

Before the  
Council of the District of Columbia  
Committee of the Whole

Performance Oversight Hearing  
On FY 2007 Budget of  
The University of the District of Columbia



Testimony of Stanley Jackson, Acting President of the  
University of the District of Columbia

Wednesday, February 27, 2008

Good afternoon, Chairman Gray and Members of the Committee of the Whole. I am Stanley Jackson, Acting President of the University of the District of Columbia. I am pleased to appear before you today to talk about the University's performance and its utilization of its FY 2007 budget and its spending to date in FY 2008. I am joined today by several members of my executive staff.

Fiscal year 2007 has been both a challenging and exciting time as we move to a new level of accountability and excellence. This is an opportune time to spend a few moments looking back at FY07 to give you a brief synopsis of the challenges confronted and the new opportunities emerging at our University.

As the nation's only urban land-grant university, the faculty and staff at the University of the District of Columbia are committed to our mandate of openness, accessibility, and service to the people and communities of this city. The University's mission is to provide a liberal, yet practical education that has direct relevance to its students' daily lives. Our students study a variety of academic disciplines, vocational career studies, and other fields of inquiry as varied as physics, mortuary science or hospitality management and tourism. Given our unique history and its rich legacy, the University is obligated to use its resources for our students; creating a student-centric urban public university that prepares our students as workers and leaders in the global marketplace. To that end, we will soon be engaged in serious and ongoing accountability appraisals with significant resources dedicated to the task. The University's commitment to accountability is real.

#### **ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

Academic programs at UDC emphasize student learning and leadership training. We remain dedicated to academic and professional preparation that enables students to be successful

in their chosen disciplines and to demonstrate competency and mastery in specific certificate requirements.

The University of the District of Columbia is fully accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education; a regional accrediting body. Through the public recognition that accreditation provides, students, employers, and others must have the assurance that UDC meets the standards for educational quality and excellence in areas such as curriculum, student services, faculty, and administration. This certifies that the University as a whole is in full compliance with established accreditation standards. The University of the District of Columbia received its latest reaffirmation of its accreditation with commendation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education in 2005 and we are preparing the Period Review Report due in 2010. The David A. Clarke School of Law also received its accreditation from the American Bar Association in 2005.

Accreditation is vital because employers want to know that a prospective employee graduated from an accredited school and/or program. Accreditation is a requirement in the transfer of credit from one university or college to another, and it is crucial to the recruitment of prospective students and quality faculty. It is also a necessity for access to federal education funding. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security only certifies accredited schools to issue the necessary documents for international students to enter the country on a student visa and UDC has a large contingent of international students.

[The University](#) offers undergraduate and graduate degrees, as well as certificate programs from six different colleges or schools within the University. UDC [operates its academic programs and services through:](#)

1. The College of Arts and Sciences,

2. The School of Engineering and Applied Sciences,
3. The School of Business and Public Administration,
4. The Community Outreach and Extension Services program,
5. The Learning Resource Center and
6. The David A. Clarke School of Law.

[Through these colleges and schools, postsecondary education, research opportunities and professional education is provided to over 5,000 students.](#)

Over the past year, a number of outstanding accomplishments have been achieved by our students and faculty. They have been profiled nationally in various forums. Ms. Kalice Robinson, a student majoring in social work was invited to observe President Bush's signing of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act in September. In October, William C. Kellibrew IV, a business major and former UDC student government president, shared his story of triumph over personal adversity on the national stage as he appeared with legendary entertainer Bill Cosby on the "Oprah Winfrey show." Later that month, the Honorable Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia, appeared as a guest lecturer on our campus. Our senior, Banu Denson-Lundy was recently recognized nationally by the American Humanics national publication for her commitment to work in public service. And another senior received a scholarship from the National Forum of Black Public Administrators.

