



Board of Trustees

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

December 8, 2022

Thank you, Chair Studley, and welcome to all the individuals joining us in person and online.

As we heard in committee meetings yesterday, there has been a great deal of excitement, enthusiasm and activity on our campus this semester. I would like to begin this report by offering my sincere thanks to our students, faculty and staff for their contributions to this positive energy — especially as we have navigated the shift into post-pandemic operations.

Over the past several months, members of our community faced many external stressors as we recalibrated to our new normal, yet they continued to show up with a Fired-Up Attitude. As always, they treat one another with compassion and grace, and challenge themselves to achieve excellence.

It has been a privilege and an honor to observe CMU rising to this challenge. I am grateful for everyone who has helped us become a stronger community.

At our last meeting in September, I spoke of the positive momentum building on campus. I think we all felt it yesterday during the presentation about the new Integration of Science, Engineering and Technology certificate program! When we talk about innovation in education and what will differentiate CMU from our peers, this new interdisciplinary program is exactly what we mean. It is collaborative. It is student-driven. It focuses on authentic experiences and equity. It is exactly the kind of experience we want to create — and are creating — for our students at CMU.

Hearing Dr. Pangle's presentation about bringing students together as a cohort to build community while challenging them to author their own learning experiences was invigorating for every member of the board and for everyone who heard the presentation. We cannot wait to see how the pioneer cohort emerges and advances CMU!

And that program is certainly not our only exciting news. We also have great stories to tell about our student recruitment efforts, our record-setting "Giving Tuesday" fundraising effort, and the exceptional work being done by faculty, staff and students across our university. There are several highlights from the past two months I would like to share with you.

First, I am pleased and excited to announce a new member of the president's cabinet. Last month, Mary Moran Hill agreed to serve as vice president of finance and administrative services

and chief financial officer. Many of you know Mary and have worked with her in some capacity during her more than 30-year career with CMU. She has been serving as interim vice president since July and has held a variety of leadership roles in the finance and administrative services division.

She brings to the role a deep knowledge of the university, the community, our people and culture, our financial operations, and every aspect of this institution. Please join me in welcoming Mary Hill to this new role.

We continue to build excitement and momentum in our enrollment efforts. To date, inquiries and applications for fall continue to trend up. The number of students who have made their enrollment deposit, formally committing to attend CMU in Fall, has also increased over past years. These are all positive signs that CMU's message, about the opportunities we provide and our value, is generating interest and resonates strongly among prospective students and their families.

Among the attributes families list as important in their college decision making process is affordability and accessibility. Last month, CMU was one of just over 100 colleges and universities nationwide to earn an "A" for scholarship transparency. College Aid Pro, a college planning technology platform, reviewed and ranked scholarship programs across the country. Only 17% received the highest grade – CMU among them. This is an exciting acknowledgement of our efforts to make it easier for students and their families to understand the investment they are making at CMU.

We aim to make earning a college degree both affordable AND accessible for our students, and that begins with ensuring we provide clear, thorough information about financial aid. Thank you to our teams in student recruitment, financial aid, student accounts and other areas that helped us achieve this excellent A grade.

We have just completed an educational and engaging celebration of Native American Heritage Month at CMU. I want to thank and congratulate the staff of the Native American Programs office, and the students of the North American Indigenous Student Organization, for their work on all the events and activities.

In an inspiring ceremony in October, we unveiled a beautiful new mural honoring Native American and Indigenous people in Michigan and around the nation. I hope that all of you in attendance will visit it, one floor below us. Members of the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe and CMU students were essential in the mural effort. We are proud of our continuing relationship with the Tribe and look forward to many future collaborations.

Also in October, CMU received excellent media exposure as part of WJR's Campus Tour series. We hosted the live broadcast here in the Bovee University Center, and host Guy Gordon interviewed three of our outstanding student leaders: Christa Paull, Eric Pouncil and Kaitlyn Mack. Provost Nancy Mathews and I also spoke about our commitment to student-centered education and research, and Athletic Director Amy Folan provided excellent updates on our student-athletes.

It was a wonderful opportunity to share our story with a statewide audience. I want to thank Chris Rowley, from the Mount Pleasant Convention and Visitors Bureau, for her role in bringing this opportunity to campus.

As we heard in yesterday's committee meetings, we also are building on educational opportunities in The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow College of Health Professions and the CMU College of Medicine.

We play an important role in the health of communities in central and northern Michigan, as well as in underserved areas throughout the state. We have a tremendous opportunity to expand our impact to better serve our students and our state, and we will hear more about that in the report from the Health Care Special Committee later today.

Last year was a record year for research grants and funding, and we are poised to build upon that success in the year ahead. In the first quarter of the 2023 fiscal year, CMU secured more than \$12 million in grants and funding, a 17 percent increase over last year. I will share a few highlights from recent grants later in my report.

