PHENIX has been a spectacular success; this is in no small part due to the leadership that we have had as well as the hard work and enthusiasm of the entire collaboration. The past several years has witnessed the discovery of the strongly Interacting Quark Gluon Plasma which was named as the top physics story of 2005 by the American Institute of Physics. First measurements have also been made of the gluon contribution to the protons spin.

However, as we contemplate the future, we cannot rest on our laurels. Enormous challenges lie ahead of us. We face competition from the LHC and other projects for people and resources. Perhaps more importantly, we live in a world where advances in biology, cosmology, nano-technology, and medicine (to name a few) are constantly in the news. We must be able to convince the "man on the street" that the science we seek to do is as compelling as any of these other fields, and worthy of funding - and, in the case of students – of choosing RHIC physics as a field of study. Within our collaboration, we face other challenges – I will only mention two here. The Physics Working Groups have been the at the heart of our ability to do analysis and produce physics results. The leadership of these groups in huge job, and we must continually be finding new people with the knowledge and capability to serve as conveners. If the conveners are strong and committed, the PWG functions well and results are produced. If PHENIX does not continue to produce such people, we will fail. We face a similar situation in all areas of PHENIX – We must recruit and train new people to give us leadership in crucial areas.

The operations and maintenance of the detector is a second critical component of the collaboration that must be healthy.. Some of our subsystems are aging and effort must be put into upgrading or refurbishing all or parts of some detectors – this will be particularly important if we wish PHENIX to become a large acceptance detector capable of making precision measurements. We cannot afford to have large dead areas because a subsystem is not efficient.

How do we meet these challenges, and what will I do? To answer these questions I would like to speak about three areas: Science, People, and Funding.

SCIENCE: The only non-electromagnetic phase transition that can be studied in the laboratory is the QCD transition. It is the breaking of the basic symmetries of QCD that give rise to this phase transition *and* to the mass that makes up most of the everyday matter that surrounds us on earth. We have witnessed that phase transition at RHIC, and it has shown us that QCD matter above the transition is startlingly different than we expected. It exhibits properties of a perfect fluid. AdS/CFT based ideas, have indicated that this may even give us insight into string theory. While this is yet speculative, it is a remarkable and intriguing connection. Is this a first case of a calculation of string theory actually yielding verifiable experimental results? I cannot give an absolute answer to this question – but certainly the excitement and the fundamental nature of our field, is every bit as compelling to the man on the street as the latest advances in nano-technology or biology.

The upgraded PHENIX detector and RHIC/RHIC II is unique facility for studying these questions. PHENIX has a lifetime of 10-15 more years of productive physics ahead.

With the addition of upgrades it becomes a large acceptance, highly instrumented detector. For the years in which the HBD is installed, PHENIX will be the only device capable of looking at low mass dileptons in very high energy heavy ion collisions, opening up the possibilities of studying thermal radiation and giving the hope of directly measuring the masses of particles which decay in the region of a restored QCD (chiral) symmetry. The luminosity and running time at RHIC, make it an ideal machine to study high pT phenomena, more than making up for the smaller cross section as compared to the LHC.

Up till now, however, heavy ion physics has been primarily a qualitative science. With upgrades, high luminosity, and a dedicated machine able to study a variety of colliding systems and energies, we will begin to collect a sample of data giving us the possibility of making precision measurements so that we can establish a quantitative picture of the sQGP. The experiments cannot to it alone, however. We will need the help our theoretical friends. I would see it as part of my job to help them organize and obtain funding. Because we are studying a dynamical system, precision measurements will require theories that embed static ideas (e.g. calculating the viscosity/ entropy density) in a model of the colliding system. This will require sophisticated computer modeling in addition to basic theory.

RHIC/eRHIC is also the premier place to study the gluon contribution to the spin of the proton, particularly at low-x. The surprise so far is that the gluons appear to be contributing very little at the x we have measured. The high center of mass energy available also give one the ability to measure spin contribution of the sea quarks using the W boson, utilizing the parity violating nature of the weak interaction. Accurate measurements will require substantial running times at high luminosity with high polarization.