I am also proud to report that our students and faculty in the UDC David A. Clarke School of Law were honored by the Louisiana Supreme Court for "the generous donation of legal expertise and dedication to helping the victims and families affected by hurricanes Katrina and Rita". Additionally, UDC David A. Clarke School of Law is one of the nation's most outstanding law schools, according to The Princeton Review. The New York-based education

services company profiled the school in the new *Best 170 Law Schools: 2008 Edition* and cited the law school as:

- Ranked 1st in the nation for most progressive students (*Princeton Review*, October 2007).
- Ranked 3rd in the nation for "most welcoming of older students" (*Princeton Review*, October 2007).
- Ranked 10th in the nation for "best environment for minority students" (*Princeton Review*, October 2007).
- Ranked 6th in the nation for "most diverse faculty" (*Princeton Review*, October 2007).

Other UDC alumni and faculty have received numerous awards and recognition this year. Professor Carolyn Cousin was awarded the 2007 National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education Nobel Prize. Adjunct Professor Milton Lee presides in D.C. Superior Court, as a Magistrate Judge. Alumnus, Deborah Simmons was appointed editorial page editor of "the Washington Times". And our Gateway Algebra program, led by Drs. Khatri, Brenda Brown and Anne Hughes, has received many local and national accolades because it significantly reduces the remedial work necessary to prepare students for algebra.

The University has attracted new staff, faculty and partners. One such staff member, Officer Dana Miller was honored as the first UDC trainee in the Washington, DC University Consortium to win the Lolita S. Armstrong academic achievement award. This award is the highest academic honor given by the Police Training Academy. UDC students participated in the annual academic competition of the best and brightest students of the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and showcased their skills and intellect by finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 64 HBCU teams. This competition is known as the "Honda All-Stars, Games of Intellectual Agility" and was held in Orlando, Florida in April 2007.

The University partners with many organizations to educate and expose residents to opportunities in professional, vocational and certificate programs. Some of these programs include the Providence Hospital Nurse Training Collaboration, the Metropolitan Police Department Cadet College Studies Program, and the Department of Homeland Security National Legal Preparedness Training Program.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) awarded the Institute for Public Safety & Justice at the University of the District of Columbia a three-year \$2.9 million grant to develop and implement a national training program to address legal issues relating to preparation, response, and recovery from terrorist attacks and major disasters through the establishment of the DHS National Legal Preparedness Training Program (NLPTP). The Institute was one of twelve award recipients in the Department of Homeland Security's "2007 Competitive Training Grant Program."

The University's Department of Nursing and Allied Health, in partnership with Howard University College of Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Health Sciences and the McFarland Institute, was awarded a \$4.4 million dollar grant to strengthen the research capacity of our nursing and allied health faculty and undergraduate students.

In total, UDC faculty received over \$15.4 million in sponsored research grants in FY 2007. Through these grants for sponsored research, UDC faculty are researching areas as varied as developing a better insecticide to understanding the progression of pancreatic cancer.

The Agricultural Experiment Station (AES) and the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) of the University is seeking to secure funding opportunities open to similar land grant institutions in the Farm, Nutrition and Bioenergy Act of 2007(the Farm Bill) before Congress. Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton introduced provisions which, if approved, will secure

\$3 million in funding for the Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service over 4 years. Congresswoman Norton is also seeking a waiver of the match requirement of 100%. This waiver will reduce the match requirement to a 50% matching funds requirement for the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education program at UDC. This program teaches low-income families (particularly those with young children) to make the most of their food resources and meet their nutritional needs.

I am reviewing the University's use of its 143 acre farm located in Beltsville, Md. Part of the land-grant mission of the university is to provide a platform for science research that supports the Agricultural Experiment Station. The Agricultural Experiment Station and the Cooperative Extension Service are required units in order for the University to maintain its land-grant status.

One initiative that we will be undertaking in this area is a composting initiative in partnership with Department of Public Works (DPW). Meetings have been held to determine how the University's farm can be used to increase the efficiency of the leaf collection and composting operations within DPW. I am also exploring opportunities to partner with DCPS for agricultural opportunities for its students and with the Office of Aging to provide opportunities for senior citizens to cultivate gardens to grow fresh vegetables for sale at local farmers' markets.

### **STUDENT AFFAIRS**

The fall enrollment for the 2007 semester was over 5,000 students. Of this number, 3,479 are District residents representing over 62% of the student body and coming from every ward in the city.

