / Purdue University, Indianapolis - 2 programs: Geographical Information Science and Museum Studies
John Carroll University - Non-profit Administration
Lehigh University - Health & Biopharmaceutical Economics
Sarah Lawrence College - 2 programs: Genetics & Public Health Advocacy and Genetics & Research Ethics
Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville - 2 programs: Professional & Technical Writing and Criminal Justice
State University of New York, Albany - Economic Forecasting
University of California, Santa Cruz - Social Documentation
University of Colorado, Boulder - 2 programs: Graduate Professional Development and Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL)
University of Maryland, Baltimore County - Public History
University of North Carolina, Charlotte - Applied Philosophy
University of North Carolina, Greensboro - Women & Gender Studies
University of North Carolina, Wilmington - 3 programs: Applied Behavioral Analysis, Applied Gerontology, and Criminal Justice

Additional information about the CGS Professional Master's initiatives can be found on the CGS website (www.cgsnet.org).

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declining. As Senator Alexander noted earlier, "we are taking our higher education system for granted, while other countries are waking up. More of their best students are staying home rather than coming to the U.S. and visa problems in the age of terrorism discourage the importation of the foreign brainpower we need."

Heath Brown, Director of Research at CGS, presented data collected from the CGS surveys on international graduate student enrollment. Last year, CGS found that there had been a 28 percent decline in international graduate applications between 2003 and 2004, and an 18 percent decline in offers of admission, though this resulted in only a six percent decline in enrollment in the fall of 2004. But this six percent decline must be added to the ten percent decline in 2003, and the eight percent decline in 2002. New data show that international applications received this year, between 2004 and 2005, have declined by another five percent. Dr. Brown cautioned that these declines cannot be attributed simply to the difficulty of the visa process, because there were increases in applications from students from the Middle East, while applications from Chinese students declined thirteen percent and from Indian students, nine percent.

In his keynote address, Senator Alexander observed that governments of a host of countries in Europe and Asia are "trying to stop the outsourcing of their best brains to the United States." And he supports efforts to reform our visa policy to make it easier to attract those brains. But he is aware that more is required than a reform of visa policy, if we are to keep our "secret weapon, the brain power we need in science, technology, and research, to keep our standard of liv-

ing." We need a comprehensive strategy for preserving our advantage. In the words of Ron Townsend, President and CEO of Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU), which co-hosted the conference, "the clearest path for the country to remain competitive and secure is the promotion of a highly-trained workforce equipped with advanced and flexible skills, and capable of operating at the frontier of knowledge creation."

The most dramatic moment of the conference came at the very end of Senator Alexander's keynote address, when he challenged the participants to answer the question, "If you were a United States Senator and you were about to create a discrete package of federal initiatives to help make certain that ten years from now the United States in terms of brain power stands where it ought to be to be able to keep its standard of living, what would those items be?"

In her closing remarks, Debra Stewart enthusiastically embraced this challenge, as a challenge for the community of graduate deans to take up, and with urgency. "We need to get busy making that list," she said. "We need not to make it in an isolated way. We need actively to engage with all of you in a continuing discussion. And I think the really good news is that there are elected officials on the other end of the telephone here in Washington who are actually waiting for this information. That may be to me the very most encouraging outcome of this conference." As a key follow-up to the conference, CGS is developing a white paper, to be released soon, that formulates concrete next steps that America's political leadership should take to meet the graduate education requirements going forward.

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its report titled *Investing in our Future*. This report notes that Massachusetts's future is dependent on its capacity for innovation. The report notes, "We can boast the highest concentration of Ph.D.s in the world and among the highest per capita research expenditures in the country." In many ways Massachusetts is truly America's "state of mind." However, the state is losing its position of leadership for two reasons: 1) competition from other states and 2) failure to protect the state's position by making the key investments and policy choices the new economy demands. According to the report, the single most important strategy for securing the state's competitive advantage is strengthening public higher education.

