

**New Partners in the Global Marketplace:  
The Role of Higher Education**

Prepared for the

**Wisconsin Economic Summit**

**November 30 – December 2, 2000**

**Milwaukee, WI**

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## **New Partners in the Global Marketplace: The Role of Higher Education**

The world to-day is becoming, and has largely become, a single unit—that is to say, that life, activities, production, distribution, consumption, etc., all tend to be international and world-wide, and this tendency is increasing. Trade, industry, the money system, are also largely international. There is the closest connection and interdependence between different countries, and an event in any one of them has reactions in others. In spite of all this internationalism, governments and their policies continue to be narrowly nationalistic. Indeed, this narrow nationalism has become worse and more aggressive during the post-war years, and is to-day a dominating factor in the world. The result is a continuous conflict between the actual international events of the world and the nationalistic policy of governments. You may look upon the international activities of the world as a river flowing down to the sea, and the national policies as attempts to stop it and dam it and divert it, and even to make it flow backwards. It is obvious that the river is not going to flow backwards, nor is it going to be stopped. But it may occasionally be diverted a little, or a dam may result in floods. So these nationalisms of to-day are interfering with the even flow of the river and creating floods and backwaters and stagnant pools, but they cannot stop the ultimate progress of the river.

Jawaharlal Nehru

If this observation was true when Nehru wrote it from prison to his daughter in 1933, how much truer it is today. America's – and, indeed, the world's – economy is evolving into an information economy, with exponential growth in many information and technology industries. Contemporary cultures all around the world reflect the influences of other, formerly distant cultures that now are accessible from virtually anywhere in the world within seconds. This process of “internationalization,” which Nehru described as “a river flowing down to the sea,” is what we call globalization.

In its broadest sense, globalization is an evolution of the world into a more interconnected, interdependent entity. This process has advanced rapidly in the areas of finance, transportation, and technology, and its effects are becoming apparent in all areas of world culture – in dress, language, the arts, and even in systems of belief. The economic sphere has been impacted perhaps most broadly and intensely, with business and industry as important leaders in the process of change. An examination of the process of economic globalization and the State of Wisconsin's participation in that process is what has brought us all together for this summit.

History teaches us an important lesson concerning the importance of not rowing against the current of Nehru's unstoppable river. The United States economy has undergone major metamorphoses in the past. As it transitioned from a locally and regionally focused economy to one emphasizing a national focus, businesses that crossed the threshold as leaders of that evolutionary change prospered; those that rowed against the current failed. Observing the effects of our current transition to a more internationalized economy, we see that those businesses that actively participate in the international sphere provide better wages for their workers, reap larger profits, and suffer less susceptibility to an economic downturn in any single region of the world. At the present time, we are experiencing the grafting of a powerful tributary, in the form of the

communication and information revolution, onto Nehru's river, and the power and pace of that river have increased dramatically. Once more, those businesses, institutions, cities, states, and nations that are prepared to function in a rapidly paced global market, fueled by technological advances in communication, will be most successful. The State New Economy Index estimates that the portion of the world economy's combined output open to global competition will reach \$21 trillion this year, up from \$4 trillion just five years ago. "This growth will be driven by global capital markets, reduced economic and trade barriers, and—perhaps most importantly—technological change, which makes it easier to locate enterprises and sell products and services almost anywhere (<http://www.neweconomyindex.org/states/part2.html>, 9/29/2000).

The numbers and types of technological advances grafted onto the process of globalization have been prodigious, with the result that the pace of change, the costs of adaptation to that change, and the depth of information and knowledge required for successful adaptation have increased to a point where an individual organization or institution cannot hope to negotiate the river of globalization on its own. Unless all the oarsmen on this ship of State pull together to steer in the middle of the current, Wisconsin will find itself on the "backwaters and stagnant pools" remaining in the wake of this river of change.

The development of creative "new partnerships" for negotiating the global marketplace will provide the means by which Wisconsin business and industry can grow and prosper in this milieu. In an effort to elucidate the kinds of partnerships that would accomplish this goal, we interviewed government, business, and educational representatives. Our subjects spoke candidly and in considerable detail about the problems they perceived and the prospects for resolution of those problems. And, while there was considerable variation in opinions concerning the specific problems and solutions, there also was a surprising degree of concurrence on a fundamental principle: the "new partners" in the global marketplace must be Wisconsin business, government, and education, working in concert on the development of a comprehensive, coordinated, and flexible strategy for growing our international economy.

