Dear Colleagues,

Welcome back from Spring Break. I know it will now be a wild sprint to the end of the semester.

It has been a busy (and cold!) semester. Scholar and activist Angela Davis spoke to standing room only crowds during her visit on February 19. Both campus and community members continue to talk about her impact and the opportunity to see her here at UM-Flint. The Frances Willson Thompson Critical Issues Forum kicked off this month, featuring author Charles Duhigg who wrote the book *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and in Business*. It was also a great success, and I look forward to the other speakers who will be on campus this spring.

Our students have been active as they participated in concerts, sports events, plays and community service. I am very proud of the students who took part in Alternative Spring Break, working in and around the City of Flint. Our Student Government has shown leadership in creating Sexual Assault Awareness Week, and drawing attention to this very important issue. On Sunday, over 700 UM-Flint students were recognized as Honor students in the Honor’s Convocation on campus in Ann Arbor.

UM-Flint Faculty continue to make an impact in their fields of expertise. David M. French Professor of Mathematics, Ricardo Alfaro, Ph.D. was nominated as Michigan’s Distinguished Professor of the Year. For the 20th year in a row, Clinical Assistant Professor of Nursing Maureen Tippen will once again lead a group of students to the Dominican Republic to deliver healthcare to remote parts of that country. Assistant Professor of Psychology, Nathaniel Miller, is working with students on important research on Parkinson’s Disease, and how physical exercise can improve the quality of life for these patients. These are a few examples of faculty excellence at UM-Flint.

This semester we received our largest non-bequest gift of two million dollars from Phil and Jocelyn Hagerman. The gift to the School of Management is the largest in the school’s history, and will be used to fund the Hagerman...
Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation, as well as other initiatives. This support from the Hagermans signifies their support for the mission of the University.

We have completed the reaffirmation and prioritization of the strategic plan work that took place during the fall semester, and will send that out to you in a separate message. It is budget season. The Deans and Vice Chancellors will be presenting their budget proposals over the next four weeks to the Senior Leadership Team. I had the opportunity to speak with state legislators on February 24 and share the UM-Flint story. The Governor’s proposed FY 2015-16 budget for higher education includes a restoration of 2%. Based on the metrics within the Governor’s budget proposal, our university may receive a 2.5% increase. The Michigan Legislature is still holding legislative hearings on the higher education budget at this time, so a final overall budget has not been determined. While the partial restoration will be helpful, it remains important to prioritize our resources in ways that enhance academic excellence and achievement.

We continue to address issues of diversity and inclusion. As I have mentioned before, I believe diversity is a critical component of an excellent learning environment and we will continue to grow our efforts to develop an increasingly inclusive campus community. About 30 members of the senior leadership and 20 members of student government participated in the Intercultural Development Inventory in March. This is a tool that helps establish a baseline for intercultural competency. In April, a group of campus participants will begin to develop a plan for the next steps of this work on campus.

We recently started the process of strategic enrollment management planning. About 25 staff and faculty from across the campus have started an in-depth analysis of our data related to recruitment, retention, and student success. Because the success of this process necessitates involvement of all members of our campus, on April 21 there will be noon hour Town Hall event where the project and data collected thus far will be shared. Details will follow soon and I encourage you to attend.

And finally, an update on the three searches underway: Provost, and Deans of the College of Arts and Sciences and the School of Health Professions and Studies. The search firm Korn Ferry is assisting with the searches. All of the searches have been launched, and positions are posted at
These searches will be “open until filled”, so if you are interested in applying or nominating anyone for these positions please send information to Korn Ferry as noted on the website. We are very focused on moving the Provost search along and the search firm has already received a number of candidates. These are critical hires for our community and we are looking forward to bringing a strong slate of candidates.

It has been a great semester for UM-Flint, I want to thank each of you for the work you do in support of our students. See you around campus.

Susan E. Borrego
Chancellor