

**City Planning Commission Remarks**  
**June 24, 2010**

President Miguel, Commissioners, good evening and thank you for the chance to speak with you today. My name is Marcelo Camperi, and I am the Interim Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at USF.

At USF, we try to instill in our students a passion for social justice and a desire to work for a more humane world. These are not just words for us. In the Sciences, this means preparing ethical leaders who will act with social responsibility applying their science education to address some of our most pressing problems. From sustainability to developing the computer of the future, from studying cancer to discovering how the Universe works, our science students are working for a better tomorrow.

However, passion and conviction for what we teach is only part of the equation. Without appropriate facilities, we will not be able to continue with our mission.

We want to build the Center for Science and Innovation because we are not well equipped to confront the challenges in science education that lie ahead. We are moving away from traditional teaching, to new methods that emphasize interaction and teamwork, supported by sophisticated scientific equipment.

Our current facilities were built under a different model, and simply do not support this approach. Many non-USF scientists, commissioned to review our science programs as part of our re-accreditation process, emphatically support this opinion.

The new Center will be flexible enough to confront science education challenges going into the future. Through careful design and integration, the whole building will serve as an educational tool, one that emphasizes environmental responsibility, and one that will be enjoyed by all students, not only our science majors.

We are proud of what we have achieved so far in the Sciences at USF. To name but a few examples, our Bachelors degree in Computer Sciences was the first such degree offered on the West Coast. A colleague was among the very first scientists in the world to develop an effective oral cancer chemotherapy drug. Another is renowned as a pioneer in the study of outer space radiation effects in humans. Yet another has been distinguished as one of the best Mathematics teachers in the country. An ice-covered lake in Antarctica bears the name of another colleague.

Our current students are being accepted into medical schools at close to twice the national rate, and go on to earn PhDs at well over twice the national average. They are involved, among many other areas, in breast cancer research, wetland restoration and, working with local community organizations, in bridging the digital divide and in achieving environmental justice in local areas with families living below the poverty line.

Our students and faculty are indeed making a difference. We simply want to continue doing so, but in a manner that embraces the future and allows us to remain relevant and vital, always in search of excellence. Thank you.