### To What Extent is Wisconsin's Economy "Globalized?"

To a large extent, Nehru's river has been flowing around the economy of Wisconsin. While individual businesses and industries have embraced the changes, as a state we have been slow in developing strategies to become a leader in the new techno-global economy. The "New Economic Index" indicators, which measure both the extent to which a state's manufacturing workforce is employed in producing goods for export as well as the share of the workforce employed by foreign-owned companies, place Wisconsin 39<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states. The "Index" also provides a measure of economic dynamism, which is defined as the extent of innovation and the ability to get to market quickly, two strategies that clearly lend a competitive advantage. Wisconsin ranks 27<sup>th</sup> according to this indicator. There can be no question that the State must take a new direction in economic development if it is to thrive in the techno-global economy.

One Wisconsin CEO and former chair of WITCO characterized Wisconsin's involvement in exporting as "inadequate," a point of view supported by Wisconsin Department of Commerce data that identify only 8 to 9% of the total State GNP as exports. Companies vary considerably in the percent of their business devoted to exports, with most companies falling into the 5 to 50%

range and with the median for exporting companies at about 15%. Ten years ago, that median was just 5%, so we have seen some progress, and Wisconsin has progressed at about the same rate as the U.S. overall. Four sectors – instruments, machinery, transportation equipment, and electrical machinery – comprise 63.7% of Wisconsin’s total exports. A large share of these exports are to NAFTA countries, and a number of people argue that figures for Mexico and Canada should be removed from data on exporting in order to provide a more realistic picture of the State’s involvement in the global economy. As one company CEO indicated, because of import restrictions (e.g., pesticides in California), it often is much easier to export to Canada or Mexico than to other states within the U.S. In terms of trade, many people view Canada as part of “the northern region” that includes the USA’s northern states. However, there are others who compare NAFTA to the European Union, and they contend that the elimination of trade figures for Canada and Mexico would be equivalent to removing from Germany’s export totals the data for exports to any EU country. Perhaps the significant lesson here is that we are seeing all over the world a regionalization of international trade, and that our planning must include strategies for becoming more competitive both in the North American market and in the wider global market. One individual that we interviewed argued persuasively that our persistence in thinking “national vs. international” trade is a barrier to making greater strides. We must learn to see the world’s economy as one global marketplace and, within that, we need to identify where individual Wisconsin companies best can compete.

There are few data available on the import side of the Wisconsin’s global participation, but business leaders generally agree that the attraction of more international business to the State should be a high priority.

### What Specific Issues Must We Address to Improve Wisconsin’s Position?

Economic success in the twenty-first century will require us to develop a complex collage of responses to the multitude of challenges presented by the techno-global economy. To do so, we must remove obstacles that impede our ability to bring together the intellectual, experiential, and financial capital that will move Wisconsin into a leadership role. Our interviews have led us to identify the following issues that call for immediate, cooperative attention.

#### *Fear of the Global Economy*

Fear may be the single most significant obstacle to increasing Wisconsin’s exporting. In Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, and a host of other countries, workers do not fear participation in the global economy because they have seen their standards of living improve markedly because of that participation. This has not been the experience of U.S. workers. In addition, education in the U.S. tends to be less globally oriented than in most other countries of the developed (and in much of the developing) world. The Governor’s WITCO Task Force produced a set of wide ranging recommendations to address Wisconsin’s need for better international education. Several individuals interviewed for this paper indicated that more needed to be done to implement those recommendations so that the people of Wisconsin will be more globally aware.

Many people in the U.S. who understand and appreciate the significance of the transition to a global economy still have difficulty envisioning specifically the role of their business in “The New Economy” and the benefits that will accrue directly to them as a result of their participation. They fear involvement with processes, paperwork, and payment in languages and traditions that are foreign to them. We need to do a better job of dispelling these fears and educating people about these benefits. In particular, the following points need to be communicated:

