



**June 27, 2019**

We start today by welcoming two individuals:

Isaiah Oliver, president and chief executive officer of the Community Foundation of Greater Flint, is attending his first Board of Trustees meeting. He was appointed trustee by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in April to complete the term of Joe Anderson, who resigned earlier this year.

Trustee Oliver is a graduate of Flint Northwestern High School and earned his Bachelor of Applied Arts from Central Michigan University in 2007. He was an art: design/graphic design major with a minor in art history.

Trustee Oliver has been keynote speaker at Central's annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. brunch and a mentor for CMU's [Pathways to Academic Student Success](#) program, which helps low-income and first-generation college students. He also received Central's Alumni Service Recognition Award in 2018.

I am delighted to welcome Isaiah to our board and look forward to his counsel, his probing questions designed to make Central Michigan University the very best it can be.

Congratulations and welcome, Trustee Oliver.

I also want to welcome Dr. Mary Schutten, who starts Monday as provost and executive vice president. Dr. Schutten joins us from her role as professor and administrator at San José State University.

She has 30 years of progressively larger leadership roles in higher education and most recently was dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences at San José State. Her leadership has been marked by a focus on student success, innovation and excellence in curriculum and academic programs, interdisciplinary initiatives, and community partnerships.

Her commitment to academic excellence, to rigorous academic programs and to ensuring academics are aligned with relevant needs of society are truly impressive.

At San José State, Dr. Schutten led a collaborative and transparent process to reimagine and rename the College of Applied Arts and Sciences as it became the College of Health and Human Sciences. She recently used a "Design Thinking" process to engage department chairs and directors in creating an identity document clarifying who and what the college is and to align its goals with the university's strategic plan.

Dr. Schutten's leadership of Central Michigan University will be pivotal as we take action in the coming months and years to shape our future. She has proven her ability to tackle issues, to have straightforward conversations and to serve as a leader while also developing leadership in others. She's a strong advocate for all parts of the academic division and has a creative, collaborative approach.

Please welcome Dr. Schutten to the family and to the community. I look forward to working with her to move Central Michigan University forward on so many fronts.

I also want to recognize three members of our cabinet who are wrapping up their time of service to CMU this week:

- Michael Gealt is stepping down as provost after six years as our academic leader.
- Steven Johnson leaves CMU after seven years as vice president of enrollment and student services.
- And Sherry Knight is stepping down from seven years as associate vice president of University Communications.

You'll hear more about their contributions to Central Michigan University later in our meeting.

With personnel changes, and the welcoming of a new provost, as any good leader or manager would do, we are taking stock of our organizational structure, of the duties and responsibilities assigned to these areas, and will be looking and thinking about structural changes before we begin the process of rehiring.

Also, as we solidify our leadership team and as I prepare to begin my second year at CMU, the time is right to review and update CMU's strategic plan that was initiated in 2017. As with any strategic plan, it is important to revisit and ask: what is working and what is not? What has changed with the environment? What has changed internally?

We have a tremendous opportunity to look forward a decade with an eye on rigor, relevance and excellence. In fact, with the immense change that is occurring in academe and the world, I'd say it's imperative that we assess our university and thoughtfully, boldly plan its future.

We must ask ourselves three driving questions that will guide our efforts: What do we need to do now so that in 2030 we:

1. Are relevant to the communities we serve?
2. Ensure we have a rigorous academic environment?
3. Are an example of excellence as a leading university known in teaching, research and service?

Much good work went into our current strategic plan, which includes three imperatives: nurturing student success, fostering scholarly activity, and strengthening partnerships in Michigan and beyond. The Advancing Excellence plan provides a solid foundation from which to envision the next decade, and we will build off of these imperatives.

As we do so, we must consider four evolving areas that are shaping our region, state and world:

- The significant and rapid pace of advancement in technology and communication.
- The incredible progress and developments in biomedicine, health care and the sciences.
- The rapid globalization of society.
- Sustainability.

