



## Oberlin College Phonecast Two MDT-PDT 10 March 2015

Chuck Spitulnik: Hello folks, this is Chuck Spitulnik, the president of the Oberlin Alumni Association and member of the class of 1973, along with Andrea [Hargrave 00:00:28] from the class of 1977. I'm a member of the College Strategic Planning Steering Committee. I want to welcome you to the first ever Oberlin Alumni Phonecast. We're dialing a total of over 30,000 alumni tonight, and we're glad that you've joined us for this interactive session with president Marvin Krislov, the 14th president of Oberlin College.

As you know, Oberlin is undertaking a strategic planning process, and our goal is to retain Oberlin's position as one of the world's most distinguished institutions of higher education. The strategic planning steering committee is pleased to hear alumni thoughts about Oberlin's future this evening. We're asking you to respond to the following questions. What current or future challenge is most important for Oberlin? In light of this challenge, what is the most opportunity for us to explore? Marvin, I really want to thank you for speaking with the alumni this evening.

Marvin Krislov: Thanks Chuck. It's great to be on. I'm eager to hear the questions. Fair warning, I'm coming off of a cold so I may not sound quite my usual self, but anyway, happy to begin.

Chuck Spitulnik: I really appreciate your willingness to push through tonight. I want to emphasize a couple of things. We want to hear questions from as many alumni as possible, and we want to make sure that Marvin has time to respond, so I need to ask you two things. First of all, when you have a question or when there's a question that you're ready to post, please push zero on your phone and you'll be connected with the folks who will make it possible for you actually to ask a question as part of this online conversation.

The other things is please remember to pose your question as a question. We won't have time for follow ups this evening because there's a lot of people so far. We already have over a thousand people on this call. We're not going to have time for everybody to ask questions, but we want to give as many people as possible a chance to ask questions. Please avoid follow up questions if you can. The first question that we have is actually one that came on in email.

Again, I want to encourage you all to push zero on your phone so that you can be connected with the folks who will be able to put you through



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so that you can participate actively and ask your question. We have a question from [Sage 00:02:50], class of 05. He has a question related to international experiences and connections for Oberlin College in the future. He has a particular interest in Cuba and will be leading the alumni tour later this month. He wants to know what kind of international experiences and connections the college will be ... What kinds of opportunities the college will be making for its students.

Marvin Krislov: Thanks Chuck. Sage, I'm looking forward to meeting you because as you know, my family and I are joining the alumni trip to Cuba in a couple of weeks, and we're very excited to do that. Internationalizing Oberlin has been part of our strategic plan, and we're looking at it in the context of the new strategic plan. About 76% of our students right now go abroad at one point, whether it's for a semester, during the summer, or during the winter term.

We also have a significant percentage of our student body who comes from outside of the United States, a little under 8%.

We're trying to expand some of our programs for students to study and work abroad. We've got a new program that we're unveiling called Global Scholars program, which will allow students to both learn about international organizations and to work in them during the summer. We have a center for languages and culture that tries to integrate the study of languages in topics such as history and politics as well. There are many, many other initiatives going on including some of our longstanding partnerships including [Wishaunsky 00:04:30] and East Asia as well as new and expanding areas. It's a high priority in one that the strategic planning group is very much considering as part of our academic future.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. Our next question will come from Fred in Florida. Fred, the floor is yours.

Fred: Hi. Thank you for taking my call. It's an honor and a pleasure to talk to you, Marvin.

Marvin Krislov: Hi Fred.

Fred: I'm calling from Palm City, Florida. My question is, when I was on campus in the mid 70s, I'm class of 79, I'm an alumni rep and a class rep, and when I was on campus in the mid 70s, the Rathskeller sold beer, 3.2 beer, but Oberlin was a dry town. In view of, and I'm sure you're aware of this



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Dartmouth going alcohol free on campus and many other colleges and universities now going alcohol free on campus, and I'm sure this isn't a very popular call with the students at Oberlin College, but have you discussed Oberlin going alcohol free, and has it been discussed amongst the Board of Trustees or amongst your management at the higher levels at Oberlin?

Marvin Krislov: You know, I think if memory serves me correctly, Dartmouth is prohibiting hard alcohol, not all forms of alcohol. It hasn't really come up as a topic per se here. I think we, despite our history of prohibition, I don't think there's any push to go back in that direction. But what we have had a discussion about, and it's in the context frankly of relationships between students, is the role that alcohol may play in creating inappropriate activity or inappropriate actions.