- *Assistance in dealing with foreign cultures is available.* The International Division of the State’s Department of Commerce can direct businesses to the assistance they need to enter into the international economic sphere. There are many other agencies and organizations that also provide information and support.
- *Exporting is profitable.* Numerous studies now have concluded that businesses engaged in exporting grow faster and earn higher profits. Exporting uses excess production capacity, smoothes seasonal cycles, keeps companies strong against competition, and alters companies to new trends and product innovations around the world. Exporting ensures expanding markets for the State’s industries.
- *Exporting creates jobs.* The U.S. Department of Commerce claims that every \$1 billion in fresh exports creates 25,000 higher skilled, higher paying (with wages 13% higher than U.S. average) jobs. Assuming the accuracy of these figures, if we can assist an industry or community to grow its exports by \$100 million, we will have helped to create 2500 new jobs for Wisconsin workers.
- *Almost any type of competitive, committed business can export.* Wisconsin firms currently export pool cues, bows and arrows, honey, Christmas trees, beer, ginseng, chopsticks, and many other such products, in addition to the precision machinery for which we are so well known.
- *Service industries can participate in international commerce.* A number of business leaders in the SE Wisconsin region have indicated that service is their fastest growing export
- *Global involvement results in a higher standard of living.* Studies show that those employed in globally-oriented firms earn approximately ten percent more than workers in other businesses. U.S. subsidiaries of foreign companies pay 26% higher wages than other U.S. private sector employers.

### *Antipathy among Academia, Business, and Government*

Business and the university, for so long, have viewed themselves as independent from one another, with little in the way of common interest to engage them in joint problem solving. Business has felt that education favors a purely theoretical interest in its teaching and research, and that universities view “applied research” as antithetical to their nature. Thus, business has listened with dispassion to suggestions that it can work with the university to serve the broader needs of the people of Wisconsin; business feel they have been rebuffed whenever they have approached the university for its assistance. Those in higher education feel pressure from the business sector to run universities more like businesses. They feel that business does not understand the importance of its role as a leader in the generation of new ideas, in conducting theoretical research to produce new knowledge, and in producing graduates who are not just technical experts but broadly educated critical thinkers who can comprehend and solve a wide

range of issues. Higher education rebels against imposing upon education what they believe is the credo of the business world - that “the bottom line” is all that matters. This chasm between business and academia must be bridged. Globalization is moving so quickly that any State hoping to keep up must have the cooperation of business, academia, and government to develop creative strategies for adapting quickly to the changes that result from the process.

While we as academics have been quick to identify cultural differences which separate us from other nationalities, we also need to understand and address the fact that the academic, business, and government communities are different subcultures. We must work hard – together – to eliminate the “culture shock” that occurs when our academic, business, and government communities interact. Other institutions have taken bold steps to build bridges between such subcultures, and we might look to them for models. For example, the State of Ohio has developed a Trade Education Partnership (TEP), the mission of which is “to broaden the public understanding of the impact of international commerce by helping companies educate their workers, suppliers and communities about the benefits of international trade” to all. According to its informational materials, TEP is a cooperative venture between the State and Ohio’s business leaders that works one-on-one with companies to develop and implement systematic, long-term trade education programs. It is a private, not-for-profit educational organization that relies upon grants and charitable donations to fund its operations. The U.S. Armed Forces, a number of years ago, developed “Joint Staff Colleges,” bringing together members of the different services to learn more about the sub-cultures comprising the four branches. These efforts have been successful in nurturing greater understanding and cooperation among sectors that previously viewed themselves as competitive or, at the very least, completely unrelated. We need to design new ways for professors, CEOs, and bureaucrats to learn more about one another and to combine their complementary expertise to achieve various globally focused goals. While there already are many examples of cooperative efforts among individuals from these different sectors, one professor we interviewed noted that such linkages across the State are idiosyncratic. He added that we need to create a statewide synergy that will increase the international potential of the State.

### *Global Education as a Low Priority*

Allen Goodman, President of the Institute of International Education, in a March 12, 1999 article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, takes the U.S. to task for its “*laissez-faire* approach to the challenges of globalization.” In particular, he decries America’s devaluing of international exchanges for students and scholars. He notes that according to recent studies by the U.S. Department of Education, every year more than 30 federal agencies regularly recruit for some 34,000 professional positions that require foreign-language proficiency. Goodman’s criticisms have struck a chord at institutions of higher education in Wisconsin, which, until recently, have not made global education a top priority. The number of Wisconsin students who study abroad falls far below the national average. Nor do Wisconsin institutions do a particularly good job of attracting international students to study here. Foreign students contribute substantial amounts of money to the economy of the country in which they study. Australia, which attracts the largest number of foreign students after the U.S. and Britain, estimates the 1999 contribution of foreign students to its economy at more than \$2 billion. But the value of a foreign student presence must be measured in more than dollars. They make a vital contribution

to the quality of the educational experience, presenting perspectives about which our own students otherwise would never be aware, helping all students to see issues from a point of view they may be in direct conflict with their own. Learning to understand alternative perspectives is a critical skill for future leaders. We need to think creatively about ways to attract more international students to the State and to integrate them into Wisconsin culture, provide a forum for businesses, K-12 schools, and community groups to interact with them in order to expand the international proficiency of our citizens.

