



# Board of Trustees

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

September 28, 2023

Fall at Central Michigan University is always a special time as we welcome students back for a new and exciting academic year – the beginning of the sixth year I have had the privilege to experience on this beautiful campus.

We started with a lot of Fired-Up energy at our signature opening student events, IMPACT and Leadership Safari. It was a year of milestones for Safari: Among the smiling faces this year was the 35,000th participating student! We also celebrated Safari's 5,000<sup>th</sup> student staff member. These two programs are a wonderful way to start a new academic year and introduce CMU's leadership culture to our newest students.

The growing number of new students choosing CMU have many reasons to become part of our university. They often point to the many successes of our students – the result of a community that offers support and sets the standard for leadership.

And we have many more great things happening that involve CMU students throughout the fall semester. There is so much happening on campus right now that instead of calling it "Welcome Week," as we did in years prior, we have changed its name to "WEEKS of Welcome." Dozens of events, including MainStage and Get Acquainted Day are designed to get the semester started on the right foot. They also nurture connections among our students, faculty and staff – and create a strong sense of belonging in this community.

We are also in the middle of celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month here at CMU. Students have the opportunity to take part in educational and entertaining events that celebrate the art, culture, traditions and important contributions of Hispanic and Latine Americans.

CMU faculty and staff are assuming prominent positions on the state and national stage and earning accolades for their outstanding work.

Dr. Benjamin Jankens, a faculty member in the Department of Counseling, Educational Leadership, and Higher Education has been chosen as the President of the International Council of the Professors of Educational Leadership. Dr. Jankens will work to advance educational leadership among principals and superintendents and shape policy that impacts public schools across the country.

Dr. Anthony Chappaz from the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences received the CMU International Impact Award. The accolade is a result of Dr. Chappaz's development of an innovative approach to studying trace elements in the environment.

Sociology faculty member Mary Senter is the recipient of the Hans O. Mauksch Award for Distinguished Contributions to Undergraduate Sociology. The American Sociological Association gives the honor to professors with a distinguished and demonstrated career of leadership, innovation and service to students.

The Event and Recreation Management major has again been recognized as a Pinnacle Award Winner by the International Festivals and Events Association. We will find out next month whether they are gold medal winners for Best Event Management bachelor's degree for the fifth year in a row.

CMU Innovation and Online just announced they are collaborating with Michigan State Police to enhance the education of law enforcement officers in the state. The partnership offers the opportunity to earn undergraduate or graduate degrees to nearly 17,000 certified officers, making a positive impact in their lives and in the communities they serve.

Grants and contracts for research at CMU are reaching new heights, with more requests for funding, a record number of grants and contracts awarded, and more than \$25.6 million secured in the last year. After two consecutive years of more than \$20 million in research funding, we are climbing in rankings related to scholarly output and grantsmanship.

We were included in the Quacquarelli Symonds World University rankings for a second year, and faculty are publishing work in several of the most prestigious academic journals. We are now first among the MAC universities in Michigan universities for research productivity and fourth overall among the public universities. Meanwhile, CMU's College of Medicine was awarded more than \$10 million in external funding, including six awards from the National Institutes of Health totaling over \$2.3 million.

And, CMU Student Health Services just received accreditation due to its commitment to outstanding service and exceptional care. The Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care granted the achievement after assessing every aspect of care provided to students and finding that CMU adheres to the highest industry standards.

There also is good news on new student enrollment at CMU. We heard from Vice President of Student Recruitment and Retention Jennifer DeHaemers yesterday that CMU is turning a very positive corner in our effort to increase the size of our incoming classes. I will explain why we are very optimistic about the direction of enrollment, recruitment and retention later in this session when I present my annual report.