I was just talking to our special assistant for diversity and equity and inclusion, who is administering Title IX today. We were talking about the role that alcohol may play in some of those instances. But I think what we'd like to do is try to have an educational approach to things like the use of alcohol. To that end I think there are a lot of programs including programs aimed at health and wellness that try to emphasize leading a balanced life and a healthy life as well.

Fred: Thank you.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. I want to remind the folks on the phone, please push zero on your phones if you'd like to ask a question. Our next caller, our next questioner, will be Jason, from Laramie, Wyoming.

Jason: Yes, hello Mr. President. My question is what ... Hi, how are you?

Marvin Krislov: Good, good.

Jason: Oh, good. I'm from the college class of 02. My question ... Sorry, I'm at a very loud bar at the moment. I didn't expect this call. I'll step outside. My question is what is the college and the conservatory doing to make an education there more possible for undocumented students?

Marvin Krislov: That is a very timely question, because just this year we actually started considering undocumented students in the pool of domestic students. That is making it more financially affordable by making them ... Financial aid even more accessible. Of course, we've admitted undocumented



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students as international students for quite awhile, but this was a change and it does allow for more financial aid opportunities. We're actively recruiting undocumented students, particularly those with the DACA status.

I would encourage anyone on this call who knows a highly qualified student who fits this category to consider applying to Oberlin. There are sometimes logistical challenges for students who don't live particularly close to Oberlin that may need to be overcome, but we have some alumni and students who are very actively raising money for this. In fact, there was a crowd sourcing project just a couple of months ago that raised money for scholarship funding for undocumented students, and it was I think our most successful fundraising source, crowd sourcing initiative to date. We're on it, and if you want to help, you can do your part too.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks very much Marvin. I want to next give the opportunity for Paula Gordon, Paula [Sphink 00:09:00] Gordon to ask your question. Paula, you're on.

Paula: Hello and thank you. I'm in British Columbia where we've just had the warmest weather in all of living memory on the west side of the Rocky Mountains, which is quite alarming, and that brings me to Oberlin's leading role in environmental education. I continue to think that that is our primary calling all the way to 2033. In light of that and the second question that you ask is how are we positioning ourselves to grow Oberlin as a powerhouse for environmental education, and in light of that are we exploring collaborations with those who serve the most impacted, that is to say the least of these, the historically black colleges and universities, community colleges, people who are serving the poor and serving the places where all of the people who can't get to Oberlin might be a resource to us?

Marvin Krislov: It is great to hear from you, Paula. I'm sorry you had ... Or I guess I'm glad for you. I don't know.

Paula: No.

Marvin Krislov: You had strange weather. We had the coldest weather on record I think here, so it's affecting different people differently. As you know, we are leaders in this regard, and David Orr continues to be the visionary who really guides us. The Oberlin Project, which is the collaboration between



the city, the college, and the schools, is making great progress. We're building a new platinum plus lead hotel that's going to have conferences and that will really draw further attention to our leadership position in terms of educating people about sustainability and so forth.

David is also talking to folks about expanding our reach even beyond Oberlin and Lorain County and really talking about taking some environmental initiatives as a region and reaching out to some of the groups that you've talked about. We also are doing work internationally as well, our students and faculty. There's everything from our students who have done things such as with the guidance of Professor Petersen, Lucid Design, technology that's going around the world, to the everyday work here at conservation, locally produced foods, the Oberlin Project, but also thinking about leadership in the region as well.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. Folks, before we go to the next questioner and while you're listening to the question and listening to Marvin's answer, I want you to help us out by answering a poll question. The poll question that you can answer by using the keypads on your phones is what should be Oberlin College's highest priority. I'm going to list the choices for you. What should be the college's highest priority?

Push 1 for financial aid support. Push 2 for academic programs. Push 3 for study abroad opportunities. Push 4 for recruiting the best faculty. Push 5 for recruiting the best students. Again, 1, financial aid, 2, academic programs, 3, study abroad opportunities, 4, recruiting the best faculty, and 5, recruiting the best students. While you are answering that question and pushing the keypads on your phone, I want to go to [Leizhal 00:12:27], and I hope I've pronounced your name correctly. If you could ... Who's from New York. If you could ask your question.