### *The Brain Drain*

While the state of global education in Wisconsin has much room for improvement, we have succeeded in educating many students globally. Students who have experienced the larger world, however, are much more likely to look beyond the State for advanced educational and/or employment opportunities. Thus, the “brain drain” of globally educated students is another matter of concern to academic, business, and government institutions alike. One business leader who was interviewed recommended that business and government enter into a partnership to offer loans to assist Wisconsin students to travel abroad and, following the students’ graduation, to forgive portions of the loans for each year that the students remain employed in the State.

### *Lack of Cohesive Planning*

The State lacks a comprehensive and cohesive plan for expanding its role in the global economy. We do not have accurate information on the nature and extent of current globally-oriented activities in academia, business, or government. We have not addressed on a large scale, utilizing the expertise of all three of these “subcultures,” infrastructure issues (especially the cost and ease of transporting both goods and people) that must be resolved to support increased exporting. There are significant disagreements among representatives of business, government, educators, and the public about the segments of our economy that should be grown, the areas of the world on which we should focus, and the ways in which we prepare Wisconsin workers for expanding global participation. Some people feel strongly that we should build on our strengths while others believe that we must move into new technologies. Some feel we should focus on markets in Asia; others say Latin/South America is critical; still others think a diversity of markets is most desirable. Some businesses seek workers with expertise in certain areas of the world or business skills; others emphasize the value of a broader liberal arts education that delivers good communication and critical thinking skills along with a wider range of knowledge; still others want individuals with experience in several different parts of the world. Most businesses want employees with more and better education while, at the same time, many feel a severe shortage of workers who can quickly obtain and employ technical skills. The State’s involvement in growing the international component of the economy must be based on a clear but flexible plan developed from the confluence of many perspectives.

### *Ignoring Importing*

We have paid little attention to the area of importing, an important segment of the global picture. The State has a relatively small skilled international importing community, and there is little coordination of information about participation in this sphere of the global economy.

Academia needs to do more to provide education that will encourage students to seek careers in this area. In addition, much more needs to be done to assist business expansion into the importing sphere.

### *Lack of Venture Capital*

There is a severe shortage of venture capital available in the State. One Wisconsin exporter expressed the view that those in the highest income brackets in the State tend to be very conservative with their wealth, preferring to hold it for their heirs rather than to risk it in new ventures. We have done little to build confidence among this segment of the population that profiting from the support of new ventures is not always a high-risk venture. Most people agreed that we could and must do much more to encourage interest among foreign companies in investing in the State. To do so, we need a coordinated effort to identify the strengths both of the State as a whole as a good site for new investments and of particular areas of the State to meet the individual needs of specific businesses and industries. We need to identify an effective means to disseminate such information, perhaps developing an informational piece, similar to "Global Chicago: Two Reports on Chicago's Assets and Opportunities as a Global City," for each region of the State. This kind of advertising must be part of a more comprehensive plan for globalization, especially for attracting venture capital, that is needed for each area of the State.

### *Infrastructure Impediments to Enticing International Businesses to Wisconsin*

We also must address directly several issues that currently discourage new ventures from considering Wisconsin, specifically taxes (as compared both to other countries such as Germany and Japan as well as other states in the U.S.), transportation, energy supplies, and the availability of an appropriate workforce (both in numbers and education/training).

### *Ignorance of the Disadvantages of Globalization and Ways to Ameliorate Them*

Finally, rarely do we pay even lip service to the notion that as we expand into the international sphere, and benefit from that expansion, we have a responsibility both to educate ourselves about the downsides of globalization and to work to resolve those disadvantages. Globalization allows us to become more aware of the growing inequality in an increasingly interconnected world; it creates winners and losers. We need to find ways to increase the number of winners, particularly in Wisconsin, but also in the world as a whole, in order to preserve the peace that is essential to building economic prosperity for all. Often those most hurt by globalization are marginalized people in countries that don't have the infrastructure or leadership necessary to extend the benefits of open markets to those most in need. If we now are to view the economy as a global one, then we must see the problems of the world from a global perspective as well.