The University seeks to make college more affordable for the neediest students by providing financial aid to eliminate barriers to education. The University uses local funds through the Leveraging Education Assistance Partnership Program grants (LEAP) and federal grant funds such as Pell, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and loan programs such as Federal Family Education Loan Program and the Perkins Loan Program to provide grants or low-interest loans to help needy students finance the costs of postsecondary education. Approximately, 2857 or 56% of our students receive financial assistance of some form. We disbursed \$11.9 million in financial assistance in FY07-08.

In FY 2007, the University began outlining steps to strengthen and expand the university college functions and workforce development functions, and establish a comprehensive community college. We plan to ensure that the programs offered through the Department of Education, Allied Health and Nursing programs develop expertise and increase the capacity necessary to address critical education, employment, and health related issues in the District of Columbia.

I am committed to immediately addressing the day to day operational and management challenges in these programs to support improved service delivery. More importantly, I fully understand that these programs are central to the larger work of expanding economic opportunity for residents through the community college function here at the University. I firmly believe that we have a rare opportunity to “get it right this time” as we expand the community college function at UDC. At the same time that I am focusing on addressing the management difficulties in the current workforce certificate programs, we are also:

- developing the larger program framework for high quality community college services based on current best practice;

- identifying and reviewing all of our currently offered Associate of Arts and certificate programs,
- identifying “best practice” models with a focus on urban learners and programs that support seamless transition for high risk populations, and,
- planning the process for markedly and strategically expanding our efforts in this area.

### **ATHLETICS**

Our Firebirds, both in intellectual games and sports competition, have performed outstandingly this past year. Our athletic teams are also having academic success – there are 50 student athletes with GPAs over 3.0 and 1 student athlete with 4.0 GPA. The University has 2 athletes that were nationally ranked in track meets in the NCAA division II level competitions. The Lady Firebirds have won 20 games (20-8) following 13-16 record last season. The University recently hosted the Women’s National Independent Tournament (NIT) during which the Lady Firebirds won their 20th game of the season. Last night, the Lady Firebirds won against the University of Puerto Rico-Bayamon in the Championship game. They brought home the 1<sup>st</sup> ever NIT championship to UDC and hopefully, as a result, will receive a bid to this year’s NCAA tournament. The men’s National Independent Tournament will be hosted at UDC beginning this weekend.

Finally, [on January 24, 2008, the NCAA concluded its investigation into UDC’s athletic program and found that it had violated NCAA rules. The violations covered academic years 2001 thru 2004. The NCAA investigation was initiated after UDC self-reported to the NCAA Enforcement Staff allegations of student athlete’s failure to meet financial aid and academic](#)

[eligibility requirements. The University will submit to the NCAA's Committee on Infractions a formal response in advance of the Committee's hearing this summer. The University is also developing a comprehensive corrective plan to ensure compliance with NCAA rules and the Athletic Department has been reorganized. I have placed the Athletic Department Director under the Office of the President and hired counsel for athletics to monitor and address NCAA compliance and eligibility issues.](#)

### **OPERATIONS AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

We have instituted changes in fiscal management, personnel and operational processes. We have realigned departmental budget priorities for FY2008 and FY2009. A faculty labor-management agreement is under negotiation. At my request, the Office of the Inspector General is auditing the workforce development program. We already have begun corrective actions after the discovery of management weaknesses in the program operations. We will soon undertake a review of the entire university's operations and academic structure. As I noted earlier, these are serious and ongoing accountability appraisals with significant resources dedicated to improving the University.

As the District's only urban public, land grant four-year institution of higher learning, the University of the District of Columbia has a unique mission that is symbolized by its open admissions policy. We are committed to providing a practical education that has direct relevance to students' daily lives and we will continue to build UDC into a world class institution. Our students deserve the best education we can offer and the graduates of UDC must be part of our region's well-educated labor force and leaders. This demands that we take a serious look at the current structure and focus of UDC and make appropriate decisions about its future. I believe the

University's focus must be to ensure an affordable quality education. We must design programs to meet the increasing need of our local, national and global constituents. The university must expand its focus on technologies as an educational resource (Internet and the related telecommunications and computer technologies) to ensure that our students become proficient with current technologies in the marketplace.