Leizhal: Great. Hi Chuck and president Krislov. Thank you guys for taking my call. I'm a member of the class of 2008. I was co-president of my class and I was a co-president of the regional club here for New York City. I just wanted to actually find out about if there's been any updates regarding the campus climate working group or committee that I had had a conversation with president Krislov about previously, yes.

Marvin Krislov: Sure. Great to talk to you. The answer is yes, there is work being done. I can't give you any specific results, but one of the things we are doing is we're looking at some data that we recently got from a campus survey. Some of the results are very positive, but some of them are things that

suggest we need to do some work. But that's why we're here. I will tell you that one of the things we're also doing is having discussions with colleagues at other campuses as well, and it is true that there are challenges at most campuses across the country.

One very positive development that I want to share with you is that Board Chair, Clyde McGregor, recently announced a \$500,000 gift to support student academic success, particularly for those students, low income first gen students, increasing funding for emergency book funds, and travel funds, medical funds, as well as increasing peer mentoring support. These are things that we think will very much enhance the academic experience of those students who may have some challenges to face here in achieving academic success. Lots of work going on. Nothing big to announce at the moment, but very serious efforts going on.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. The next questioner, who I'd like to have an opportunity to hear from, is [Marcelino Equiveria 00:14:30] in Oakland.

Marcelino: Hi, how's it going, president Krislov? It's Marcelino.

Chuck Spitulnik: Good. How are you? Good, good.

Marcelino: Good. I wanted to ask how is Oberlin improving its programs for students looking for jobs after graduation, whether it be within their major or in general? Is Oberlin providing after graduation advisers, check-ins to see how graduates are doing? What kind of things are happening?

Marvin Krislov: Thank you for this question. It's a topic that is very important to me and the strategic planning process. In fact, we're talking a lot about how we can integrate the academic experience and the co-curricular experience and work with students on advising as well so that they can have a real sense of where they might be going after they graduate. As you know, many of our students have many, many paths and take multiple jobs in their lives, but we want to position them to make good choices when they leave college.

To that end, we are increasing paid internships during the summer because unpaid internships create a barrier for many students. We're also increasing some of the other programs we have such as business scholars, and law scholars, Cole scholars which supports electoral politics, the entrepreneurship program, programs that expose students, whether



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it's during winter term or during the summer or during the semester even, to various options.

I also think it's very important, and Danielle Young is here with me tonight, we're really to increase the connections between alumni and students. We think that that's a role that all of you can help play in increasing the connections. The Alumni Association and the Career Services office has partnered to create a new platform called Tappan which allows you to connect. It replaces OBIEWeb.

It allows you to connect with current students. If you have questions about this, Danielle would be someone to contact. We really want to create these opportunities for students, because I think it will be very meaningful for them and also, frankly, meaningful for the alumni to see and hear from today's students. Lots of ways that this is part of the focus of mine and the strategic planning process.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. Before we get to our next questioner I want to let you all know the results of the poll that we just took while you were on the phone and listening. The question of course was what should be Oberlin College's highest priority from ... In rank order 34% percent of you said academic programs. Thirty-one percent said financial aid support. Twenty percent said recruiting the best faculty. Fourteen percent said recruiting the best students, and 2% said study abroad opportunities. Thanks very much for participating in that poll. Now I would like to call on Jennifer in Salt Lake City.

Jennifer: Hi. I'm class of 98. I had recently heard something about MIT offering an online course with their faculty, and I was just wondering if Oberlin had any similar plans about online curriculum.

Marvin Krislov: Great question, Jennifer. What we are doing is we're certainly talking about the role of technology here at Oberlin. I think what the faculty believe is that technology is a great addition to the kind of in class hands on researches and other experiences we offer. We haven't gone the route of producing our own online courses. Those actually cost quite a bit of money, and they're more of a branding exercise than really money makers, certainly for the undergraduate experience.

We are part of a consortium with Bryn Mawr that has a blended learning approach where we do use technology to deliver some of the content. I think many teachers, including myself, have experimented with some of



those types of learnings, but I don't see us at the moment embracing fully an online education course. But that is a topic for discussion. Just this week we have Michael Horn, who works closely with Clayton Christensen on disruptive education. He's coming in to talk to us, so you never know. After Thursday night when he speaks, who knows what people may be thinking, but that's where we are now. Thanks for your question.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks very much again Marvin. I want to go next to Tom, somewhere on the road in Oregon.

