

## ABOUT WKU PRESIDENT GARY A. RANDELL

Gary A. Ransdell was named President of Western Kentucky University on September 12, 1997. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from WKU in 1973 and 1974, followed by a doctorate in Higher Education from Indiana University in 1978. Dr. Ransdell came to WKU following his service as Vice President for Administration and Advancement at Clemson University in South Carolina. Prior to that, he served as Director of Alumni Relations at Southern Methodist University.

Dr. Ransdell is leading WKU through a transformation from a university of regional importance to a leading American university with international reach. WKU has been the fastest growing university in Kentucky for 13 straight years, with an enrollment increase of 44 percent from 14,500 to 20,900 students. Enrollment at WKU's three regional campuses in Glasgow, Owensboro, and Elizabethtown/Ft. Knox has grown to over 6,000 students, and WKU leads the state in the number of online degrees, courses, and distance learning students. WKU's graduation rate has increased by 33 percent, and the first year retention rate has grown by 15 percent. WKU completed its first capital campaign in 2003 with \$102 million in new gifts and pledges, and is nearing the completion of its second campaign with \$170 million in hand toward a 2012 goal of \$200 million. Sponsored research has also grown from \$11 million to \$30 million under Dr. Ransdell's leadership. The transformation of WKU also includes a rebuilding of the WKU campus with the completion of some \$500 million in capital construction since 1998 with nearly \$200 million of projects to be completed by 2012.

Major academic achievements include the creation of Kentucky's only independent Honors College; the establishment of the Gatton Academy of Math and Science in Kentucky; new baccalaureate degree programs in Electrical, Mechanical, and Civil Engineering; and new doctoral degree programs in Education and Nursing. Internationalization of the WKU experience has been highlighted by significant growth in study abroad programs; numerous student, faculty, and research exchange programs with international universities; and new partnerships with Hanban in Beijing, China, for Kentucky's first Confucius Institute; the University of Evansville at Harlaxton College in Grantham, England; and an agreement with Navitas to facilitate international recruitment.

Dr. Ransdell serves as Chair of the Board for the Louisville Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Gary and Julie Ransdell met as WKU students and married in 1972. They have 2 sons—Patrick (WKU '02) and Matthew (WKU '06), who both played baseball for WKU, and a daughter-in-law—Brooke (WKU '04), and a grandson—Walker (WKU Class of 2029!). They also have two Labrador Retrievers named Topper and Spirit and a Rhodesian Ridgeback named Tsavo!

Dr. Ransdell has an agreement with the Board of Regents to serve as WKU President through 2022.

