

MEMORANDUM

To: University Council members
From: Havidán Rodríguez
Date: May 2, 2019
Re: President's Report for 5/10/19 Council Meeting

UNIVERSITY EVENTS

The Big Event, 4/6/19: Again, this year we took part in this national day of service where 1,200 UAlbany volunteers (students, faculty, staff, and community members) participated in 41 volunteer opportunities with 19 community agencies. Our thanks to the Center of Leadership and Service for leading our Big Event and to all who participated!

That day, we also held our first-ever “Short Takes” series featuring snapshot presentations by faculty, alumni, and other experts. We combined these events with our admitted student open house, bringing about 4,200 other visitors to campus for the day - this includes 1,600 admitted students and their families. This huge and successful event showcased UAlbany at its best as a publicly engaged research university.

After the Big Event we launched straight into Awards Season:

President's Awards for Leadership and Spellman Awards (4/13/19): At these events, both held in the SEFCU Arena, we recognized academic excellence, leadership, and service and engagement of our students. We also celebrated student success and diversity. These are important synergistic elements representing who we are as an institution of higher education. The SEFCU was an excellent venue that comfortably accommodated so many more friends and family members than in past years. We truly “celebrated” our students and our excellence.

50th Anniversary of UAlbany's Performing Arts Center, 4/16/19: We gathered to celebrate the impact of this Center, our faculty, staff and students and their role in expanding and strengthening the arts at UAlbany, with an outstanding performance by the Saakumu Dance Troupe from Ghana.

Earlier this week, we had our annual **President's Award for Exemplary Public Engagement (4/29/19)**, where we honored [several of our faculty members, initiatives, and publicly engaged research projects](#). This event was followed by the **President's Awards for Excellence (4/30/19)**, recognizing excellence, in teaching, research, service, and librarianship. We also included this year's recipients of the Chancellor's Excellence Awards.

Finally, the **Alumni Association 50th Awards Gala (5/4/19)** is right around the corner, where the Citizen of the University Award will be presented to all UAlbany employees—in recognition of the critical service of every member of our faculty and staff in meeting our mission.

UNIVERSITY UPDATES

New Provost: UAlbany's next provost and senior vice president for academic affairs is Dr. Carol Kim. We are so fortunate and pleased that Carol will be joining our team on August 1. Carol is joining us from the University of Maine System where she is currently Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Innovation and Partnerships.

Dr. Kim also held a succession of academic and administrative positions at the University of Maine, including director of the Graduate School of Biomedical Science and Engineering, Vice President for Research, and Dean of the Graduate School.

Carol was here for our Spring University Address on April 16, and will be visiting with us a couple of times this summer as she transitions to UAlbany and the Capital Region.

Strategic Plan Implementation: Our Year One Accelerators, which were announced last semester, were funded and are up-and-running, totaling \$2,419,000 over a three-year period. These initiatives are spread across our five Core Priorities, and include undergraduate and graduate scholarships, transdisciplinary research funds, a mentoring program for underrepresented minority faculty, education abroad, and our Albany Book Festival, among other initiatives. In addition, another \$1.6M was identified for reallocation across the administrative divisions, for a grand total of \$4,044,793.

In addition, earlier this semester we announced a call for proposals for a new funding mechanism called **Strategic Allocation of Resources** or **StAR**. These will be micro-grants of \$5,000 to \$50,000 for a total of up to \$500,000 targeting retention, graduation, or diversification of our graduate student body. Among 88 proposals submitted, 21 were selected for a total of \$499,772. Details of these investments will soon be available on our Strategic Plan website.

Strategic Plan Metrics: Our Metrics' Team has been hard at work vetting the high-level institutional metrics by which we will benchmark and measure our progress on our core priorities. I invite you to review and comment on our [final draft metrics](#).

Middle States Self-Study: As we have discussed, our reaccreditation effort is being led by deans Jeanette Altarriba and Jason Lane. A draft of our self-study is scheduled to be shared with the campus late this spring. The Middle States external review team will visit campus in spring 2020, just over a year from now. Thanks to the tremendous commitment and engagement by our campus community, I am confident we will be reaccredited with flying colors.

Research Excellence: In addition to other milestones this year, we are celebrating the first anniversary of the NYS Mesonet, which is the largest and most advanced system of early-warning weather detection network in the nation.

The Mesonet has 126 sites, spaced 19 miles apart, distributed throughout the state of NY, collecting all sorts of weather, and other data, every five minutes. This is a truly transformational resource for NYS and the nation.

Capital Campaign: You will have a full report on our Campaign from Vice President Fardin Sanai, but I am proud to announce today that we have reached \$124 million of our \$150 million goal. This success is yet another indication that this is truly our time! It has been an amazing experience to see the tremendous support from our alumni, friends, and supporters.

I am also extremely pleased to let you know that our longtime faculty colleague and former dean, Dan Wulff, and his wife Bonnie Taylor, recently made a gift to the campaign in the amount of \$5,000,000, earmarked for a number of student-facing programs, with an emphasis on diversity and inclusion.

As part of the Campaign, we had an amazing opportunity last month to travel to California with our Alumni Association and staff from the Office of Advancement for several events in both Los Angeles and San Francisco. We enjoyed getting to know so many alumni of all ages—from the class of 1947 to the class of 2018.

These alumni remain deeply committed and enthusiastic about their alma mater and the transformational impact that an education at UAlbany had on their personal and professional lives.

I would like to thank Vice President Sanai, the entire Advancement team, and the Alumni Association, along with our hosts, friends, supporters, and donors who are making the campaign such a resounding success.

UPCOMING EVENTS

175th Birthday Party (5/7/19) on Dutch Quad at 2:00 p.m.—along with cake; we will also reveal the contents of a time capsule placed in the Podium in 1965. Earlier that day, I will be with Mayor Kathy Sheehan on the Downtown Campus as she presents a proclamation declaring May 7, 2019 “UAbany Day” in the city of Albany.

175th Commencement (5/15-19)—I hope many of you are planning to join us as members of our Platform Parties and participants in our graduation festivities. We are very fortunate to have Kathryn Marinello '78, President and CEO of Hertz Global Holdings, as our undergraduate commencement speaker. It will also be our great pleasure to present the Medallion of the University, UAlbany's highest honor, to SUNY Board of Trustees Chairman H. Carl McCall.

IN CLOSING

I look forward to seeing you at our meeting on Friday, May 10, where we will have an opportunity for a robust discussion of these and other issues of importance to the University.