

# The Investiture of Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D., as the Chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha

Thursday, Sept. 5, 2019

## Remarks from Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts

On behalf of the people of the great state of Nebraska, congratulations on your investiture. I know from our time working together that you will be a successful and effective leader for the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

You have an amazing track record of service to the Cornhusker State. From your time in the operating room, to your leadership of the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and now to your leadership of the students, faculty and staff of UNO, you have consistently held yourself and all those around you to the highest standard of excellence.

I personally appreciate your recent efforts at UNMC to help our state combat addiction and better address substance use disorders. Through your work, you have been a valuable partner to the State, and your capable leadership is helping us cement our place as a world leader in cancer and biomedical research. I look forward to continued partnership in education, research and healthcare. I especially applaud UNO's "Access to Exceptional" mission which will serve our students well and help Grow Nebraska.

As you formally assume this new role at UNO, I know that you will continue to demonstrate the outstanding leadership and vision for which you have become known. Your resourcefulness, integrity, and trademark Nebraska work ethic will be a blessing to UNO and the entire University as we move forward. Indeed, you truly embody the "Maverick spirit" that defines the UNO community.

Again, congratulations on your investiture and best wishes on the road ahead.

## Remarks from Omaha Mayor Jean Stothert

Good afternoon, everyone. On this very day five years ago, September 5th, 2014, I had the honor to represent the citizens of Omaha and welcome Dr. Gold as the chancellor of the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Today, I speak as a partner and a friend to recognize Dr. Gold for proven leadership to the University of Nebraska system and our city and welcome him as the chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. He has led tremendous growth at the Medical Center in important areas of academics and research, talent recruitment, and campus development. This extraordinary progress requires initiative, experience, and commitment. Dr. Gold now brings these important strengths to the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus.

Building great partnerships is the way we get things done in Omaha. Partnerships, with our academic, business, development, and philanthropic communities, with our state and with our non-profit sector, nearly everything that we accomplish benefits from the leadership, financial support, and the vision of these valued partners. Higher education is an investment in our city. Our strong academic partners are critically important for business development and expansion, to recruit and retain talent, and build on our reputation as a city of opportunity and inclusion.

Beyond academic achievement, the students at University of Nebraska at Omaha learn the importance of community service and engagement, thoughtful debate, and strategies to participate in positive change. Throughout our city, UNO graduates continue to support the university's mission to transform

and improve the quality of life. They are involved in their neighborhood, their churches, and businesses. They are our partners, the foundation of all we do. Dr. Gold, the future of this great university is in your capable hands. The students, faculty, staff, and proud alumni will all be a part of the next decades of success. We welcome you as chancellor and look forward to our continued work as partners.

## Remarks from Michael B. Yanney, Chair Emeritus, Burlington Capital Group

This is a really very special occasion, and I'm deeply honored and humbled to be on this stage. Thank you for coming out to join us to celebrate the installation of Dr. Jeffrey Gold as chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

They've asked me to speak representing our community. I want to say to you I don't know whether I'm representing the business community, the charitable community, but whatever it is, we're really honored to be here.

I don't think you can overestimate the importance of the University of Nebraska at Omaha not only to the city, to the state, to the entire region. Our community looks to UNO to produce the leaders of tomorrow, leaders in technology, in science, in fine arts, public administration, and certainly in education. Leaders across the entire spectrum, we look at UNO to do that.

We are excited to have Chancellor Jeffrey Gold since he first arrived in Omaha in 2014. I've been working with him the entire five years. I'm not on his payroll either.

Dr. Gold as emphasized the importance of partnerships between the University of Nebraska Omaha, Lincoln, Kearney, and all of Nebraska communities. These partnerships have led to improvements in curriculum, in outreach, in programming, and even in the campuses themselves. He is a leader with vision, a man quick to look for ways to collaborate and enhance the university's impact all over.

The famous business and leadership author, Tom Collins, who wrote the book Good to Great, researched CEOs all over the United States. He found two common characteristics, first, a dogged discipline, and second, humility, which really describes Dr. Gold to the "T" - as the CEO, as a great volunteer. As he officially takes the rein at UNO here today, we look forward to a future in which UNO will continue to foster innovation, collaboration, and continue to impact our city, our state, and perhaps the entire world. I am excited to see what's ahead for UNO under Chancellor Gold and under his very fine leadership.

