

# President's Report to the Board of Trustees



**September 21, 2017**

Thank you Chair Weideman, and good morning, trustees, faculty, staff, students and community members.

Central Michigan University last week marked a special anniversary — our 125th.

Local business leaders in 1892 created Michigan's seventh public university here in Mount Pleasant. Our story began by addressing a great need across the state — that of preparing teachers who would educate coming generations.

That purpose — to meet needs — has continued through the years. It was highly apparent in 1959, when our fifth president, Charles Anspach, helped Central achieve university status after a 20-year effort.

Anspach knew that as a university, Central could expand its programs and be bound only by the needs of the state, its employers, our students and the identification of priorities.

The push in recent years to address growing needs has brought a College of Medicine to CMU's campus. It has spurred the addition of mechanical, electrical and computer engineering ... and today, faculty are exploring the addition of *environmental* engineering. We have added sales and entrepreneurship programs.

This fall, our master of science in information systems program added a track in cybersecurity in order to address one of the greatest threats of our day. And yesterday during our committee meetings, we heard an update about the pending construction of our new Center for Integrated Health Studies, a project largely funded by the Michigan Legislature.

We have seen our fashion merchandising and design program evolve into one of the best in the country. And we have seen an integrative public relations program — a collaboration between our broadcasting and journalism departments — grow dramatically.

As we lay the foundation for next 125 years, I am pleased — and I am proud — to say that many faculty and staff across campus are becoming actively engaged in an academic

structural review. This alignment, as we study it through their efforts, is envisioning the future as part of the Advancing Excellence 2022 strategic plan you approved in June.

While sometimes wary of change, many are excited to contemplate how we can make this great university even greater. Many have expressed appreciation for the invitation to be thoughtful, collaborative, creative and bold.

Trustees, your leadership and your support of an inclusive and energetic process this academic year will serve CMU and its students very, very well. The efforts underway on this front support strategic imperative No. 1 — nurturing student success.

Additional work is underway on other areas of the strategic plan as well.

Vice President Steven Johnson is finalizing an updated strategic enrollment plan to align with our strategic plan.

Provost Michael Gealt and his team are looking at the need for 120-credit-hour degrees, so students are better able to graduate in four years and with less debt.

A committee will look at updating our responsibility centered management budget model, particularly in our academic division.

And importantly, last week during the 2017 State of the University address, I announced our first two premier partnerships, directly supporting the third strategic imperative, which calls for increased relationships with external entities.

Our first two partnerships, with Ford Motor Co. and Quicken Loans, will help address their talent needs while giving CMU students and alumni greater access to internships and jobs. Our students and faculty also will support these partners through research and capstone project experiences.

Birgit Behrendt, vice president of global programs and purchasing operations at Ford Motor Co., and Jim Livingston, vice president of talent acquisition at Quicken Loans, were present at the event.

The following quote from Ms. Behrendt at Ford captures the magnitude of our partnerships:

She told the audience: "I'm honored to be able to have this privilege on behalf of Ford to receive this first prestigious award. It will continue to strengthen our relationship for recruiting in manufacturing, in IT, in purchasing ... recruiting outstanding talent and future leaders **to jointly put our stamp on the world**. It has never been more exciting to be a part of the automotive industry and to be a part of Michigan. And we love that CMU is a part of our future leadership."

Trustees, as you can see, the 2017-18 academic year is off to a tremendous, active start.

And, as you'll hear later this morning from Plante Moran, CMU once again has earned a clean audit opinion. This positive audit result reflects the hard work of leaders across campus who continue to manage their budgets and align expenditures with revenues.

Our financial strength comes only with a collective recognition that we can be anything we want to be ... and we can do anything we want to do ... we just can't do it all.

CMU's ongoing fiscal stability continues because of the diligence with which we prioritize and pursue the greatest opportunities for meeting needs and advancing excellence for the benefit of our students, employers, the state of Michigan and beyond.

Chair Weideman, this concludes my report.