



**December 6, 2018**

First, I would like to offer my sincere appreciation and thanks to Provost Michael Gealt. Dr. Gealt has served Central Michigan University admirably and faithfully for over five years and has advanced the academic agenda of our university extremely well. He has overseen many activities that further our goals and commitment to rigor, relevance and excellence. These include the reaffirmation of our accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission and receiving our inaugural full accreditation for our College of Medicine.

Dr. Gealt has overseen many program-specific reaffirmations, CMU's reclassification as an R2 research university, the academic program restructuring and the updating of our Advancing Excellence Strategic Plan. Personally, I appreciate the counsel, advice, wisdom and insights he has shared with me during my transition to Central Michigan University and the support he has provided me over the past three months. I am grateful for his efforts and support.

Please, at this time, share your appreciation for Provost Gealt and thank him for his commitment to academic excellence at Central Michigan University.

### **The First 90 Days**

The transition continues to progress with rapid speed. Over the past 90 days, I have been on a "Listening and Learning Tour" that involves every division, college, residence hall, numerous student organizations as well as groups, employers, and alumni across the state and beyond. From these visits, I have developed a strong sense of our challenges and opportunities and the discussions have informed my priorities and focus for the upcoming year.

These include, in no specific order:

- Enrollment Management
- Marketing and Communications
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- College of Medicine long-term planning
- Furthering our University Culture and Internal Relations

- Community Relations
- Fundraising
- Legislative Affairs
- Senior Leadership Planning

In addition to these areas, we need to continue to reinforce the three imperatives of our strategic plan, *Advancing Excellence: CMU's Strategic Plan, 2017-2022*. These are:

1. Nurturing student success.
2. Fostering scholarly activity.
3. Strengthening partnerships in Michigan and beyond.

We must ensure all of us at CMU understand these imperatives, how we impact them and how they impact the overall university and drive our decision-making processes, including budgeting and resource allocation.

As strategic planning is an iterative process, over the next several months we will review, from a universitywide perspective, the strategies outlined in *Advancing Excellence* to determine how each is being actualized and if the desired results are being achieved. Clearly, a lot of good work is occurring and tremendous effort is being made by faculty and staff that is benefiting our students. The objective is to realize and acknowledge these accomplishments and to identify next steps. We also need to ask ourselves what strategies need to be modified and adjusted, as well as what needs to be added or deleted for the university to continue on its trajectory.

This review also may reveal additional and/or different measures and metrics to provide indications of success.

In the end, we must be bold, clear and focused in our ambitions and strive for rigor, relevance and excellence in all that we do.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives Across CMU**

Speaking of being bold and clear, let me state with extreme clarity, at Central Michigan University, we will not tolerate acts of racism, hatred, bigotry, misogyny nor personal threats targeting members or groups of individuals within our community.

Over the past several months, we have seen individuals singled out and attacked for who they are. These actions will not and are not tolerated. I want to thank the entire Central Michigan University community for denouncing these actions and supporting the students who were singled out. You have rallied in support, both as individuals and as part of various organizations. Most importantly, you did so collectively, because that is who we are at CMU.

I want to thank members of our various offices, OCRIE, CMU Police, Residence Life, Counseling Center, our CARE Team, and other offices who responded immediately to support our students.

During this time, I have been asked what Central Michigan University is doing to advance diversity, equity and inclusion. The answer is we are doing much and will continue to do more. We have seven core values, five of which — integrity, respect, compassion, inclusiveness and social responsibility — directly relate to this discussion.

Our actions include appointing a cabinet-level vice president and chief diversity officer this summer, and we are investing in initiatives such as:

- Diversity, equity and inclusion are being incorporated across our strategic plan.
- A Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council is engaging representatives from colleges, units, and staff and student groups. Each area will develop at least three annual, goal-oriented initiatives. The council designs and implements initiatives and reports, disseminates and acts on data, and promotes participation.
- A Vice President/Chief Diversity Officer Advisory Council, formed with Human Resources, Faculty Personnel Services and other hiring offices, is working on policies and procedures in hiring, retention, promotion, professional development and evaluation. These include:
  - A diversity, equity and inclusion section in the staff performance review.
  - An initiative through the Academic Senate Multicultural and Diversity Education Committee, supported by the provost, to revise departmental bylaws to recognize DEI activities for faculty promotion and tenure.
- The Advisory Council and Office of Civil Rights and Institutional Equity are looking at training and data for job searches and a program for recruiting faculty.
- In concert with area partners and major employers, CMU is working to cultivate a broader range of cultural resources regionally.
- Partnering with student organizations, CMU will develop DEI programming for accepted students. Related curriculum will expand next fall through an added section in the General Education program. We are investing also in courses associated with Intergroup Dialogue, one of the most effective, skills- and experientially-based pedagogies in higher education.
- A Chosen Name policy will be implemented next fall to support faculty, staff, students and alumni whose life circumstances conflict with the public use of legal names.
- Faculty Diversity and Inclusion Fellows starting in 2019 will bring expertise and advice to initiatives and research, while also establishing a campus DEI research group.

Central Michigan University is not only joining the national conversation, but being seen as a leader for our efforts. We are sending campus teams to conferences — as attendees and presenters. We are participating in grant and research opportunities, expanding alumni and student affinity groups, and adding recruitment messaging around our values and diversity, equity and inclusion.

Great progress comes not just through select initiatives; it depends as well on what each of us does on a daily basis. We must continue to live our core values, especially integrity, respect, compassion, inclusiveness and social responsibility, as we support all members of our community. That is, as you all know, who we are at CMU.

## **Recognitions**

Fourth-year College of Medicine student Samuel Jackson, from Harbor Springs, and Bethany Brown, a doctor of nursing practice, certified nurse midwife and assistant director of CMU's new online nursing degree completion program, are leading a street medicine program.

The initiative involves students from multiple academic programs and provides care to those in need, who otherwise are likely to go without medical attention. So far, the team has had three street medicine events in Isabella County and plans to hold one a month throughout the year and beyond.

Samuel could not be with us today, but Bethany is here and I want to thank you both for this tremendous initiative helping those in our community who need it most. Thank you.

Angel Stallings, a junior from Detroit who is with us today, received a \$10,000 merit scholarship from the Public Company Accounting Oversight Board. Angel is majoring in accounting, with minors in information systems and finance. She helped re-establish the CMU chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants to help fellow students develop professional skills. CMU accounting faculty members nominated Angel for the award because of her outstanding academic performance, involvement on campus and experience in accounting. Congratulations, Angel.

Senior photojournalism student Josie Norris, from Saginaw, took home the silver award for International College Photographer of the Year. Her portfolio was one of 11,000 entries from 123 colleges in 22 countries. Her winning entry included photos from her internship in San Antonio as well as a project on what it means to be a black male in the U.S. and at CMU. The competition distributes just two awards: gold and silver. Josie is currently completing her internship in San Antonio.

Last, but certainly not least, Provost Michael Gealt was recently honored by being named a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The AAAS recognized Dr. Gealt for distinguished contributions in microbiology research and for enhancing STEM education in K-12 and higher education institutions. The selection process requires nomination and support by three current AAAS fellows, at least two of whom are not at the nominee's current institution. CMU is one of four Michigan universities with fellows named this year. The others are Michigan State, Wayne State and the University of Michigan. Congratulations, Mike, on this very prestigious honor.

Chair Weideman, that concludes my report.