None of these areas can be viewed from one paradigm or from one field of study or discipline. The only way to properly address the issues each of these areas raise, as well as to harness the immense potential of these lines of inquiry, is to collaborate and partner between and among our colleges and disciplines. Not just from the academic side, but also how each of these areas impacts our administrative functions and the way that we work. We must explore the careers, courses and services needed by students, regardless of their degree programs.

When we think about all of these issues, while they're centered in sciences, the liberal arts has to be alive and well. That's why it is so critical that we look at these with an interdisciplinary aspect.

Beyond these four macro areas, as we shape CMU's future, we also must be mindful of the political climate surrounding higher education. We must grapple with questions about the value of degrees, for example, and wrestle with ideas such as badges, free education and the proliferation of online providers.

How do we continue to manage student debt and the anticipation of student debt? How do we ensure we remain relevant and dynamic? How do we think about higher education through the application, dissemination and creation of knowledge that creates leaders?

This isn't just about a strategic plan that gets us to 2030, it is truly about who we are as a university and as a community and how we remain relevant, rigorous and excellent. That's the exciting part of what we're going through.

Our 2030 strategic plan will take enormous work and the involvement of all of us across campus. This process will indeed distinguish us from our peers and competitors. It will force us to think about, and answer, who we are now, and will be, as an organization.

We, as a university community, will all be involved in this process of thinking, planning and articulating our pathway forward.

Rest assured, we will be transparent and follow the hallmarks of shared governance. Our end product will be powerful and groundbreaking for CMU, setting an actionable, visionary and bold plan. We will communicate more about this in late summer and early fall.

As part of this process, later today we will approve our budget. I want to thank all of the vice presidents and the many others who were involved in this process. While we are presenting a budget that is less than last year's as a reflection of our declining revenues, we are making important investments in key areas. When we initiated this process, I put forward four main priorities:

1. Recruit, retain and graduate students.
2. Ensure academic and program innovation and excellence.
3. Manage our enterprise risk.
4. Infrastructure and safety.

As such, this process was also about investing in key areas that will help shape and prepare us for our 2030 visioning. This includes the creation, through the reallocation of current resources from the President's and Provost's offices, a Fund for Innovation and Excellence that will be used to spur areas of inquiry that will advance our reputation in providing our students rigorous, relevant and excellent programs that will prepare them for our dynamic world. These funds will be granted on a competitive basis for programs that truly develop a roadmap for excellence and innovation.

This will help ensure we remain relevant in the areas I mentioned earlier, including interdisciplinary programs. This is a fund that will provide the opportunity to be creative, forward thinking, and to engage our faculty in a meaningful way to produce activities and programs that will continue to put CMU on the map.

The second is the funding of an aggressive and proactive advising model that is aimed at serving our students on their pathway toward graduation. We are taking the culture and ideas of Central Michigan University, overlaying those with best practices, and putting incredible investments into our students to help them be successful.

As you can tell, there is a lot going on, and it is an exciting time to be here at CMU.

Trustees, I now will recognize four examples of outstanding work and achievements happening across our campus community:

First, Dr. Robert Bienkowski, would you please stand? Bob is the director of CMU's Office of Research Compliance and has been selected as the recipient of the 2019 Distinguished Service Award from Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research. PRIM&R is an organization of approximately 4,000 members dedicated to creating a strong and vibrant community of ethics-minded research administration. Candidates for the Distinguished Service Award must have made a significant impact in the field of research ethics and have attained distinction in promoting the purpose and ideals of the organization through writing, teaching or research.

One of the people who nominated him for this award stated, in part: "Bob has long been an advocate for ethical research and has built or rebuilt several institutions' research protection programs to comply with federal standards. He has published extensively in multiple areas including basic science, clinical trials and research ethics. He has been a mentor to numerous people and always stood up for what was 'right' even if it was the difficult thing to do. I value his integrity." And to quote Provost Gealt, "I am especially impressed that the award is for impact in research ethics because compliance sets the standard for behavior and helps us to move forward and grow our university efforts."

Congratulations, Bob, on this distinguished award and for upholding the values of CMU in all that you do.

Second, Dr. Peter Ross, Dr. Jeremy Bond and Mr. Phil Coffman, from the Office of Curriculum and Instructional Support, and Dr. Barb Klocko, a faculty member from the Department of Educational Leadership, would you please stand? These individuals recently accepted an award on behalf of CMU from the American Association of University Administrators in recognition of the process they created to develop CMU's online courses and programs.

