

Dean's Message

09/19/2019

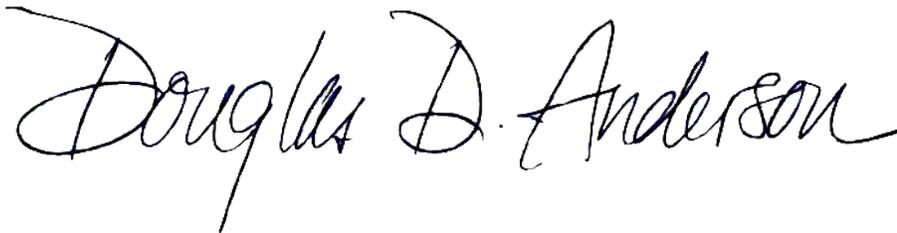


The management thinker, Jim Collins, coined a phrase that he called "BHAG—Big, Hairy, Audacious Goal." BHAG's are a key component in organizations

that are “Built to Last.” BHAG’s reside at the far edge of an organization’s field of view, or maybe just beyond the visible horizon. They are a bold stretch of the imagination meant to push and pull an organization beyond what many believe may be possible, but most desire. They motivate, they inspire, they attract, and they give focus to an organization’s collective efforts. Together with “purpose” and “core beliefs and values” they form organizational vision. But unlike purpose, which expresses the abiding, deep need that an organization exists to serve, or core values, that answer the question, “what do we stand for?” BHAG’s are meant to be accomplished. This year we celebrated the 50th anniversary of John F. Kennedy’s famous BHAG: “Put a man on the surface of the moon within the decade and return him safely to earth.” Once accomplished, the organization needs to fashion another BHAG, consistent with its unchanging purpose and core values.

Jon Huntsman helped fashion our first BHAG more than a decade ago: “Become top tier in our chosen niche.” Among other things, that meant a focus on undergraduate education. It meant better faculty, better students, better facilities and better finances. We have made great progress on each of those vectors since then, but now it’s time to stretch even further. Our new BHAG is to “become the premier, undergraduate business and economics program in the Intermountain West.”

By Intermountain West, we are referring to that part of the country from Mexico to Canada that lies between the California/Arizona border and the New Mexico/Texas border, and by “premier” we mean first in importance, excellence, or rank —“the very best.” At its core is a focus on our students and their success—students like Jackie Sullivan. Jackie returned to campus recently to share her story with our entering students. She came to Utah State University from Woods Cross High School intending to study medicine, and ended up majoring in economics, with minors in chemistry and statistics. Visiting Oxford University for the first time with the Huntsman Scholars, Jackie thought, “I wonder if I could do this?” She applied, was accepted into their master’s program in economic development, and now after completing her degree, is on her way to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. She will serve as a consultant to the Ministry of Agriculture on food security. That kind of success comes from vision. Ours is bold. It’s audacious. It’s hairy. We are not there yet, but when we are, we will fashion a new BHAG, worthy of our very best efforts—we will take on the Pacific Coast!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas D. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with large, connected letters.

Douglas D. Anderson Dean and

Professor