

Message from the Chancellor |

April 27, 2016

Dear Faculty and Staff,

Another full academic year is coming to a close. As we prepare for graduation and students finish their exams, I wanted to take a moment to thank the entire University of Michigan-Flint community.

This year has been challenging in ways many of us could have never expected and in ways many of us have never experienced. As our community faced the water crisis, we came together in service of the community and in congruence with our mission. Long before the media came to town, our faculty, staff and students were assisting in multiple ways. Within 48 hours after the story about water broke our campus mobilized to distribute over 3000 filters in the first filter distribution. Together you spearheaded recycling efforts, mapped city records, created a free water information course, provided education for our students and community, provided blood testing for at-risk children and participated in service projects too many to name. I have been constantly impressed and inspired by your commitment to the wellbeing of our community.

This year also marked a series of milestone events for our campus.

- For several years, space has been an issue limiting program expansion. With the purchase of the FirstMerit building we will be able to address critical space needs. Provost Knerr and the Deans have been working for several months to identify space needs and priorities and will soon have a plan for consulting with the campus about these decisions. Additionally the generous gift of the Riverfront Residence Hall and Conference Center will also allow for future growth.
- We launched our Victors for Michigan campaign, and just six months after announcing the effort have brought in donations in excess of \$33 million. We have received both the largest cash gift and property gift in University history. And a special thank you to the 598 faculty, staff and retirees who chose to support the University by making a gift as

part of the Give from Within campaign. Your generous example demonstrates your belief in our University and why it is deserving of external support.

- We worked to increase transparency in the budgeting process, including the addition of open budget town halls and the inclusion of space requests as part of the budget process. As I enter my second budget year, the CAC/BSP has been a strong partner in identifying budget priorities that align with the strategic priorities reaffirmed by campus members in the Spring of 2015. Last year they recommended the funding of 9 new tenure track faculty positions, \$300,000 in additional funding for faculty/student research, and a 16% increase in student financial aid. They continue to prioritize faculty support and student success with this year's recommendations, which will soon be ready to share. We also are continuing to actively work with state legislators and the governor on the funding process and importance of their support.
- This year we will celebrate the University of Michigan-Flint's 60th year, which gives us an opportunity to emphasize the University's enduring commitment to academic excellence and student support. This milestone will also enable us to celebrate our past, our present, and our future as an anchor institution for the City of Flint.

In the coming months, we will continue to work on our campus priorities: enhancing academic excellence through focus on faculty research and support as well as student achievement; improving affordability and completion rates; enhancing community engagement; developing educational programs that service the community/region; building an increasingly diverse and inclusive academic community; and increasing UM-Flint's reputation statewide and regionally. The attached document provides background and links to more information about our progress to date. We will also engage in a collaborative effort to review equity across the institution. This will include a compensation philosophy for staff positions and a broad review of equity for faculty positions. These are important goals and I am confident we will make progress on all fronts. I look forward to working with each of you on these priorities.

We are expecting the city's water issues to have some impact on our enrollment, and we have been working hard increase our outreach to both

current and prospective students. In our countless conversations, students describe over and over their appreciation for the faculty, who know them and work to mentor them in multiple ways. Our students say they appreciate being part of a campus community that cares about them, and many of them talk about being part of a diverse community and feeling at home – that they belong and are welcomed here. Their words are powerful and hit at the very heart of our University’s values and beliefs about what we stand for. I invite you to listen for yourself: <http://youtu.be/ZfYWYdmpvbw>

Thank you for your leadership and your dedication. Your commitment is what makes the University of Michigan-Flint the special place it is. I hope you get time to rest and enjoy a bit of the Michigan summer. Stay safe and see you in the fall—if not before!

Go Blue!

Sue