Open Letter to the CSU Channel Islands Community:

During the fall 2010 term the California State University conducted a three-year review of Richard R. Rush, president of California State University, Channel Islands. The review concluded on November 9, 2010 with a discussion of the review by the CSU Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees and I appreciate the contributions of those who worked with us on this review.

The Board of Trustees’ criteria for assessing the performance of a president and of the institution include the overall management of the institution, relations on campus and within the system, educational leadership, community relations, major achievements of the campus and the president, and personal characteristics of the president. Faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community representatives were invited to submit written comments responding to the trustees’ criteria.

President Rush has continued to earn high marks for his leadership at CSU Channel Islands among all constituencies, from faculty and staff to community members. He is extremely popular for his inclusive management style, for his encouragement of new ideas and fresh thinking, and for his team-building skills that have helped foster a strong sense of identity on campus. He is frequently cited as a mentor and even as an inspiration among members of the campus community.

Dr. Rush has seen the campus through a most challenging set of circumstances: the development of a new university, coupled with the worst budgetary cutbacks the CSU system has ever experienced. Yet he has been praised, both inside and outside of the university, for his thoughtful decision-making process, for his adept senior leadership team, and for his outreach to the community to build new and innovative programs that attempt to fulfill some of the otherwise unmet needs. The development of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program supported by Santa Barbara’s Cottage Hospital has been frequently cited as an important example of CSUCI’s public-private collaboration.

Other highlighted achievements include the dedication of the Martin V. Smith Center for Integrative Decision-Making and the John Spoor Broome Library, completion of a new Student Union building, creation of the California Institute for Social Business in partnership with Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus, successful completion of WASC accreditation, recognition on the Chronicle of Higher Education’s list of 2010 Great Colleges to Work For, and recognition as President of the Year by the California State Student Association.
On the campus level, Dr. Rush has been praised for being generous with his time, and for remembering names and details about faculty, staff, and individual students. He earned widespread praise and thanks from employees for establishing the “Helping Hands” program, through which employees who were adversely affected by the furlough could confidentially apply for limited, one-time funds to help pay bills (funded by voluntary donations of the campus community).

He is well-connected across the community, from the county P-16 council to the local chambers of commerce. As one community member put it, “I don’t think you could find a single person in Camarillo, or Ventura County for that matter, who wouldn’t recognize CSU Channel Islands as an integral and beneficial part of our community. And that is precisely due to the leadership and community outreach orchestrated and executed by Dr. Rush.”

President Rush and I discussed this review and established the following goals:

- Continue to raise private funds for the support and enhancement of academic programs.
- Continue to build and maximize relationships with community members in Camarillo, Oxnard, and throughout Ventura County and Santa Barbara.
- Develop a community outreach program for Santa Barbara for master’s degrees in business, nursing, and education.
- Complete the development of campus housing projects.

Dr. Rush is an energetic, dedicated, motivated, and very capable president who is whole-heartedly committed to the success of CSU Channel Islands and its students, staff, and faculty. He has developed programs and opportunities that have bolstered the university’s reputation throughout the region. Additionally, he and his wife Jane have become an integral part of what is an exceptionally tight-knit, caring university community. We congratulate Dr. Rush on a successful review and we look forward to this university’s continued growth and development under his leadership.

With kind regards,

Sincerely,

Charles B. Reed
Chancellor

CBR/jpf