Now I'm going to take 30 seconds to deviate from the script. I've done business in a whole bunch of countries around the world. I've had chief executives in many, many places. They don't get any better.

Thank you.

## Remarks from Tim Clare, Chair of the NU Board of Regents

Good afternoon. My name is Tim Clare. On behalf of Regent Paul Kenney, Regent Bob Phares, Regent Elizabeth O'Connor, student regents Ozanne, Johnson, Kent, and Yousuf, and all of our colleagues on the Board of Regents, it is our honor to be here today to extend congratulations and full support to Chancellor Gold.

The upward trajectory and sense of momentum at the University of Nebraska at Omaha is palpable. That is a credit to the talented staff and faculty here, the amazing students, and the countless other Nebraskans who truly care about this outstanding university and its success. UNO's success is a credit to leadership. Dr. Gold had big shoes to fill in terms of the great leadership provided by his predecessor, John Christensen. But in less than 28 months, Chancellor Gold and his team have lead UNO to more achievements and student success, research, and engagement than we might have even thought possible.

From new milestones in diversity to new programs to enhance student outcomes, to record research activity, to unprecedented philanthropic support, to national recognition for community service, this is truly an exciting moment in the history of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. This success comes as a result of a campus-wide laser focus on the vital mission of UNO to transform the lives of those we serve. At UNO, everyone knows what the priority is. Students. Every staff member, every faculty member, every administrator is all in on the goal to support each and every student through their academic journey. With a campus culture like that, great things will happen, and we're seeing that already with Chancellor Gold at the helm.

The most exciting part for us, and that's all of us, is that the future looks even brighter. The theme of this investiture, access to exceptional, is a clear north star about where UNO is headed. At the University of Nebraska at Omaha, every student, no matter their background, will have access to exceptional education that will prepare them for the workforce, equip them to be a productive citizen, and transform their life and the lives of those around them.

Chancellor Gold, you have proven yourself as a bold thinker, a strategic leader, a gifted collaborator, and somebody who dreams big. Your student-centered approach and your bias toward action are serving the university and our entire state extremely well. We believe ... No, scratch that. We know that we have the right person at the right time to lead UNO through its next chapter of growth and opportunity. Congratulations again on this role. My fellow regents and I look forward to the many achievements that your leadership will create in the months and years ahead. Thank you.

### Remarks from Laura Grams, Ph.D., Chair of the UNO Department of Psychology

Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Laura Grams, a faculty member in the philosophy department, and I'm delighted to join you here today for the investiture of our chancellor, Jeffrey Gold, with whom I had the pleasure of working through the faculty senate when he first began at UNO.

As a first generation college student himself from day one, his sights were set on helping every UNO student achieve success and on benefiting everyone else whose life the university touches, perhaps because he started his own journey as an engineering student but later became a pediatric cardiologist. He understands the need to nurture students' broad ranging intellectual curiosity and openness to new possibilities.

As Dr. Steven Page, a UNO psychology professor, whose memory we cherish, used to say, "Be an expander, not a narrower." Our chancellor is just such a person. He continues to take on new challenges to achieve his deeply personal goal of expanding access to the highest quality educational opportunities, and in doing so, he is helping to open future horizons not only for our students and for our beloved university, but for this entire community. I am inspired to do better by his expansive vision and his unflagging commitment to excellence, and I am proud to welcome him officially as our chancellor.

### Remarks from Steven Summers, President of the UNO Staff Advisory Council

Good afternoon. My name is Steven Summers. I'm the facility director for the Thompson Alumni Center and the president of the UNO Staff Advisory Council. On behalf of the staff at UNO and the Staff Advisory Council, please accept our congratulations on your investiture as the chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The staff at UNO are excited about the future of our great university and ready to be a part of the continuous improvement and growth of UNO.

Staff at UNO care deeply about our campuses. They include the folks who mow the Pep Bowl in the July heat, the staff who come to work before sunrise to make sure breakfast is ready at the Milo Bail Student Center, the admins that keep departments running smoothly, and every building and support staff who are deeply invested in seeing our students succeed. The staff's investment in UNO is complete and in part what defines our unique character and mission.

