**Gerding Business Building dedicated**

By William Dillon  
Staff Writer

The $10 million contribution Russ and Ann Gerding made to Iowa State University in 1998 was honored Friday with the dedication of the new business building in their name.

Russ Gerding is a member of the Dean’s Advisory Council in ISU’s College of Business and the president, chairman and chief executive officer of Heartland Express, Inc. He and his wife’s donation got the fund raising started for the new business building on the southeast side of ISU’s central campus. Private contributions toward the new building and endowment fund reached $35 million.

“It’s a very small token to give back for what you all in the state have given to our family,” Russ Gerding said.

The 300-seat lecture hall of the Gerding Business Building was not large enough to hold the almost 500 people in attendance. The overflow was redirected to classrooms throughout the 111,000-square-foot building where the event was broadcast, said Kimberly Schroeder, director of marketing and alumni relations in the College of Business.

Ann Gerding said she and her husband never imagined what the building could become when they made the initial investment.

“It was hard to imagine (the building) when you could only see it on paper,” she said.

During his remarks, Russ Gerding commended the contributions of ISU Business Dean Labh Hira and Provost Benjamin Allen.

“I would ask each one of you to remember when you go home today who put the real effort in the business building,” he said.

“Thousands and thousands of students who pass through these halls will benefit from your generosity.”

**ISU President Greg Geoffroy, about philanthropists Russ and Ann Gerdin**

Hira and his wife Tahira walked past the building every night and regularly called with updates and sent digital pictures of the construction, Russ Gerding said.

“It felt like I was here every day, but I didn’t have to be because of their efforts,” Russ Gerding said. “I honestly believe that this building is Labh and (Tahira’s) baby.”

Gov. Tom Vilsack commended the Erdings for their contributions and hard work toward the project and stressed the positive impact it will have on the future of Iowa.

“There are today literally thousands of people who don’t know you whose lives are going to be improved because of your generosity,” Vilsack said.

Gov. Tom Vilsack as he addresses the crowd Friday during dedication ceremonies in the building’s main hall.

Images of the new Gerding Business Building are projected above Gov. Tom Vilsack as he addresses the crowd Friday during dedication ceremonies in the building’s main hall.