Tom: Hey Marvin, it's Tom [Wallmer 00:19:29].

Marvin Krislov: Oh, hi Tom!

Tom: I'm on my way home from ... To Portland from Salem, but my question is [crosstalk 00:19:36] ... Let's not talk about that here. As a judge, I have to be careful. What are the trends you see in terms of academic interest these days, the interest in different majors changes? What are the majors that are popular and to the extent where changing or accommodating student interest? Are there departments that were restructuring or getting rid of, as is happening in some colleges?

Marvin Krislov: You know, Tom, that is a great question. I think you will see that our majors actually have remarkable continuity. I don't know the exact order off the top of my head, but when I last asked this question what I heard were places like bio, and politics, and English, and history are all very strong majors. The growth areas include environmental studies. I think neuroscience is growing, and of course there's some others as well. But I think that our students are really pursuing fairly rigorous traditional majors in many ways, but they're also pursuing multiple majors.

That's one trend that I see. Many of our students have two majors, sometimes even three majors, which is sort of crazy but they do it, and sometimes minors as well. What's happening is I think that there is a very interesting discussion taking place at the strategic planning level about interdisciplinary work. I think one of the questions is will we create more faculty appointments that span multiple departments, and is the department structure one that is not necessarily best supporting the way people want to think and learn these days?

At least in the majors I don't see major, major shifts, so there's some growth areas but I think adding things and even on the faculty side





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perhaps thinking across disciplines is the trend of the future. That's something that I know our two deans, [Elgrand 00:21:46] and Kalyn, are thinking about as well. Frankly, one area that we want to think about is more collaboration between the conservatory and the arts and sciences as well. I think that's very exciting and will play to a great strength of Oberlin.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. Our next questioner will be Amber, Amber in Los Angeles.

Amber: Hi.

Chuck Spitulnik: I also ... Amber, before you go I just want to remind everybody who's on the phone to please push zero on your phone if you want to get in on the queue to ask a question. Amber, I'm sorry, go right ahead.

Amber: Oh, no worries. I'm Amber and I'm class of 94. I'm a social worker. My question has to do with the interviews that I've had with students out here to go to Oberlin. I volunteer to interview students. Everyone I've interviewed has been absolutely incredible. But my question is how is Oberlin keeping itself diverse, not just racially, and ethnically, and socioeconomically but in terms of the breadth of experience that people bring to Oberlin?

When I was there not everyone was an absolute A class superstar student, but everyone brought a unique experience to the college.

I worry sometimes that Oberlin is turning into another kind of version of an ivy league school. This is not having talked to anybody directly about it, but just from my observations of talking to the interviews here in Los Angeles or the people responsible for admission, that it's getting so competitive. I'm just wondering whether Oberlin keeps itself open to students who may have something [of meaning 00:23:36] to offer but aren't necessarily the A class student.

Marvin Krislov: Amber, thank you for that question. Oberlin is getting competitive to get into, and we just had a record number of applicants this year, 7,000 applicants for arts and sciences. We will admit around a third of those, and around a third of those will matriculate, give or take, assuming the numbers. But I can tell you that the people we admit represent a wide variety of experiences. We look at holistic ... It's a holistic review, and certainly life experiences and life stories are very much a part of the process.



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It's not something that we look for a cookie cutter formula. We also have a lot of partnerships to try to create opportunities for students who might not otherwise necessarily be admitted to Oberlin. We have the local partnership with Oberlin High School where every qualified student is given free tuition. We have partnerships with the Posse Foundation and QuestBridge as well, but we also work with community based organizations throughout the country to discover students who may not have had all the advantages in life and may not have had the luxury of, let's say, having all of the great extracurriculars because they working at jobs and supporting their families and so forth.

