

## ***Chancellor David Wilson's Remarks to the 4-H State Conference***

June 19, 2006

...Thank you, everyone, for joining us here in Madison for this 4-H conference.

The last time I spoke to Jamie, we were communicating via videoconference between Madison and Sheboygan, as part of a briefing on the incredible scope of 4-H programs across Wisconsin.

I came away from that videoconference impressed by Jamie's sincere passion for 4-H and her ability to articulate the positive impact it has on so many young people.

Today, as I look around this room, I see that Jamie is not alone in her strong commitment to 4-H. I see equally passionate, enthusiastic and articulate ambassadors for 4-H.

A few minutes ago, I was looking at my calendar for the week ahead, and thinking about all the work and all the meetings that await me.

However, you have reinvigorated me for the hard work ahead. I know that I will leave this room energized by our time together.

My question to you is – How will YOU leave this room? What will YOU take away from this conference?

This is a chance for you to make new friends, and establish new connections with people from all over Wisconsin. Don't take that for granted.

Success in this world largely depends on your ability to look at issues from many perspectives. If you can understand and respect other peoples' points of view, then you become a more enlightened person and effective communicator. If you can communicate better, you can find common ground and achieve win-win solutions.

This is an area where you and I have a lot in common. I just moved to Wisconsin from Alabama on May 1<sup>st</sup>, and I'm spending a LOT of time making new friends, communicating with people, and learning to see things from a new perspective.

As I meet people and engage them in conversation, I'm gaining useful insights about Wisconsin people, local communities and important issues of the day.

One issue that I hear people talking about today is "access" to higher education. And I'm proud to say that, today, UW-Extension is fulfilling its mission to serve as a convenient gateway to this university through a wide array of statewide educational networks:

Today, while **500** of you are taking part in this invigorating state conference, another **2,500** Wisconsin people will contact a county-based Cooperative Extension educator. Many of those will be people seeking to join the university's most successful "pre-college" program ever... 4-H.

As you leave this room today, and as you return to your hometowns after this conference, I invite you to do exactly what your conference theme suggests – "make the best better."

Take what you have learned from 4-H, and use it to transform your lives.

Utilize all the educational opportunities provided to you, and apply that knowledge in meaningful ways.

Leave this room as better people. But never "leave" 4-H.

Instead, take it along with you on the journey ahead. I've done just that, and it has served me well. As chancellor of UW-Extension, I look forward to serving you and everyone in 4-H.

It has been my pleasure to spend a few minutes with you this evening. Thank you, and have a wonderful conference!