

### Visscher Reception, Tuesday, June 6, 2017 = 5 minutes

- Good evening everyone, and welcome to Eastcliff.
- We're honored to have Legislator Emeritus Phyllis Kahn with us.
- Phyllis represented the University and her district ably, uniquely and passionately for more than three decades, and we're very thankful for her support.
- A special thank you to Dr. Metzger for your leadership of this remarkable faculty and staff of our Department of Integrative Biology and Physiology.
- And thank you all for all you do for our University.
- If you haven't yet, please get a chance to meet my wife, Karen ... she's our University's biggest and most enthusiastic booster.

#### [BRIEF PAUSE]

- Of course, we've gathered here to celebrate the life and work of our extraordinary alumnus and faculty member, Dr. Maurice Visscher, and to congratulate Dr. Jeffrey Friedman, the keynote speaker at today's Visscher Symposium, and the recipients of the Young Investigator Awards.
- Maurice Visscher's work and words, conducted, spoken and written a half century ago, resonate particularly loudly and powerfully today.
- I'm thinking, for example, of the words that were included in today's Symposium program.
- Dr. Visscher said: "First of all, pay attention to your scientific creativity and productivity.
- "But," he added, "also remember that you live in a society in which **the ethic of truthfulness, which is at the heart of the scientific method, may be infused into societal decisions.**"
- I think we all know that we live in a time when the truth, when the data and when the scientific method are not always part of decision-making equation for some of our policy makers and political leaders.
- That's why in these times we need the spirit and legacy of Maurice Visscher to guide us at this University — and to guide our nation — as we strive to ensure that data

and facts *are* at the foundation of decisions to move science, to move medicine, and to move our society forward.

- As Visscher believed, that's our duty not only as scientists, but as citizens.

**[BRIEF PAUSE]**

- This commitment to excellent science and a deep impact on the public's health is why I've made the rejuvenation of our Medical School and our entire Academic Health Center a priority of my presidency.
  - It's been a priority of mine — and of Governor Dayton's — and we're making progress.
  - First, we have a visionary and tireless leader in our Medical School, Dean Brooks Jackson.
  - He couldn't be here tonight, but when I say tireless, I mean it.
  - Brooks claims he hasn't missed a day of running since 1979, which is pretty miraculous.
  - But it's prepared him for this marathon to enhance the excellence, reputation, and national stature of our Medical School.
  - And we're making strides and taking action.
  - This past legislative session, the state agreed to partner with us to build a new \$104 million Health Sciences Education Center.
  - It will set the national standard for interactive, engaged health education and training and help us to recruit and retain the best students, faculty, researchers and staff.
  - It's very good news.
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- The state also partnered with us on a new MnDRIVE initiative.
  - MnDRIVE stands for the Minnesota Discovery Research and Innovation Economy program and it's our focused research program, and the state will invest \$8 million

to help us create a much-needed statewide cancer clinical trials network with community partners.

- Meanwhile, we're recruiting new faculty for our Medical Discovery Teams to bring in grant dollars and create additional centers of excellence for the University and our Medical School.
- Dean Jackson has implemented new incentives and expectations around scholarship and grants.
- We've prioritized and invested in new research infrastructure to make research easier and more productive for faculty.
- We've emphasized and invested in mentorship for junior and mid-career faculty.
- And we've been working hard — with Fairview, with UMP and with others — to improve our clinical partnerships . . . to drive resources and to expand our clinical research opportunities.
- As always, our challenges are resources, which can mean it's sometimes a challenge to recruit and retain highly productive faculty and department chairs.
- But we've been doing better recently, and we will do better as we move forward.
- In the end — with the work of Maurice Visscher and our Department of Integrative Biology and Physiology as our guides — we need to insist on excellence in all that we do.
- That must be our crystal clear aim . . . the sort of excellence that is the trademark of Dr. Visscher's groundbreaking work.
- With that, thank you all again for joining us here tonight.
- And let me turn this over now to one of the leading members of our Medical School faculty and research enterprise, a relentless advocate for the University and our health sciences, the Executive Vice Dean of the Med School and Brooks Jackson's right hand person, Dr. Jakub Tolar.
- Thanks again.