

# President's Report to the Board of Trustees



**February 19, 2015**

Good morning. And welcome, trustees, faculty, staff and students.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome alumnus Rich Studley as our newest trustee and alumnus Robb Wardrop as a returning board member.

Rich has been president and CEO of the Michigan Chamber of Commerce since 2008. As part of that organization for more than 30 years, he has helped to lead this state's business environment at the highest levels. Rich's expertise is backed by a Master of Science in Administration degree from Central Michigan University.

Robb first was appointed to the board in 2010 to fill a vacant position. A successful attorney with Wardrop & Wardrop in Grand Rapids, he was reappointed in December for an eight-year term. He is a Mount Pleasant native and a proud alum with both bachelor's and master's degrees from CMU.

Robb, Rich — welcome. Thank you for serving the students, faculty, staff and alumni of this great university as we plot and implement a future with unprecedented strength and value to the State of Michigan and its residents.

These two alumni exemplify the fact that CMU graduates leaders. They're putting their stamp on the world ... giving back to their communities and their alma mater in extraordinary ways.

Two months into the second semester of our 122nd year, we at CMU have much on the drawing board.

Our largest construction project ever, a \$95 million Biosciences Building, remains on track and within budget. Students who are high school juniors today will be able to study in its classrooms and labs starting in January of their freshman year at CMU.

Later this morning, we'll ask the board to consider a major renovation project for Grawn Hall, the oldest building on campus. Grawn is home to the College of Business Administration, which has nationally and internationally leading programs such as sales, logistics and information systems.

More than 4,000 business students a year study in Grawn, and the potential for growth is significant. Its purpose will be to give CMU students modern learning spaces where they will study, collaborate and develop the ideas for the great businesses and innovations of tomorrow.

It is an exciting time at Central Michigan University.

Our strategic planning team is reconvening and will work with the campus community, including the Board of Trustees, to refine and update the initiatives and metrics of our strategic plan.

As you'll remember, that plan outlines five priorities designed to:

- advance student success;
- promote excellence in research and creative activities;
- support quality faculty and staff;
- build community partnerships; and
- uphold smart infrastructure stewardship.

**This is a time of momentum for CMU.**

- Trustees, you and many others have talked of sensing an increased cohesiveness across campus and a shared commitment to our mission.
- You and many others have noted feeling a tremendous pride not only on campus, but throughout the greater CMU community — a pride in both our university and in each other.
- And finally, you and many others are discussing a profound level of leadership as our students, faculty and staff take responsibility for the impact we all have on others.

Let me share a small bit of proof of that leadership. In two weeks, CMU students will take a deep breath and head out for spring break. Nearly 160 will go on trips to serve others, working through the Mary Ellen Brandell Volunteer Center. They are among more than 600 CMU students who will donate their time and energy this academic year through the Alternative Breaks program.

Thanks to efforts such as this, Central Michigan University last spring ranked fourth in the nation with its number of Alternative Break trips, a ranking we expect will continue but hopefully raise.

From Atlanta to Pittsburg to Omaha and St. Louis, our students this spring will travel across the country in minivans to do construction and major cleanup work. They will share their hearts with children. And they will deliver hope to those facing social justice issues, who aren't as privileged or as fortunate as we are, here today.

Our CMU students will give. They will inspire. They will lead.

For that we thank them and applaud their Chippewa spirit.

Before I conclude, I'd like to recognize a couple of individuals ...

With us today are Central Michigan University juniors and broadcast and cinematic arts majors Kathryn Havrilla, from Lake Orion, and Jennifer Weingart, from Bridgman, who recently won scholarships in the Broadcast Education Association's 2015-2016 competition. Havrilla received the Richard Eaton Foundation Award, and Weingart won the Nielsen Company Scholarship Award.

CMU was one of only two campuses nationwide with multiple winners, with the other being Illinois State University. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., the BEA is the premier international academic media organization, driving insights, excellence in media production, and career advancement for educators, students and professionals. Congratulations, Kathryn and Jennifer.

In December, Dean Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson represented Central Michigan University and joined President Obama, the First Lady and Vice President Biden at the White House College Opportunity Summit, an invitation-only event.

The Summit brought together colleges and universities, business leaders, nonprofits, and others that are committed to supporting more college opportunities for students across the country. This year's summit focused on building sustainable collaborations in communities with strong K-12 and higher education partnerships to encourage college-going and supporting colleges to work together to dramatically improve persistence and increase college completion, especially for first-generation, low-income and underrepresented students. Dr. Dale is with us today – would you like to share some brief comments about your White House visit?

Thank you, Dean Pehrsson.

Chair Kanine, that concludes my report.