



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Mark A. Emmert, President

September 24, 2007

Dear University of Washington Community:

Our planet's climate is changing at an unprecedented rate in the course of human history. Scientists from the University of Washington were among the first to observe and understand this change, as well as the magnitude and range of the impacts it would have on our social infrastructure and ecological systems. From the poles to the tropics, we continue to be at the cutting edge of this research. We realize that it will take a combination of significant political, economic, and technological investment to mitigate and adapt to our changing climate.

As a global community, we face many important social, economic, and security issues. The impacts of global climate change will exacerbate many of these challenges and create new ones. If we are to reduce the risk of lasting, world-wide damages, then ambitious solutions must be undertaken without delay. It is our obligation as an institution to ensure that our students, faculty, and staff understand the core of the issues and are engaged in the process of finding solutions free from the influences of politics and partisanship.

The national Focus the Nation campaign is coordinating teams of faculty and students at hundreds of colleges, universities, and K-12 schools across the nation to engage collaboratively in an interdisciplinary discussion about "Global Warming Solutions for America." The UW will be participating in this campaign. We will draw from the expertise held within our community to develop a comprehensive discourse on the science, policy, and technological solutions for climate change. This event will build on the discussions begun through activities surrounding our 2007 UW Common Book, *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*, which addresses the potential devastating effects of climate change on our environment.

I encourage all faculty, students, and staff to look for opportunities to participate in the UW's Focus the Nation programming. It is through these types of community activities that we can build the momentum to make positive changes together. For more information, please visit <http://www.depts.washington.edu/uwfocus/>.

Sincerely yours,

Mark A. Emmert
President