### What is the University's Role in Addressing these Issues?

Higher education is uniquely poised to address concerns raised by the process of globalization. Education is a powerful agent for alleviating fear, since most fear is based on a lack of understanding or knowledge of something unfamiliar. It is the means by which we create new tools, systems, strategies, and knowledge for responding to change and for solving

problems. Carey Goldberg of the New York Times Service says, “The university is an increasingly powerful force in the knowledge economy, both because its brains are greater assets than ever before and because of a growing trend for institutions of higher education to see themselves as generators of business, whether professors’ start-ups or technology licensing deals” (*International Herald Tribune*, October 12, 1999). Institutions of higher education all over the United States are rapidly becoming more visible partners with business, government, and other academic institutions in international endeavors. These endeavors fall into a wide range of categories.

**Exchanges.** Cooperative programs between educational institutions that bring in foreign students for education and training and send U.S. students abroad are numerous. Businesses have been encouraging such exchanges particularly for technical fields where the demand for workers is high. More recently, businesses are taking an active role in the development and support of such exchanges. The July 14, 2000 *Business Journal* describes a Milwaukee School of Engineering summer program in which the Allen-Bradley division of Rockwell Automation supports the education of “50 electrical engineering and controls students, handpicked by Rockwell from Latin America, China and Europe,” for 5½ weeks during which they study and work on simulated problems at Rockwell. Institutions of higher education are linking with businesses and the K-12 school system to get their international students involved in raising the awareness of students and workers about the cultures of other countries.

**Advisory Services.** A number of American universities are serving an advisory role for international institutions of higher education. Thailand is just one of numerous countries that have experienced considerable activity for several years, despite the Asian economic crisis of the late 1990’s. Michigan State University has helped several Thai universities set up or expand academic departments and train their faculty. Duke University and the University of Connecticut are helping the Thais develop English language universities, with Thai businessmen financing the UC project. The University of Northern Illinois sent a librarian to Thailand University to computerize its card catalogue. The University of North Carolina Business School is helping develop partnerships between U.S. and Thai companies. Case Western Reserve University works with Thai nursing schools to update curricula and provide top students with advanced training. M.I.T. is assisting in the development of Bangkok’s first urban master plan. We also see such advisory services applied on a macro scale. California Community College is assisting the Thais with setting up an entire two-year college system. The University of Oregon is help one Thai university to establish an MBA program. In Germany, Rice University is lending administrative and other help to establish the International University of Bremen, a private research university.

**Distance Education.** A plethora of on-line courses from hundreds of institutions of higher education have increased overseas access to American education. However, it is often the case that those for whom education has been most inaccessible do not have the means to take advantage of this educational treasure house. In India, for example, many villages do not have telephones, and the country’s more than one billion people have fewer than three million computers among them. Other means must be found to serve

these populations. Open universities in Hong Kong and India are establishing study centers where students can gather for lectures via radio and television. Correspondence study remains an important tool for the delivery of education in these areas, and most U.S. educational institutions continue to provide this kind of access to courses. But other vehicles are being developed. For example, Carnegie Mellon University prepares a set of CDs containing course work for an MS in Information Technology. It then sends professors to advise local colleges on adapting these courses for their students.

**Branch Campuses.** Numerous U.S. universities are opening branch campuses in a wide range of other countries. Just a sample of these endeavors reveals the considerable variety in places and program. Webster University (St. Louis) has branch campuses in Geneva, Britain, the Netherlands, Austria, China, Thailand, and Bermuda. Champlain College (Burlington, VT) offers undergraduate degrees in business and technology in the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, and Tel Aviv; it soon will open campuses in India, Singapore, and Hong Kong. Fairleigh Dickenson University's Tel Aviv campus offers a liberal arts education, with majors in psychology, communication, business management, and restaurant/hotel management. St. Louis University's campus in Madrid has eighty different courses of study. At its Tokyo campus, Temple University offers eight undergraduate majors. Temple also has campuses in Rome and London. Twelve subjects are taught at the University of Maryland's campus in Germany.

**High-Tech Incubators.** Silicon Valley and Kendall Square are some of the most well known examples of concentrated clusters of private research laboratories and institutions of higher education focused on cutting-edge advancement in high-tech fields. But symbiotic relationships between business and education are far more common than most people realize. The University of Texas at Dallas feeds graduates and research to over 600 companies in the area's Telecom Corridor. Pittsburgh's economic renaissance is built on high-tech start-ups that have grown from local universities. The University of Alabama holds stock in 21 companies it has spawned, has begun building a research park, and has a commercialization office that has earned more than \$10 million in royalties and licensing fees from faculty discoveries. Columbia University claims nearly \$96 million in technology licensing income in the past fiscal year. A high-tech corridor is being built from the Gulf Coast to the Atlantic, anchored by the University of South Florida and the University of Central Florida. In the last decade, 140 spin-off companies (30 of them founded by graduate students or medical residents at the University of Washington) have been created, and they now are valued at more than \$10 billion and employ over 6,500 people.