Last week, I joined colleagues from the Michigan Association of State Universities in the announcement of the Michigan Assured Admissions Pact. CMU is joining nine other state universities in the agreement to admit Michigan high school graduates with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher. The idea behind offering these students assured admissions is to increase their awareness of higher educational opportunities while demystifying the admissions process. The agreement also aligns with CMU's commitment to keeping degree attainment within reach for Michigan students, while *not* lowering our academic standards.

Making CMU a safe place for the students who choose to live and learn here is always a top priority, and we are making strides in campus safety.

I would like to offer my profound thanks to the CMU Police Department for their ongoing and committed effort to protect and serve our university community. Their work, along with the dedication of Facilities Management staff, has enhanced security in even more of our campus buildings. In addition to the electronic access controls already in place in residence halls, we have added similar controls to several academic buildings. So far this year, we installed units in Pearce, Anspach, Dow Science and Park Library. We plan to add units in seven more buildings throughout the year.

CMU Police Lt. Mike Sienkiewicz has done an outstanding job communicating about the security upgrades, and emphasizing that, while we enhance safety measures, we also maintain a friendly and welcoming campus.

University campuses across the country are facing a crisis when it comes to the mental health of students. Addressing students' changing needs has been an ongoing priority at CMU for several years. We now have more resources to support CMU students and our community: The CMU Counseling Center and our new Rural Health Equity Institute collaborated to obtain a Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention grant. The \$102,000 grant encourages help-seeking behaviors and increases access to mental health services.

Coming up on October 2nd, the CMU Counseling Center will observe World Mental Health Day in a very visible way on campus. Students, faculty and staff are encouraged

to write on a yellow flag one way they take care of their mental health and build resilience. The resulting display of flags will show that no one is alone when dealing with their mental health.

As we address current needs, CMU is also preparing future leaders in mental health professions. CMU's online Counseling Program recently received accreditation, which means we now offer the state's *only* accredited online master's degree in counseling.

As CMU turns 131 years old this month, I continue to be amazed by the support the university and its students get from our alumni and friends. During our most recent Giving Week – which revolved around CMU's 131st anniversary – we raised the highest dollar total ever for an anniversary giving week campaign. More than 1,500 donors stepped up to give over \$440,000 to CMU scholarships, academic programs, student support funds and more.

The generosity of these donors will make a tremendous impact for many CMU students, and I want to thank everyone who contributed to and supported this effort.

Alumni are as engaged as ever and have had many opportunities to demonstrate their love for and loyalty to CMU. In the last year, our Alumni Relations office hosted more than 114 events, often partnering with university and community groups to create experiences that strengthen our already impressive alumni network.

Another exciting opportunity for alumni – and for our students, faculty and staff – is coming up this fall. We will celebrate CMU's third year of participation in the America's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Detroit. This is the nation's second-largest holiday parade, annually reaching more than 70 million households nationwide. It is an exciting opportunity to showcase our brand and the Fired-Up attitudes of our CMU community on a national stage.

And I want to recognize some of the most committed CMU alumni – this year's recipients of national alumni awards.

- Bob Oros, class of 1990, is our Distinguished Alumni Award recipient.
- The Dick Enberg Alumni Commitment Award this year went to the McGuirk Family for their generational commitment to supporting CMU.
- Our Honorary Alumni Award winner is Vicki Loss Lautzenheiser.
- Daniel Stoudt, class of 1970, received the Alumni Service Recognition Award for his work to provide scholarships to CMU students.
- And, finally, Tyler Zimmerman, class of 2024 and current SGA president, is our Future Alumni Leader Award recipient. He was selected for his tremendous involvement and leadership on campus.

We also recently honored a new class of CMU's "10 in 10" alumni award winners. This year's group of young alumni are demonstrating to the world what it means to live, work and serve with a Fired-Up attitude in communities across our country. Congratulations to *all* our truly deserving alumni award winners.

Trustees, colleagues and community members: We are off to a fantastic start this academic year. I will have more to share about the future of our great institution, including the new strategic plan and our academic envisioning process, in my annual report later in today's session.

Thank you. This concludes my opening remarks.