I can tell you that our admission staff and I share your commitment to bring in a really broadly diverse group of students. It's certainly the Oberlin mission and the Oberlin value system. I meet these students every year, not all of them of course, but I meet as many as I can, and I think their stories would be very compelling to you. Rest assured that while I can't speak to an individual student who is or is not admitted or chooses not to go, I can tell you that we are looking at a very wide range of students. That's what is at the heart of making Oberlin an exciting place to be.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. Folks, it's time for another poll question. Again, use the keypad on your phone to answer this question. Listen to the choices. What's the best way to engage, communicate, and keep Oberlin close to you in your life? Press 1 if your answer is the Oberlin Alumni Magazine and publications that come in the mail. Press 2 if it's Around the Square e-newsletter, email, and social media. Press 3 if it's events in cities where you live and on campus.

Four, streamed content such as concerts and lectures, and 5, a reasonable mix of all of the above. Again, those choices, number 1, Oberlin Alumni Magazine and publications that come in the mail, 2, Around the Square e-newsletter, email, social media, 3, events in cities and on campus, 4, streamed content such as concerts and lectures, and 5, a reasonable mix of all of the above. The next question is going to be from Robert in California.

Robert: Hello. I'm ...

Chuck Spitulnik: Robert, I'm sorry, go ahead.

Robert: OK, my question today is a number of large colleges are having real difficulty selling themselves because they're still quite committed to the liberal arts. I suspect it's something that's not of that much interest to a lot of new students.

Marvin Krislov: Robert, I think your question is what is Oberlin doing to sell itself to students. Is that your question?

Robert: To sell itself to students who are not interested in the old traditional liberal arts.

Marvin Krislov: Let me just say this. I don't think it's the old liberal arts. I think it's the new and vital liberal arts, which I think has a lot of relevance for students today, and of course that includes things including the humanities, and the social sciences, and the sciences. I think what we are trying to do is connect liberal arts education to the world beyond.

That's partly through co-curricular experiences but also through opportunities to talk about current problems as well in the classroom.

Our students come to Oberlin, and most of them are very excited about the advantages of having the broad based approach to education. They know that they're going to need to think about the world. They're going to need to think about technology. They're going to need to think about language, and religion, and history as well as science and social science. Judging from the numbers, I mentioned that our number of applicants to arts and sciences was a record number this year, there's no shortage of demand for the spots at Oberlin. I think so long as we continue to be known for the rigor of our education and the depth and warmth of our community, which I think we are, as well as the added advantages of the conservatory and the art museum, we will continue to attract students.

Obviously, it's not an education that's for everybody, but I can tell you that from what I can tell, we're doing very well. What we are doing, Robert, in the course of strategic planning is thinking about the future generations and one of the groups that specifically look at students of the future, changing demographics in America, and some of the other factors that may affect demand for an Oberlin education. We are trying to think not only of where we are today but where we will need to be 10, 20 years from now.



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Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin. Our next question will be from Bill Hilton in Sunnyvale, California. Hi Bill.

Bill: Hi Chuck. Hi Marvin.

Marvin Krislov: Hi Bill. How are you?

Bill: I'm very well, thank you. My question today is what do you think the most significant role that the alumni body can play in the life, the current life of the college and conservatory?

Marvin Krislov: Thank you Bill. What a wonderful question. I think there's so many things that alumni can do, particularly in this world of technology and social media and so forth. I think one of the things that you do best for us is spread the word about Oberlin. Although our communication shop has dramatically improved, I think our website and our magazine, we still need to get the word out about Oberlin. It's not known everywhere, so it's very important for you to carry the message about Oberlin to prospective students but also other people who might be friends of ours.

I think it's important for you to come back and to continue to support us and continue to show your passion for what we do. That can be in every different kind of way. Many, many of you have supported the comprehensive campaign, and we are deeply grateful for that. Many of you have opened your hearts and homes to our students and through alumni connections, and that's very important too. I just would say to continue considering Oberlin part of an ongoing relationship that you have for the rest of your lives, and draw on us but also think about ways to connect yourselves and others to us. For that I think it will be a great benefit for us all.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin, and thanks, Bill, for your question. Our next question will be from Laura in Colorado.

Laura: Hey Chuck, how are you? [crosstalk 00:31:45]

Chuck Spitulnik: Hi. How are you?

Laura: I'm from the class of 73. My concern with everything that's been going on in the news the past year is about how the campus, the faculty, and the administration are handling issues of women's safety. As much as I appreciate how diplomatically you've tiptoed around the issue when you

talked about alcohol, I'm really tired of hearing it, of people not being ultimately honest about this and what the situation is. I don't know that everyone has [the same 00:32:15] problem, but I'm really wondering what is being done to discuss it openly and honestly.

