

President's Report to the Board of Trustees



May 1, 2014

Good morning. And welcome to this Board of Trustees meeting a week prior to CMU's 121st May commencement.

Before we discuss the business of the day, I'd like to remind us all why we're here ... through a story posted last week on Facebook, by a father in Clinton Township. It reads:

Yesterday, I walked a beautiful young girl to her first day of kindergarten. She wore her Powerpuff Girls backpack, held my hand and giggled anxiously as we made the one-block pilgrimage to her classroom. As the school took deposit of our children, I remember many parents continuing to hover, causing some of the children to look back or cry.

... "Don't worry," assured the teacher, shooing the parents away. "They will be all right."

And I knew Cecelia would be.

Today, a beautiful young woman will drive herself to her last day of formal high school at International Academy. ...

In a few short weeks, she will finish her International Baccalaureate Exams and in a few short months press on to Central Michigan University on scholarship. I couldn't be prouder.

... The girl, if you can still call her a girl ... will be all right, the kindergarten teacher would say. And she will be.

Cecelia Scotta's mother went on to comment:

We couldn't be more thrilled that CMU wanted Cecelia as much as Cecelia (and the rest of us) wanted CMU. We have no hesitation about turning her over to begin her new life as a Chippewa ... Within an hour of our first visit last fall, the campus felt like home and the friendliness of everyone we met made us feel like family.

Our decision to make this happen — no matter what — was made on the drive home. Those few hours of our campus visit motivated Cecelia for this entire academic year ... We hope the people at CMU know they are really something special.

Cecelia Scotta and her parents, Tony and Kara — and about 27,000 other students and families — are the reason behind every decision we make.

As we set 2014-2015 tuition rates, and as we approve 3,600 prospective graduates to receive diplomas in nine days, we must remember that it's our job to make sure Cecelia has every opportunity for an excellent educational experience here at CMU.

It's our job to help her graduate — hopefully in four years — with the knowledge, the leadership and the confidence to know where and how her path in the “real world” will start.

That's who we are at CMU. That's what we do. At CMU we educate and graduate leaders.

This morning, we will review **undergraduate and graduate tuition rates** for the coming academic year.

I have directed our staff and I urge the board to keep higher education as accessible as possible.

That's difficult, considering a few short years ago, state appropriations amounted to about 75 percent of CMU's funding. Today it funds just 17 percent of our budget, leaving students and families to bear almost all the weight of a university education.

State support of CMU students and families was \$90 million in 2001-02. Today, 12 years later, in spite of inflation, state appropriations are \$73 million.

While appropriations have declined, costs have increased.

... the cost of purchased goods and services...

... exponential technology cost increases ...

... increases in faculty, staff and administrative salaries and wages...

... increases in health care and benefit costs ...

... investments in joint student/faculty research and creative endeavors...

... investments in the library and its thousands of holdings...

... investments in student leadership programs...

... investments in student scholarships...

... investments in educational advising and career services...

... all of which make higher education more costly than ever.

At CMU, we have a proud history of fiscal conservativeness, while maintaining high academic quality. Today, trustees, I challenge you to stay the course.

We'll have plenty of time soon to continue that discussion.

Before I end my report, I would like to talk about our strategic direction. I want to talk about “Advancing Excellence” at CMU and our #1 priority – Student Success. So, let's spend a few minutes celebrating achievement. For this, as we like to call it, is “the good stuff.”

Michelle Vanhala is a senior from Big Rapids, who is graduating in May with a Bachelor of Science degree in Secondary Education and majors in both Integrated Sciences and English. Michelle recently found out that she has been awarded the Knowles Science Teaching Fellowship, a prestigious, competitive national fellowship awarded to only 32 future STEM teachers across the United States. The program provides professional development and funding to new high school STEM teachers for the first five years of their teaching careers, to fund such things as supplies, projects, and professional development classes. Only three awards went to students in the state of Michigan, and they are from the “Big 3” universities in the state – Central Michigan University, Michigan State University, and the University of Michigan. Best wishes to you, Michelle, in your teaching career and congratulations on your graduation.

Campus Compact, a national coalition of almost 1,200 college and university presidents who are committed to fulfilling the civic purposes of higher education, has named the 2014 Newman Civic Fellows. The Newman Civic Fellows Awards recognize inspiring college student leaders who have worked to create lasting change in their communities. One of the Michigan honorees is **Octavia Carson** from Pontiac, who is also a Lem Tucker Scholarship winner at CMU. Congratulations, Octavia.

Also with us today are the incoming president and vice president of the Student Government Association and the new president of the Residence Hall Assembly. I look forward to working closely with incoming **SGA President Chuck Mahone**, a Junior from Chesterfield Township, and **SGA Vice President Mariah Urueta**, a Senior from Waterford, as well as RHA President **David Burney IV**, a sophomore from Bay City. I have confidence that you will represent the CMU student body and residence hall students well during the coming year.

Next, I want to recognize two students who will be making their mark internationally.

Three years ago, the CMU honors program made a commitment to national-level scholarship. Honors staff members weren’t satisfied, for example, that only two CMU students had won Fulbright awards between 1946, when the prestigious program was launched, and 2011. With concerted effort, one CMU student received the award in 2012 and another in 2013. This year ... we have two recipients.

Through the dedication of students, faculty and staff — because Fulbrights happen only with collaboration, our 2014 recipients are:

- Ben Harris, an Allen Park senior with dual majors in English and history. Ben graduates in May and has won a Fulbright teaching assistantship to South Korea. Afterward, he plans to attend law school.
- Sarah Alm is a 2013 graduate with a major in music and a minor in anthropology. This Mount Pleasant native has won a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship to Turkey. Afterward, she plans to become a physician assistant with a focus on international rescue. Today, she is completing a year-long internship with the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra in Colorado.

Sarah, Ben — we are proud of you, and I thank all of the faculty and staff who helped you make these Fulbrights a reality.

And finally, I want to recognize a team of students that recently competed at the **Pi Sigma Epsilon National Convention** in Miami and won the **Pro-Am Sales Competition**. A few statistics:

- More than 65 universities participated in the Pro Am.
- More than 300 students competed to get to nationals from schools that included Ohio State, LSU, UConn, Purdue, Virginia Tech, University of Missouri, University of Hawaii and Nebraska.
- This is the largest collegiate sales competition in the United States.

Joining us today are the following students and their advisor/coach/mentor **Ken Cherry**, faculty member in Marketing and Hospitality Services Administration (who was named Pi Sigma Epsilon top faculty advisor in the U.S. in 2012):

Kristina Crilley

Ryan Williamson

Jeremy Cooper

Lauren Dworzanin

Ashley Fennell

Matt Russo

Tyler Wallner

Adam London

Ben Devereaux

Among these students' many accomplishments: Kristina took first place as top sales person in the U.S. and is the second consecutive student from CMU to win this award.

Ryan finished fourth in this competition, and Jeremy, Lauren, Ashley and Matt placed in the top 20.

Tyler was awarded a scholarship from Vector Marketing, and Adam took second place for top sales project.

Overall, the Sales Education Foundation named CMU's professional sales program to its 2013 Top University Sales programs for the fifth consecutive year.

These students each put in hours of preparation and hard work prior to the event to put themselves in the position to win. They took their CMU work ethic and education and applied it to be the national champions.

Thank you for representing CMU so well — we are proud of all of you.

Chair Kanine, this concludes my report.