

Our First-year Class

September 11, 2012

Dear Colleagues and Students,

This afternoon, I provided to our Board of Trustees details about our first-year class for fall 2012. A news release with information about the class is viewable here:

<http://uknow.uky.edu/content/record-numbers-quality-mark-uks-first-year-enrollment>.

More than anything else, I wanted to convey to them that this class – a record in terms of quality and numbers – says so much about each of you: our faculty, our staff and our current students.

Consider just a few numbers:

- Record numbers in terms of size at 4,645 – with a record nearly 29,000 students overall -- and we have maintained the average ACT score of 25.5 – also a record high;
- A record number of National Merit Finalists at 71 – up from 29 last year;
- Record numbers of African-American, Hispanic, international and out-of-state students – all of which underscore the growing reputation this institution has for quality and commitment to students; and
- Record numbers of Singletary Scholars, Governor's Scholars and as well an expanding number of students in our Honors Program.

But more than the numbers themselves is what they represent. They are, in short, a testament to the work of our Enrollment Management team, led by Associate Provost Don Witt. They have worked tirelessly for months recruiting this outstanding first-year class and are emblematic of the devotion to UK that I see and experience everywhere. But while Don Witt's staff is at the front-line of recruiting, all of us are responsible for this success. Every one of us -- our physical plant workers; our academic advisers; our faculty; our Extension Agents; our alumni; our current students – everyone is an ambassador for our University to prospective students and their families.

It also is a testament to our being Kentucky's leading research university, where talented undergraduate students know they have the opportunity to learn from and work alongside world-class researchers at the cutting edge of the landscape of disciplines.

All of you are a testament to your commitment to making UK a students-first institution. I say that because a university doesn't attract this kind of class unless that commitment to students and quality instruction is widely and deeply known among families in Kentucky and the region. Moreover, it doesn't occur unless the word is out – the word being that we are the choice of students in this state and, increasingly, in the region.

Thank you for making that possible. This class underscores that commitment to students, but also the progress we continue to make in fulfilling the Kentucky Promise.

It's a Promise that says we must educate those who will be our state's best and brightest to secure an even more promising future.

It's a Promise that you are clearly and unmistakably honoring and bolstering each day.

Eli Capilouto
President