

Madison Civics Club September 17, 2011

Remarks by Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief of Police Susan Riseling

Imagine with me for just a minute that the date is September 10, 2001 and you are at the Dane County Airport about to catch a flight. Being the proud Wisconsinite that you are, you have a gallon of milk in one hand and a six pack of Spotted Cow beer in the other heck there is no 3 ounce limit. You are keeping your shoes on and your laptop stays inside your carry on. You don't seem to possess a gun and all you really have to remember is to remove your car keys and place them on top of the x-ray machine. Do you remember when a block of cheese in your luggage was just a block of cheese? Those were the days.

At the University of Wisconsin as a Badger fan you enter Camp Randall football stadium by having your ticket ripped and unless you are attempting to carry in a case of beer no one cares to check you.

In 2001, at the University international students came from all over the world. Nations sent us their best and brightest. We hoped to learn from them and they hoped to learn from us. This exchange enhanced our research results and that bettered humanity. They arrived on student visas and some of them stayed and became US Citizens. Others returned to their homeland and enriched their own nations.

In 2001, UW researchers worked with some of the most toxic substances on our planet. Some of the most deadly diseases were and are in their laboratories. They work with these substances in order to find the cure, the antidote, or to weaken the substance so it won't pose a danger to people, or to our crops or to our livestock. Who are these researchers? Are they all on the up and up? How about their students? In 2001 who knew?

Now ten years later you have spent a decade now living in a different world as so has the University. Today of course at the airport gone is the gallon of milk as you are limited to 3 oz containers in your carry on – you get to take your shoes off, your laptop out and by the time you finish with airport security you feel you have begun a new intimate relationship with a complete stranger.

Today as you approach Camp Randall on game day by car you are stopped. Your car is sniffed by canines for explosives and unless you have prior authorization you do not pass. Even ambulances that approach Camp Randall are scrutinized. Police in plainclothes and in uniform are looking over the crowd as it approaches for threats of suicide bombers, lone wolves or someone who may be carrying a concealed weapon. On their shoulders are devices that measure radiation. Tickets are electronic and small purses are the only item you are allowed to carry in. Surveillance cameras are everywhere.

Some things haven't changed. The United States is still the best place in the world to attend college. The University of Wisconsin is one of the top 20 schools **in the world** in which to study and by the way Michigan is not on the list. It remains critical that the best and brightest from around the world continue to be allowed to come to the United States and particularly to UW-Madison. As UW-Madison looks to the future we know we will play an essential role in creating the Innovation economy our country so desperately needs. So while maintaining the wonders of an open campus, remaining a center of controversial debate and research it is my role to find and strike an important balance between openness and security.

So every researcher dealing with substances of concern is fully backgrounded, fingerprinted and vetted; as are their students. So too are the foreign nationals and international students who get anywhere near one of our high security labs.

We test ourselves again and again. We drill, we coordinate, cooperate and we communicate. This system works 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Is it flawless – no? Is it fool proof – no? Is it our best effort – yes. I want you to know that I sleep very well at night – and so should you.

So for those of you who thought all my staff did was chase drunk undergraduates – well there is a bit of that; but there is so much more, hopefully unseen and unnoticed but there, constantly there. Whatever the scientists, students and staff create, discover or develop, we protect. Whatever it is that can harm them we try to prevent.

And so I've enjoyed serving as the warm up act for Secretary Napolitano, who leads our nation's effort to protect the homeland its citizens and our future. My special thanks go to the Madison Civics Club for inviting me to address you. It has been my honor.