Chancellor Gold has been a champion for staff and in support of the SAC Professional Development Fund. For the first time in UNO's history, a campus-wide program exists for staff development and career growth. UNO staff leadership appreciates being able to advocate in forum and engage senior leadership on behalf of the UNO staff. Chancellor Gold, we appreciate your commitment to UNO mission and core values, and we appreciate your efforts to engage on all levels of university system to examine and solve complex issues. Staff members will be key players and collaborators in developing the UNO Strategic Plan Initiative, Completion Imperative, and overall UNO growth. You only need to ask, and we'll be there to support the needs of our university and our community.

In the 1930s, Babe Ruth said, "The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may not have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime," or, adjusted for inflation, the whole club would not be worth \$1.57 today. It is in this period of team work and collaboration that we will help UNO provide access to exceptional for all our students, faculty, and staff. It is in the details of our work that we are inspired to think big and achieve big. The UNO staff is UNO true, staff focused, and ready for the journey.

Chancellor Gold, on behalf of all UNO staff and the UNO Advisory Council, congratulations, Chancellor Gold.

### Remarks from Aya Yousuf, UNO Student Body President and Student Regent

Good afternoon, distinguished students, faculty, and guests. My name is Aya Yousuf. I'm the student body president at UNO and student regent and the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. It is my privilege and pleasure to present greetings to Chancellor Jeffrey Gold today on behalf of UNO students.

Chancellor Gold has lead UNO for the past two years with great passion and commitment to not only serve our campus, but also its students. From attending student meetings at 7 PM in the evening to discuss his experiences as first-generation college student to responding to students' emails at 5 AM in the morning, he has truly made students his top priority. His integrity, work ethic, and vision has impacted Mavericks across campus as well as many future Mavericks to come. As a student myself, I could not be happier and prouder to have a leader like Chancellor Gold leading what I call home.

A few months ago, I had the pleasure of attending a meeting with Chancellor Gold. At that meeting, I vividly remember him asking, "If you could step into my shoes, what would you like to change or do?" As a leader, this has not only exemplified his passion for students, but also his commitment to making UNO a truly exceptional place. Moreover, I remember Dr. Gold saying, "If you truly want to make a difference in the world, this is the place to do it," in reference to our institution. I echo that sentiment, and Chancellor Gold is leading by example. Chancellor Gold has lead UNO with many accomplishments from strengthening our community and campus partnership to expanding academic programs. UNO is undoubtedly in great hands.

On behalf of the 15,000 students here at UNO, thank you for working tirelessly to make UNO a place we are proud of. Thank you for being a leader that we, as students, can look up to. And more importantly, thank you for always advocating for students.

### Remarks from Chris Denny, Chair of UNO Alumni Association Board of Directors

Good afternoon. I'm Chris Denney. I'm speaking today as chairman of the board of ... I'm sorry. I'm speaking today as the UNO Alumni Association chairman of the Board of Directors. On behalf of the Alumni Association and board, it is my pleasure to extend congratulations to Dr. Jeff Gold on this special occasion for you, your family, and for UNO.

In Chancellor Gold's invitation to us all today, he discussed the importance of connections, connections in the context of UNO's unique position and ability to connect students with the community. Those comments hit home to us at the Alumni Association when we think about our mission, which is simply to

strengthen connections with UNO. We envision these connections as a highly engaged network supporting UNO, the community, and each other.

Today, we have over 112,000 alumni, 57,000 of which are right here in Omaha. So when the chancellor talks about student connections, it's the very beginning of developing a strong and engaged relationship that we, as 112,000 alumni, are all a part of. Also as alumni, we have a unique perspective to watch the university grow and improve. I think each of us can say, with some envy, the UNO we knew as a student is not the experience students receive today with the growth, facilities, and faculty talent. But the core of what it means to be a Maverick remains unchanged.

Since Chancellor Gold stepped on campus, we've seen the engagement momentum at UNO accelerate as he challenges us and laid out ambitious plans. His participation with the Alumni Association and board over the past two years gives us confidence and excitement to expand our work and connect these engaged students with the Maverick alumni community.

It is with a great amount of enthusiasm, support, and Maverick spirit that we at the Alumni Association officially welcome Chancellor Gold to his important role. Your Alumni Association remains committed to strengthening connections with UNO, and we are eager to continue our partnership with you. Best wishes.

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