Marvin Krislov:

Thank you Laura. Great question. As you may know, about a year ago we adopted a new sexual misconduct policy. It's one that has different branches, which includes education and prevention as well as adjudication if there are complaints brought. As a result of that, I was talking to our special assistant for these areas today. We actually have heard of a lot more concerns than we had previously, and she takes that to mean that we're doing a good job in terms of airing it exactly the way you suggested we should.

We have a group of peer counselors, students who are working to improve understanding of things like consent and also try to get bystander interventions as well. We worked with the athletics department in the fall, and there are a lot of education prevention efforts being undertaken. I think you're right that we do need to have a discussion about alcohol and the effects that that may have on behavior, and that has definitely been part of the discussion.

This campus more than most I think has very honest and open discussions about these issues, including responsibility and being sensitive to consent issues. While I can't say that we are perfect, I think we have really jumped ahead of many other campuses in what we're doing, and we're very committed to doing even more to try to make this campus a very safe place. I will say that I think for most of our students this campus is a very safe place. I can't say it's for everybody because that's probably not realistic, but that's our goal, to make it safe for everybody.

Chuck Spitulnik:

Thanks Marvin. Before we get to our next questioner, I just want to let you know the results of the second poll question that we took. The question was what's the best way to engage and keep Oberlin close to you in your life? The top answer, 55% of you said a reasonable mix of all of the above. Thirty-three percent said the alumni magazine and publications that come in the mail. Five percent said the streamed content such as concerts and lectures. Four percent said Around the Square, e-newsletter, email, and other social media. Then 3% said events in cities and on campus. Thanks for participating in that poll. Now I would like to give Shirley from Fresno the opportunity to ask your question.



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Shirley: Hello, this is Shirley [Valle 00:35:06], class of 1950. I go way back. My husband and I donated some years ago to the new jazz, study for jazz center. I wondered if that's still going strong, and if people are interested, and how it's going.

Marvin Krislov: Oh my goodness. Thank you so much for your support. You should be very, very proud, and I hope you come and visit. It's a wonderful building, and we have a wonderful recording studio that the musicians, including Stevie Wonder, have just raved about. Our jazz program lost [Wendell Logan 00:35:43], its great visionary, but we have a very strong faculty and we're actually doing some expansion slowly in that area. A lot of terrific students. There are just so many great musicians and composers that are coming through our doors in this area. I think the new facility has made a tremendous difference in attracting students and faculty. Thank you very much. It's a great success, and I hope you can come see it.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks very much. I next want to go to Ben in Phoenix. Ben, you're on the line.

Ben: Hi. Hi Mr. Krislov.

Marvin Krislov: Hey!

Ben: Class of 2012. I'm just wondering what is being done to further mental health services at Oberlin, considering possible aggravating factors such as the weather or maybe even unintended consequences to the tobacco ban or even uncertain economic conditions like now?

Marvin Krislov: Right. That's a great question. The tobacco ban has actually not been implemented yet, but I think that one of the things we are going to try to do in terms of helping students and others who are struggling with that is we're going to bolster our cessation services. But we have probably increased mental health services more significantly in the past few years than almost any other area. We created a new counseling center service for students this February that provides 24/7 counseling by phone on evenings and weekends.

We've committed more resources to the counseling center, and we're working on even increasing those as well. We have talked a lot about mental health and wellness and increasing our programming in the health and wellness area as a way of reducing stress and so forth. There's



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also a student group that's name escapes me at the moment that is trying to promote open discussion of these issues.

It's something that I talk a lot about. It's something our dean of students, Eric Estes, who I'm sure you also know, talks a lot about, and it's a high priority. Oberlin students are prone to ... Many of them have mental health challenges, as do campuses throughout the nation. It's a national challenge, but we are absolutely committing more resources and, frankly, if you and others are interested in doing more, we can use your support on this front.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin, and thanks for the question. Our next questioner is Gideon from somewhere in New York State.

Gideon: I'm in New York City. Good evening Marvin.

Marvin Krislov: Hi Gideon.