PEOPLE: *People* do science. While we will do everything we can to keep people in PHENIX, some of our colleagues are now moving to the LHC. As I said previously, the competition from the LHC is a healthy thing for our field. More avenues of knowledge is good and helps us all since measurements at the LHC will complement our work at RHIC. However, we must make sure that the intellectual capital available to the collaboration does not decrease. We must be continually training and inducting new people (students, post-docs etc) to do analysis, to take shifts, to become PWG leaders, EC and DC members and even PM. I will be going out of my way to twist the arms of non-PM members (e.g. ex PWG conveners, EC members or ex-members) to be taking on tasks – not only in paper writing – i.e. IRC's but also in tasks such as looking at the running scenarios for the future, reviewing detector performance, following up theoretical ideas, training students, and working on funding problems etc. But we must also grow by adding collaborators. I will be going after groups both in the US and abroad. This will be tough going, but the addition of even a single strong group can make a huge difference to an upgrade project or subsystem. I will also make a great effort to establish more permanent positions in universities and labs. This is a task, which will be difficult, but one that is dear to me. We must give our younger folks the hope of a future in the field, They will be providing the much needed leadership we will need to keep our field healthy

and vibrant. Finally – I will come knocking at your door, whether to ask you to take charge of some task, to establish a new position at your institution, or to help recruit other institutions to PHENIX – I will come.

FUNDING: Funding is the final issue. For those in the US, funding is a tricky business, since it so often has to do with things out of our control – decisions are often made by people who know little or care little about what we do. In order for our upgrades program to remain healthy we not only need funding for construction, but we need funding for operations and university research. To make the precisions measurements, we will need long steady runs at high luminosity (and good polarization for spin physics). We have been enormously successful at obtaining foreign support for the detector – and I will continue to go after this money; however, I believe it is the responsibility of the US to pay for the operation of RHIC and later RHIC II. We owe it to our colleagues whose governments have often put up great sums to help construct PHENIX, that we provide data in a timely manner. A reliable flow of funding for RHIC operations will also give confidence to possible new collaborators to join our effort

As a representative of PHENIX, I would work with the UEC and make our presence felt on Capitol Hill As the chairman of the UEC, I became familiar enough to the staff of our local congressman, that I could call them when I needed help, and they would respond. I would seek to do this on a broader scale, together with some folks in our collaboration. I would also be making visits to your institutions to help lobby your administrations to support PHENIX both monetarily and in positions and to meet your local congressman. Congressman George Brown, who served on the House Science Committee for many years was at UCR chided us for being some of the worst groups in lobbying for our own support. (He compared us to the beer-sellers association. He told us we were worse!)

A second important activity which will involve us all is the new Long Range Plan. This is critical if we are to establish RHIC II/eRHIC as the future for RHIC. We must make sure that the construction of this new facility be high priority within the nuclear physics community.

I should close with a few specifics. I have spoken with the chairman of the physics department at UCR who has granted me 3 years release from teaching and other duties. I plan to spend at least every other week at BNL. During busy times, this will increase to every week. I have kept to such a schedule previously, commuting weekly to BNL when I served as spokesperson of E917. I plan to have at least between 2 and 3 deputies, depending on the circumstances. My style of leadership will be very inclusive, and I will be making an effort to talk with many of you informally on a continuous basis. I will asking many people, the deputies, EC members, etc to take on specific responsibilities. I also invite constructive criticism from the collaboration. I will need this from all of you if I am to serve as kind of leader I wish to be.

So to close 1) Our science is compelling. We must work together to make sure this message is clear to the rest of the world. 2) We need people – trained people to take on the leadership and responsibility of doing the science the PHENIX can do. I will work to

bring in new collaborators and to establish permanent positions, so that junior people will have hope that they have a future in the field. 3) To ensure a reliable funding stream for RHIC operations, upgrades, and research, I will be increasing our lobbying activities with the federal government and foreign sources. Such efforts include insuring that RHICII/eRHIC be recommended for construction in the next Nuclear Physics Long Range Plan..

There are great challenges ahead for us all, but challenges come with enormous promise. We all chose this field, not because it provided comfort, money, or security - but because we love the chance for discovery. Perhaps more than anything, I would hope that this excitement pervades the environment within which we work.

Rich