### **FISCAL STABILITY**

The University is addressing its financial management challenges. The University's budgeting and accounting is complex and it has a wide variety of revenue sources (local funds, federal grants, special purpose funds, unrestricted receipts such as fees and tuition, and restricted funds such as endowment amounts and federal grants). This requires that costs be distributed timely and accurately in order to properly monitor spending and account for results.

In FY07, we instituted financial controls and new financial policies to ensure that expenditures and revenues are properly accounted for to accurately reflect the University's financial position. Preliminary results of our year end financial position reflect spending levels of 97.1% of the University's gross budget. Total FY07 spending is projected to be approximately, \$113.4 million of the \$116.9 revised budget authority. The available balance remaining in local funds was approximately \$35,000 and the other available balances reflect federal grant carryovers and intra-district authority of approximately \$3.6 million. Overall, there was no significant under-spending of the FY 2007 budget as reported earlier in the fiscal year. It is also important to note that the FY07 spending level of 97.1% of the gross budget demonstrates a substantial improvement over the FY06 and FY05 spending levels of 92.7% and 90.4% respectively.

We are working with the CFO's Office in restructuring the UDC CFO's office to meet the business needs as well as establish a financial organizational structure similar to comparable public and private university finance offices.

### PERSONNEL

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Revamping the personnel system has been a major priority. Previously, no annual performance evaluations had been conducted, the personnel tracking was deficient, and many functions were performed manually. We are mandating adherence to the annual performance evaluations requirement. We are also mandating the full implementation of Peoplesoft which aligns positions to authorized FTEs. The personnel changes in key functional areas of the University continue. There have been several new hires and personnel actions in Academic Affairs, Athletics, Financial Operations, Information Technology, Campus Services and Facilities Management. Additionally, we are reviewing employees' personnel status and resolving benefit issues reported by employees.

### FACILITIES

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As I testified three months ago, UDC's aging physical structures desperately need capital investment. This requires the university, as an independent agency, to prioritize and gain control of its capital budget funds to address present critical needs and restore the buildings and grounds to acceptable levels for the benefit of the health, safety and well-being of our key stakeholders – our students. Improving the appearance and comfort of our campus continues to be a challenge as the capital budget has been flat for the past couple fiscal years with no money for new projects. We are in discussions with OPM to regain control, consistent with other independent

agencies, of our capital budget. This control will allow us to prioritize our needs based on the ever-shifting list of critical projects. In FY 2007 and in prior fiscal years, construction starts have been delayed on many of the projects that would repair the campus facilities (for which funding was approved several years ago) and these delays have caused additional damage to those facilities. The University has historically taken a band-aid approach to repairs to the physical structures. We must eliminate this band-aid approach and address the major deficiencies that exist on our campus. This band aid approach has also contributed to the continued, and in some instances, the accelerated deterioration of our structures. In order to be the world class institution that we are striving to become, we must provide an environment that is conducive to learning.

Some of our current capital projects include:

- Building 52 – currently under renovation – interior demolition complete
- Student Center – The conceptual design is complete; however capital funding has been tabled for this project.
- Replace two high pressure steam boilers – Building 43
- Plaza Deck and Parking Garage Renovation;
- Repair Concrete Stairs
- Student Disability Center

These projects have been funded in our capital budget; however, there are several other capital projects for which enhancements were requested but were denied and still more that have just recently been discovered. These include: coming into compliance with items listed on the ADA

report and the study and assessment of the campus electrical system for upgrades, just to name a few.

Actions completed thus far includes

- Roof Repairs – Buildings 41, 42
- Plaza lighting
- installation of the fire alarm system
- installation of six HD flat panel LCD screens in public areas on campus
- installation of an electronic access control system
- replacement of the university telephone system which is expected to reduce university's local telephone and switch costs by \$200,000 annually.

### **CONCLUSION**

Although, there is much work to do, the University is embarking on a real renaissance. We must refocus our energies on our core mission as well as vocational education and workforce development. These changes are not easy, but are necessary if we are to continue to build UDC into a comprehensive, public university that meets the needs of its students and the community into the future. We have begun down that path and the university is committed to achieving a new level of excellence. With the Council's support, a real renaissance in the academic stature and reputation of the University can be made. Thank you, Chairman Gray, for the opportunity to testify today. I welcome your questions.