Both domestically and abroad, there has been an increasing number of research facilities with a circumscribed focus that have been developed to address specific challenges of the new century. These facilities function as incubators of new ideas, technologies, strategies, and inventions for the particular spheres of interest on which their resources are brought to bear. TechStar and BioStar are examples of such facilities in the state. A good international model is City West in Dublin. Increasingly, domestic institutions are partnering with international institutions of higher education, private research

laboratories, and community and government agencies to maximize the use of the intellectual and financial resources available.

**International Universities, Incorporated.** Within the past year, we have seen the creation of new international university networks for the purpose of capitalizing on the academic assets and intellectual property of member institutions. The first of these, Universitas 21, is an international network of sixteen research universities in seven countries (with the University of Michigan and the only U.S. member) that has filed an application in Britain to become an incorporated business (The Chronicle of Higher Education, July 23, 1999). The new corporation will focus on such areas as technology transfer, the commercialization of new patents, and staff training and recruitment for corporate clients. This fall, the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee became a founding member of the Global University Alliance, “a pioneering online education provider for distance-learning students, headquartered in Hong Kong” (UWM Report, 9 November 2000). GUA will concentrate on the delivery of graduate degree and professional certificate programs to students throughout Asia.

**Venture Capital Funds.** Some universities are looking into starting their own venture-capital funds to develop campus companies to the point where they can attract big-time investors. Vanderbilt University launched such a fund earlier this year. This option tends to be most attractive in areas of the country that normally are able to attract less outside venture capital, ie., the Midwest and the Southeast.

### Recommendations

In keeping with the theme of this report, the following recommendations identify “New Partners” that, in working together, will strengthen Wisconsin’s position in the techno-global economy.

**We must strengthen partnerships between academia, business, and government within the State.** The following specific actions are recommended:

- create a permanent “think tank” composed of representatives of academia, business, and government to bridge the chasm between these subcultures, with special attention paid to drawing lawmakers into the process;
- charge the think tank with developing a flexible strategic plan for the State’s international economic expansion that is built around the strengths of various areas of the State and sectors of the economy;
- charge the think tank with reviewing the recommendations of the WITCO report, reporting on the extent to which its recommendations have been implemented, and developing strategies to move the goal of having a globally educated Wisconsin citizenry forward;
- develop and support “Wisconsin Worldwide” as a partnership among academia, business, and government to deliver custom global services in an innovative platform;

- investigate the feasibility of various kinds of international showcases that link academia, business, and government, e.g. a Wisconsin Worldwide Conference, a Wisconsin International Trade Center building;
- make a commitment to including university administrators, faculty members, and student leaders on all future trade missions.

**We must strengthen partnerships between Wisconsin’s institutions of higher education and between Wisconsin and international institutions.** The following specific actions are recommended:

- create inclusive partnerships among all public and private institutions of higher education in each region of the State to coordinate meeting the educational needs of each region, leveraging resources in meeting those needs;
- extend access to Wisconsin’s top-notch educational system to other areas of the world through a variety of means, including the establishment of satellite campuses with joint research and teaching components;
- develop a shared Wisconsin International Alumni data base, and cooperate with other institutions in meeting collectively with alumni in different parts of the world.

**We must strengthen partnerships between Wisconsin and our neighbors within the Midwest region.** The following specific action is recommended:

- with the assistance of regional Federal Reserve offices, develop regional think tanks with representatives of academia, business, and government from neighboring states (particularly Illinois and Minnesota) to discuss economic development in the corridors linking the larger cities (Milwaukee - Chicago, Minneapolis/St. Paul - Eau Claire, Madison – Janesville - Rockford, etc.).

Wisconsin’s economy is at a crossroads. We must move quickly and with innovation to ensure the security of our place as a major player on the international stage. Forward-looking initiatives are needed urgently. With the considerable intellectual power available among our leaders in academia, business, and government, we can respond successfully to the challenges of developing those initiatives that make and keep Wisconsin a world leader.