Gideon: My question is we just finished a straw poll which basically said that financial aid was the second most important priority to us in the future of Oberlin. I know that it's also a priority for the Illuminate campaign, but there always seems to be a disconnect between the passion and the support. I'm wondering if we have 1000 plus people here and probably in the previous call as well, how can we as a larger group of alumni actually find a way to sustain and enhance the financial aid program?

Marvin Krislov: Gideon, thank you for the question. We appreciate the support of everyone on this call for financial aid. It is the number one priority of the comprehensive campaign goal. We're targeting 90 million dollars. We've raised over half of that. We want to create enough support for financial aid so that we can balance that with all of the other commitments we have, including faculty and programs, and so forth. Last year we spent 60 million dollars on financial aid.

Our operating budget is around 160 million. The vast majority of our students get need based financial aid, and as we look in the strategic planning process into the future we can expect that more and more students, because of the demographics of American young people, are going to want financial aid. We know it's challenging to afford the tuition and costs of going to Oberlin.



If everyone on this call committed to doing whatever you can to support financial aid, that would make a huge impression. We really ... There's nothing more important to Oberlin, and we appreciate everything that folks have done. If you can find it within you to do more and encourage your friends to do more, we would be very grateful, and the students who benefit would be very grateful as well.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks Marvin, and thanks Gideon for a good question. Our next questioner will be John in Brooklyn. John, you're on.

John: Hi. Thanks for taking my call. In the literature for alumni that's put out by the college I've noticed that there has been an emphasis, an understandable emphasis on alumni accomplishments in the arts, and perhaps more so than alumni accomplishments say in the sciences. I say this as someone who comes from an arts or humanities background. But I guess I want to know does this reflect budgetary or strategic priorities of the college or does it maybe simply ...

Is it simply that it profiles people like Bill [Irwin or Lena Dunham or Gary Steinhart or Ed Helms 00:41:40], people whom I think are great, but is it that it's easy to do a profile of such people, such well known artists, as opposed to say profiles of scientists in the lab whose work often may not be as glamorous but is often as important or equally important.

Marvin Krislov: You know, that's a great question. I think you're probably thinking that the alumni magazine suggests that's the focus, and perhaps on the cover stories ... I haven't done a calculation, but I know that we are extraordinarily proud of the work we've done in the sciences. In fact, one of the things that I say to people when they ask me, counselors, high school counselors, "What's the thing you most want us to know about Oberlin?"

I said I want them to know about the sciences because I think our sciences are so strong and the quality of the research that students get to here is extraordinary, and they're so well prepared for graduate school or medical school or whatever they go into. For instance, our neuroscience program is certainly viewed as one of the great producers of scientists, and one of the first, but not just neuroscience. Bio, and chemistry, and all of the others as well. I think in terms of the literature, we do have a pamphlet on admissions, that you probably didn't see, that was created at my request, that focuses on the sciences. I have talked with our communications people about trying to emphasize science stories.



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If people have ideas for science stories, we appreciate them, and we have tried to do that. We had a very fun story, for instance, on Professor Katie Ortel, who's an alum, and her work at the Art Museum and how those two intersected. We try to talk about Charles Martin Hall, who of course is the ultimate Oberlin scientist. But perhaps we do need to look at our communications and make sure that we are balancing the sciences. It may be that the sciences produce fewer celebrities, but we don't need to focus only on celebrities. I appreciate the point you're making.

John: Thank you.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks very much. We're going to go next to [Allia 00:44:02] in Los Angeles, and I hope I pronounced your name correctly.

Allia: Hey Marvin, how are you?

Marvin Krislov: Good. How are you?

Allia: Good, thank you. I just wanted to ask you about the Town and Gown divide and the college's vision for bridging that. Just a little background, I was class of 07 and was around for the beginning of the Spanish in the elementary schools program. It was really instrumental in my college experience. It seems like these types of programs are increasing with the Apollo Initiative and other ones, but I just wanted to hear your take on that.

Marvin Krislov: Oh, thanks for that question. There is so much going on. The program that you started, the SITES program, is booming. Kim [Farber 00:44:48] is amazing, as you know. We also have programs with students tutoring math. We have Professor Lynn Powell teaching imaginative writing in the schools. We have Ryan and Jeff in the cinema studies program during the Apollo outreach. There are other, other programs that I'm not even sure I could reel off the top of my head. We have efforts to help students in the Oberlin High School through the Ninde Scholars prepare for colleges.

