

**Aspire Campaign Priorities:
The Princeton Experience and Annual Giving**

**President Shirley M. Tilghman
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I would say that we can identify two very different kinds of priorities for the University that are based on both our traditional strengths and areas where we need to be significantly better.

We have, I think, a very high priority to sustain what are Princeton's traditional excellence in areas such as financial aid, where we have been a leader in the field for now at least a generation. We need to ensure that our faculty are as engaged in education, whether it's undergraduate education or graduate education, as they have historically been in the past. This is one of the hallmarks of a Princeton education. We need to ensure that the quality of residential life at Princeton—that includes what is happening in the residential colleges, of course, but it also includes everything that is happening on this campus, from extracurricular activities to long walks on the canal on a Sunday afternoon, exploring the meaning of life—all of those things are part of residential life and we had to ensure that the sense of community, which I think is so much a part of Princeton, would be sustained as we entertained a decade of further growth in the University.

And many of those things one needs to make continued investments in. We cannot just assume that the faculty will continue to be strong. We have to be looking to our alumni, and our parents and friends to ensure that we are able to attract the very finest faculty in the world as we do now, but to do that in the future, because the

synergy between the greatest faculty in the world and the greatest students in the world is always palpable here at Princeton.

And much of what we call the evergreen needs of the campaign, things that are historically our strengths that we need to continue are assisted by Annual Giving.

Annual Giving has two important roles in this campaign. First, it's the most democratic way to ensure that every single Princeton alumnus or alumna, parent, and friend can make a contribution to this campaign, whether it is the one-year-out graduate, who is in his or her first job and is sending in a check for \$10, or whether it is one of the class leaders at their 50th reunion, making a significant contribution to their class. It's a way for everybody to participate in the campaign. But the other important part of Annual Giving, of course, is that it provides unrestricted funds on a yearly basis to the University, and it's those unrestricted funds that are our "margin of excellence." We often describe Annual Giving as either "Job One," which it is, or our "margin of excellence." It allows us to capitalize on new opportunities rapidly, rather than having to wait until an endowment grows to the point where its income can support a new initiative. Often by that time, the moment has passed. So Annual Giving for us is a very important part of the campaign, and it is a part that supports both our historic strengths and allows us to begin new programs for the future.