The Task Force report identified five specific challenges and recommendations for addressing each one. Of particular interest to graduate deans is the recommendation to "fuel the state's economic engine" and the need to "secure additional investments from taxpayers by imposing specific accountability provisions requirements on the higher education system." To fuel the state's economic engine the task force report recommends creation of a five-year strategic plan to address the University of Massachusetts's R&D capacity and potential by focusing on strategic opportunity in ways that will provide the greatest downstream economic benefits to the state. Other recommendations include providing additional state financial resources toward key science and technology professorships and funding the development of laboratories, equipment, and facilities that will help strengthen the state's innovation economy.

These recommendations do not specifically target the role of graduate education, and there may be an opportunity for graduate deans in Massachusetts to emphasize the role of graduate education to the overall objective of enhancing the state's capacity for innovation. A copy of the Task Force report is available at www.mass.gov/legis/reports/public_higher_ed_taskforce_report.htm

These state initiatives may serve as important components of the CGS national effort to promote graduate education and American competitiveness. Such efforts can be used to highlight the importance of graduate education with key members of Congress and reference initiatives from their home states. Graduate deans have the opportunity to become involved or to promote initiatives in their home states and to gain the attention and support of state policymakers in an effort to promote greater commitment and resources for graduate education at the state level.

CGS is seeking nominations for the annual CGS/University Microfilms International Distinguished Dissertation Awards

This year's fields for the competition are 1) Humanities/ Fine Arts and 2) Biological and Life Sciences.

The award consists of an honorarium of \$1,000 to be presented at the Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

Each regular member institution may nominate one person in each field. Nominees must have received their degree between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2005. Nominations for the awards are due by July 29, 2005.

More information is available at the CGS website, <http://www.cgsnet.org/ProgramsServices/index.htm#awards> or by calling Cheryl Flagg at 202-223-3791, ext. 17.



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McNair Memos

As many in the graduate school community know, the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program is a graduate school preparation program for undergraduates interested in earning a doctoral degree and considering careers in the professorate. Each year, several institutions host McNair conferences, which provide a forum for McNair participants to present their research orally and via poster presentations.

Of particular interest to graduate deans during these conferences are the graduate school fairs, an opportunity to disseminate information about graduate programs to a "captive" audience of motivated undergraduates with Ph.D. aspirations. McNair Scholars have research experience, have knowledge of the graduate school culture, and represent a diverse community. The McNair community encourages your participation in the upcoming conferences.

MCNAIR SCHOLARS RESEARCH CONFERENCES

Name: 11th Annual SAEOPP-University of Tennessee Knoxville McNair National Scholars Research Conference

Dates: July 7-10, 2005 [2006 Dates: July 6-9]

Website: <http://web.utk.edu/~mcnair>

Name: 11th Annual University at Buffalo McNair Research Conference

Dates: July 14-16, 2005

Website:

<http://wings.buffalo.edu/vpaa/mcnair/conference/index.htm>

Name: Penn State McNair Summer Research Conference

Dates: July 29-31, 2005 [2006 Dates: July 28-30]

Website: <http://app.outreach.psu.edu/MCNAIRSCHOLARS>

Name: University of Maryland Baltimore County

Dates: September 23-24, 2005

Website: www.umbc.edu/mcnair

Name: National McNair Scholars Research Conference and Graduate School Fair

Dates: September 30-October 1, 2005

Website: www.udel.edu/mcnairconference/

Name: 14th National McNair Scholars Research Conference and Graduate School Fair

Dates: November 4-6, 2005

Website: www.omsa.uiuc.edu

Name: National McNair Scholars' Research Conference

Dates: February 17-19, 2006

Website: <http://www.coe.unt.edu/mcnair/>

Name: University of Maryland National McNair Scholars and Undergraduate Research Conference

Dates: March 16-19, 2006

Website: www.aap.umd.edu/mcnairconference

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