Then of course we have our ongoing the Robinson Scholars to give tuition to, free tuition to qualified Oberlin students. The Bonner Center coordinates these efforts. We have a lot of student placements in the community. Just this summer, past summer, we started a program to have summer placements of students in some of the social service agencies over the summer. I forgot to mention the America Reads literacy program and all the folks that work through the library. There are



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a lot of efforts through the schools and through Oberlin community services.

The Oberlin Project is also an effort to create job opportunities for people in this community as well. We're very excited about that, and that continues to be a strong partnership between the city, the college, and the schools as well. I could go on and on about this topic, but I won't in the interest of time, but you should feel very proud of what you started and know that there is even more good stuff happening now.

**Chuck Spitulnik:** That is exciting, Marvin. Thanks very much. We have time for one more question. I want to remind all of you or tell of you that those of you who are on the phone and haven't had a chance to have your question answered, if you'll stay on the line after this session completes and follow the prompts, you'll have a chance to leave a voicemail with your question, and we'll do our best to get back to you with information and a response. Our final questioner will be [Jamie 00:46:54] from Port Jefferson, New York.

**Jamie:** Hi. This is Jamie [Melacher 00:47:00]. I'm in Port Jefferson, New York, class of 96. My question for you, Mr. President, I haven't actually been to Oberlin since I don't know when, maybe 2000, so I haven't seen you there, is what do you think is the greatest strategic challenge for Oberlin over the next 10 to 20 years? My inkling is that it's the cost of a private education and the debt that students are facing when they graduate, but I'm curious what you think is the greatest challenge and I guess what you think are your strategies to address it.

**Marvin Krislov:** Jamie, great question. You need to come and visit, and then we can talk about it in person. This issue is of course what the strategic planning process is grappling with. I think there are a variety of questions. I think the financial one is central and, of course, it's not just cost but it is also our relative wealth which supports the cost of education, so our endowment is reasonable but not huge by comparison with some of our fellow schools.

Our endowment doesn't support the tremendous commitment to financial aid that we provide. I mentioned earlier we give about 60 million dollars in financial aid every year. Our endowment spins off much less than that, and our endowment pays for things besides financial aid.

I think to ensure the commitment to financial aid we really need to grow the endowment and also increase the fundraising. There are also some other secondary issues I think. Our location, I think it's a wonderful dynamic town. I think it's one of the more exciting college towns in America, certainly in our size, but unfortunately this area is not a growth area, so what we need to do is we need to make sure that people get to know us, either by technology or by visit, and for our core student audiences, which tend to be on the coast, that often means travel.

That can be expensive. Our location is a challenge because so many students today do like to visit their campuses before they make decisions. We need to do more with communications and other venues of getting the word out to motivate people to make that effort, because it's not a school that most people can come with a two hour drive, which is the way you'd see a short distance.

Cost is probably number one. Location is number two. I think within costs there are a lot of challenges associated with what is an extraordinarily deep and rich education with tenured faculty members teaching small classes of highly motivated students and hands on experiences. This is a very expensive, exciting model of education, and it is absolutely the case that to preserve it, and sustain it, and grow it we're going to need all of your support and then-some. Thanks for that question.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks very much Marvin, and thank all of you for joining in this Phonecast tonight. I want to emphasize that you can learn more about the strategic planning process by going to Oberlin's website. Just go to Oberlin.edu and enter 'plan' in the search box on the home page, and you'll see the link to the strategic planning site.

The strategic planning steering committee also welcomes you to contact them at [Ocstrategicplan@oberlin.edu](mailto:Ocstrategicplan@oberlin.edu). I just want to say that as president of the Alumni Association I've been involved in a lot of efforts over the last couple of years to increase alumni engagement, and this Phonecast model is just such a great example of our desire to include more alumni in the life of the college. I want to thank Marvin for taking the time to talk with us tonight. Marvin, I think this has been absolutely terrific. Do you have any final thoughts that you want to share?

Marvin Krislov: I've had a great time and I wish we could have had more time for questions and more time for follow ups, but it's all the more reason for those of you who haven't visited campus recently to come back, and you



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can have those conversations with all these great people here. We hope to see all of you back, whether it's for reunion or just some sort of random trip to Oberlin. Come visit us.

Chuck Spitulnik: Thanks very much, and goodnight everyone.