



It's Time To Be Bold

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT - CASEY STEINBACHER

By now, I hope you have all heard about the Chamber's new campaign, Vision 3D. The official kick-off was held at the Chamber's Annual Meeting on Feb. 17 at the newly named and dedicated Durham Convention Center. Co-chairs John Stallings of SunTrust Bank and Dr. Victor Dzau of Duke University Health System, unveiled this new initiative aimed at creating and retaining jobs and investment in Durham over the next four years to the 500 in attendance.

The Greater Durham Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors has been engaged in numerous discussions with key business and community leaders over the last year to ensure that the Chamber was positioned correctly to meet the needs of the businesses and community it represents.

Throughout that process, the need for additional resources to help grow the Chamber's effectiveness in the areas of economic development, workforce development and community development was identified and a professional feasibility study was conducted by NCDS, a leading campaign expert. The end result is Vision 3D.

Also unveiled at the event were the names of the companies/organizations who willingly contributed to Vision 3D in the early stages, so that we might launch this campaign from a strong starting point. If you don't know who they are, you will see the list in this newsletter, and many more to come. Thanks to those companies, we are already halfway to our goal - \$1.25 million already pledged!

So are we nuts? Raising money in this economy? When it comes to economic development, there is no better time to promote the quality of people and place that Durham and the region has to offer.

Companies across the world are re-working their business models. We need to be vocal and visible as the BEST place for consolidation, reorganization, new acquisition, or expansion. Being vocal and visible requires a very specific plan with dedicated resources over a prolonged period of time. While we're ratcheting up our visibility with our local businesses and national and international prospects, we have to also make sure that we are protecting and improving the two most important assets that make this location the best - our people and our community (workforce development and community development).

We are home to the Research Triangle Park which was founded on the three pillar institutions of Duke University, University of North Carolina, and North Carolina State University, enlivened by a culture as diverse and international as any successful world economy. We possess the economic capacity, the intellectual capacity and the community capacity to think and act bold if we so choose.

Thus, Vision 3D...economic development...workforce development.... community development. We invite you to share the vision. Make a commitment to Durham. Now is not the time to retrench. It is a time to think and act bold. Join us as we invest in Durham's economic future!