The University of South Florida System is on track to become one of the nation's top 50 public research universities within five years. With continued support from the Florida Legislature, USF will reach our goals. Together, we can serve students, build a stronger economy and enhance quality of life for all Floridians.

We are thankful for the Florida Legislature's support for USF in 2004, and we look forward to continued support during 2005.

Sincerely,

Judy Genshaft
President

The USF System's Critical Legislative Priorities

Preserve Base Funding and Fully Fund Enrollment
The USF System's base budget is its lifeblood, and underfunded enrollment is the same as a budget cut to the base. Therefore, USF's top priority is for the Legislature to fully fund the Board of Governors' enrollment request of $80.2 million. Funding this request will result in $22.4 million for new students at USF.

Adopt the Board of Governors' New Enrollment Formula
Last year, the USF System was next to last among Florida's public universities in per-student enrollment growth funding. (See chart below.) Recognizing the inequities of the current, expenditure-based formula, the Board of Governors is recommending a new, fairer enrollment funding model for legislative approval. The new formula is especially important for dynamic, urban-growth universities such as USF, which have historically been underfunded by expenditure-based formulas. Therefore, in addition to fully funding enrollment growth, the Legislature should adopt the new enrollment funding formula recommended by the BCG.

Fund Capital Construction
The USF System has only 53 percent of the critical facilities needed to serve expected enrollment growth during the next five years (see chart below), and it would have to double the number of classrooms, teaching labs and research labs by 2010 to keep up with growth. Only one Florida university is in more dire need for capital construction. The Legislature should fund critical construction projects, starting with our top priorities: $2.7 million for a Visual and Performing Arts Teaching Facility, $2.58 million for the USF St. Petersburg Science and Technology Facility, and $3.7 million for phase one of the new USF Lakeland campus.
Advance Economic Development Through University Partnerships
Through partnerships with government and private industry, the USF System is an engine for economic development, especially in high technology and the biosciences. State support is vital, and the Legislature should provide funding for key economic development initiatives:

- $9 million for the expansion the USF Research Park for bioscience research and entrepreneurship. The park will expand high-tech economic development throughout the State of Florida.

- $4.25 million for the USF Health Sciences Center’s Research and Biotechnology Initiative. The initiative will increase economic and workforce development centered around cardiovascular instruction and research.

- $2 million for the USF Connect business development program. USF Connect will support business formation and development by supporting the most promising bioscience businesses.

- $1 million for the Florida Medical Manufacturers Consortium. The consortium will relocate in the USF Research Park and foster industry-university partnerships that expand this vital high-tech business cluster.

Address Critical Statewide Workforce Development Needs
Florida’s universities are important partners in helping the state address critical workforce development needs. The USF System is poised to address shortages in several areas, if the Legislature provides funding:

- $2.56 million to address Florida’s nursing shortage through programs in Tampa and at USF St. Petersburg. Additional funding will support instructors and classes to educate new nurses for Florida.

- $2.45 million to expand targeted programs in critical areas such as teacher education, information technologies, engineering and public health. Funding will provide increased access and additional instructional programs in Tampa and at USF St. Petersburg, USF Sarasota/Manatee and USF Lakeland to grow and support Florida’s workforce needs.

Fund Matching Gifts
Florida’s matching gifts programs are recognized as among the most successful public-private partnerships in the nation. The Florida Legislature was successful during the 2004 Legislative Session in clearing the backlog of gifts to be matched. Since last spring, universities have been fortunate to raise another $32 million, which is the amount of the Board of Governors’ request for state matching funds.
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

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The USF System
Comprised of campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, Sarasota and Lakeland, the USF system serves the unique needs of our communities, while advancing USF’s goal of becoming one of the nation’s top 50 public research universities.

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