



IUPUI Chancellor  
**Charles R. Bantz**

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## GREETINGS FROM IUPUI

May 2012

Recently, we announced that we will **convert the University Place Hotel and Conference Center into a student residence hall, dining room, and classroom facility**—a critical need for the campus as we work to attract, retain, and graduate students and meet the need for more college-educated citizens in central Indiana.

Research has proven that **on-campus living provides many benefits** to students compared to students who live off campus or commute to college. At IUPUI, a six-year longitudinal study revealed that students who live in the residence halls during their first year have **significantly higher grade-point averages and retention rates** compared to their peers who do not live on campus.

Students living on campus were also **more engaged in university life and activities**—including contact with faculty, networking with peers, and involvement in student organizations—proven indicators of academic success as borne out by the National Survey of Student Engagement and other studies.

**Demand for housing exceeds our modest capacity** (1240 beds) on campus. We have been contracting with Park Place apartments to accommodate the demand for more student housing. In addition to the some 250 students in **overflow housing** at Park Place, who ultimately desire to reside on campus, we maintain a **waiting list** of 200 more students for on-campus housing on average annually.

There are more than 1,000 first-time, full-time degree-seeking undergraduate **students coming to IUPUI from outside central Indiana** who would be good candidates for selecting housing on campus over other alternatives.

I'm pleased that community reaction to our announcement has been overwhelmingly positive. Comments like, **"Wow—congratulations for thinking outside the box!"** were typical.

At the same time, we are keeping track of **issues people have raised** with me that we will address as we go forward with the conversion, which will begin December 2012. Because renovations will be minor, we expect 15 new classrooms to be available for use in January 2013 and residential occupancy for 560 students by fall 2013.

Some expressed a **concern about the loss of a conference venue** and the opportunities it had offered to bring the local community and national and international visitors to campus. While it is not financially viable to maintain a facility expressly for this purpose, given competition from other venues and higher priorities for facility use, we will find ways **to keep IUPUI a center for intellectual and cultural life** that draws visitors downtown to the campus.

The opening of the new **IUPUI Theatre in the Campus Center**, with the premiere performance of the Shakespeare/Fletcher play, **"The History of Cardenio,"** is one example of how we'll be continuing to meet this community need in new ways. We are also exploring **new procedures for offering off-campus organizations access to venues** on campus for speakers, events, and nonresidential conferences, where conference-goers might stay at hotels downtown but be shuttled to campus for meeting venues.

Along with the White River State Park Greenway and the Canal Walk, having the **Indianapolis Cultural Trail: A Legacy and Eugene and Marilyn Glick** coming through campus is another new option that will keep our borders porous for visitors from downtown.

The hotel conversion offers us opportunities to better serve our students that we didn't have before. We can offer **a dining hall with a meal plan** for the first time, which will make living on campus much more desirable for students—and more reassuring to parents, who often expressed concern on campus visits about the lack a dining hall. There may be an opportunity to open another **secure 24/7 study space** for students on campus. The **386 parking spaces** under the hotel will be added to the inventory for the IUPUI Parking and Transportation Services to alleviate some of the demand for more parking on campus.

As the conversion goes forward, we are planning **information sessions** to hear other concerns and suggestions, but you are also welcome to share them with me any time by sending an e-mail to the comments link noted below.

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CHANCELLOR CHARLES R. BANTZ



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