The development of the Cohort Course Design Model was truly a team effort involving over a dozen Curriculum and Instructional Support staff led by Jeremy Bond, director of Instructional Development. The model has been widely embraced by faculty over the past two years for the way in which it has improved the efficiency and collaboration involved in course development and the overall quality of course design and content. The creation of the Cohort Course Design Model has allowed Curriculum and Instructional Support to triple capacity to develop and revise online courses (with no new resources) and complete course developments in a far more timely manner, enabling students to enroll in online courses, on average, a semester earlier than they had been able to do in the past.

Thank you to the entire team for creating this model for developing online courses and programs and the benefits that it brings to our students.

Third, our communications, marketing and design team has received two international [Circle of Excellence Awards](#) from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

University Communications received an Issue and Crisis Management award for its work during and after last year's March 2 deadly domestic violence incident.

While campus was on high alert for 15 hours during a search for the shooter, University Communications team members worked closely with CMU police, campus and community partners, and media. UComm led the communication efforts that helped ensure safety and kept faculty, staff, students and their parents well-informed.

According to judges, "(Their work) shows a team deeply conscious of the preparation required for effective crisis communication. It shows their ability to adapt to a situation as it evolves and to attend to the requirements of multiple audiences."

California State University Chico received the only other award in this category.

CASE also recognized University Communications in Design/Specialty Pieces for its "Fire Up!" T-shirt swap and 2018 shirt design featuring the phrase "Always a Chippewa" and a quote: "Be like me. Walk with pride."

The judges wrote, "Central Michigan alone won a medal for their shirt because of the intention behind it. ... The design team had the great idea to make this shirt an homage to beloved alumnus and renowned sportscaster Dick Enberg. The baseball jersey — fitting because Enberg was a baseball broadcaster — features a quote from a speech Enberg delivered on campus.

"Most impressive, however, is the 'Fire Up! T-shirt Swap' concept. We were impressed the design for the limited-edition shirt was teased on social media. We love that the shirts cannot be purchased, but must be 'swapped' with any other school's apparel, which is then donated to people in need."

Here with us today are UComm team members — please stand — Blaine Bendele, Ari Harris, Paul Henderson, Mel Purdy, Emily Stulz and Curtis Wildfong.

They are joined by three of their leaders, Amy White, Heather Smith and Sherry Knight, and are flanked by two members of our police force, who played critical roles in communications during the March 2 crisis: Larry Klaus, CMU's new police chief, and Lt. Cameron Wassman.

And finally, I want to recognize an individual who set a new standard for success during the first year of employment.

Jordan Bischel, will you please stand?

Jordan was announced as our new baseball coach almost exactly one year ago — on June 28, 2018. He was taking over a team that had just completed its season winning 29 games and losing 30. A team whose record had been about 500 for several years.

We all knew Jordan had tremendous potential. He came to us from Northwood University, where he'd led his team to regular-season and tournament championships during his last two seasons there.

It didn't take long this year for us to start thinking: This guy's going to do it again!

Sure enough, the Chippewas achieved one of their very best seasons in CMU baseball's already phenomenal history.

The team made it all the way to the NCAA Tournament, finishing 47-14 and tying the 1988 team for most victories in program history. It won both the Mid-American Conference regular-season and tournament titles, completing that sweep for the first time.

The league tournament championship and resulting NCAA Tournament berth were CMU's first since 1995, and the Chippewas' 6-5 victory in a game over Miami was the program's first win in the NCAA Tournament since 1988.

And of course, while the coach's story is extraordinary, it was the men on the team who made it all happen, but unfortunately none of them could be here with us today.

I'd be remiss not to mention that eight team members have earned Academic All-Mid-American Conference honors, qualifying with a cumulative 3.2 grade point average or higher and having participated in at least 50% of the team's contests. Freshmen and first-year transfers are not eligible.

Team, thank you all for representing Central Michigan University so well! Congratulations on an excellent season!

Chair Keith, that completes my report.