We also are seeing exciting results in our efforts to cultivate a new culture of philanthropy at CMU. This year's record-breaking "Giving Tuesday" engaged more than 2,400 donors and has raised more than \$418,000 — far surpassing our goal. The funds raised will be directed to vital student support programs such as scholarships, the Student Emergency Fund and the Student Food Pantry.

I would like to thank our alumni and advancement teams for their incredible efforts to engage our donors throughout the entire year — this success is a direct result of their hard work. These donations also are the result of the work of countless faculty, staff, students and others who are doing great work at CMU every day. Our donors see what is taking place at CMU and are inspired to help. Thank you to everyone who played a role.

There has been much to celebrate, and there also is much to look forward to in the coming year. I would like to talk a little about the exciting direction we are heading in with our new strategic planning process.

As we have discussed, our current strategic plan, Advancing Excellence, has served us well and is reaching its planned time horizon. It is time to develop a new plan that will powerfully differentiate CMU from our competitors and ensure our future success.

This new plan will build on work already underway or completed in the strategic envisioning process, which launched in 2019. It will outline a new path forward for CMU, using SMART goals to help our institution navigate the rapidly changing landscape of higher education. It will begin with a review and revision of our mission and vision statements, and it will provide opportunities for all our stakeholders to be involved.

The efforts will be led by the Board of Trustees, with leadership and guidance from several committees representing all areas of the university. In fact, earlier today, a group of university stakeholders that included faculty, staff, students and trustees, met for the second time to explore, discuss and articulate how CMU currently differentiates itself from others and the value we add. These efforts will provide the foundation for wider discussions and planning efforts.

Over the next several months, there will be numerous opportunities for our stakeholders to participate; this will include several sessions open to all members of the university community, as well as options to contribute suggestions and feedback online. A new website, which will launch soon, will outline the committees and opportunities for involvement.

This undertaking is a vital and transformative project that will set the course for Central Michigan University through the next decade. We need inspired ideas and input from every member of our community throughout the process. Help us create a plan that moves our university forward successfully and sustainably!

The Budget Model Steering Committee has been working on details surrounding CMU's new budget model. As the committee identifies key recommendations in the spring semester, we have determined that a phased implementation approach is the most prudent way forward. Major components of the new model will be implemented in the 2023-24 operating budget. Modifications for some of the more detailed areas will be included in the 2024-25 operating budget.

We will also plan to align the 2024-25 model with the goals and objectives of the strategic planning process. We are excited about what this model will offer CMU. We will provide additional information and updates throughout the spring semester.

Before I close my report, I would like to share a few more of the achievements and accomplishments of our students and faculty. They continue to excel and to push scholarly and philanthropic work into areas that will keep CMU ranked highly among national leaders. For example:

Student Eric Urbaniak was recently presented with the Youth Philanthropy Award by the Mid-Michigan Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. Earlier this year, Eric was selected as CMU's first-ever Udall Scholar, and he has made significant contributions to our campus community. I look forward to shaking his hand at commencement. Congratulations, Eric.

Evan Montague, executive director of the Office of Student Success, secured an award from the U.S. Department of Education for CMU's McNair Program. This outstanding program prepares underrepresented, first-gen and low-income undergraduate students for advanced degree attainment through mentorship and hands-on research experiences.

Dr. S. Sethu Reddy, senior associate dean for research at CMU's College of Medicine, recently authored a new national guideline for the care and management of people with, or at risk of, diabetes. The guideline features new evidence-based clinical practice recommendations for every stage of diabetes. Our faculty are truly setting the leadership standard for scholarly work with real-world impact.

I also want to acknowledge our journalists from CM Life for their outstanding achievement. CM Life was recently named one of the Associated Collegiate Press' Top 100 Pacemaker publications. Well done.

Congratulations to everyone whose determination, curiosity and skill led to these accomplishments that will positively benefit the community, the state and beyond.

I cannot close my remarks today without talking about winter commencement. On Saturday, Dec. 17, more than 1,700 summer and fall graduates will earn their CMU degrees. They will become the next generation of entrepreneurs, health care professionals, teachers, engineers, scientists, communications professionals and so much more.

Most of you know that commencement is my favorite event. It is a chance to recognize our students' incredible achievements and also, very importantly, it is a chance to thank everyone — the families, supporters and friends — who supported those students through their higher education journey. To all of them, we offer our warmest congratulations for a job well done.

As we head toward the winter break and the start of a new semester in January, I feel confident, energized and excited about what lies ahead. Fundraising and grants continue to climb; future enrollment numbers look promising; and we are setting the course for CMU's future with our new strategic plan. Our future is indeed very bright.

As I close my remarks today, please allow me to say thank you once again to this outstanding community of learners and leaders. It is an honor and a privilege to continue to serve you.

Chair Studley, this concludes my report; however, I would now like to begin the Emeritus recognitions of two dedicated Trustees whose terms on the CMU Board of Trustees are ending.

Would Vice Chair Robert F. Wardrop II please join me at the front of the room? And Chair Studley, would you please join me?