

Jan. 14, 2020

Good afternoon,

A very Happy New Year to all. Here's hoping your holiday break was satisfying and restful. With 2020 well under way, here are a few updates:

New and Retiring Colleagues. Please join me in welcoming two new colleagues. **Dr. Artie Lee Travis** will be joining us as the Vice President for Student Affairs later this month. Read more about Dr. Travis [here](#). I am pleased to have someone with Dr. Travis' experience (both in student affairs and the University System of Maryland) joining the executive team. Also, **Donnell VanSkiver** is my new executive assistant following the retirement of Sandy Rohrbaugh. She started last week. Donnell is joining us from Northrup-Grumman and is learning her way around FSU. I hope everyone takes the time to welcome them — along with new colleagues in other divisions and departments across the University. Due to the pending changes in retiree benefits, we experienced an unusually large number of faculty and staff retirements at the end of the 2019. I'll discuss these retirements more in my next update.

Budget and the Legislative Session. This year's legislative session, which started last week, is one to watch closely. The Governor will be announcing his proposed budget for the state — and by extension, the System — soon. There is new leadership in the Senate and the House of Delegates, and it appears that the Kirwan Commission report will be the main topic this session. Frostburg State, along with the other USM schools, is looking to that report to understand funding implications and opportunities for higher education. At the same time, we continue to monitor our own current year's budget and track enrollment figures. Watch for more information from me as the session progresses.

USM Leadership. Dr. Jay Perman assumed the role of Chancellor on January 6 upon the retirement of Chancellor Caret. Dr. Perman, previously the University of Maryland Baltimore president, told the presidents he plans to tour each of the campuses and meet with the governance groups. He will likely be here in June when the Board of Regents holds its monthly Board meeting on campus. I've known Jay since I arrived in Maryland, and I look forward to a productive working relationship with him. We also are fellow alums (a few years apart) from the same undergraduate program at Northwestern University.

Commencement. Thanks to all who made the December Commencement Ceremony a success as we celebrated the achievements of more than 500 of our students and welcomed them anew into the Bobcat Family as alumni. The ceremony marked the first use of the new screen and technology that allowed us to show students crossing the stage, displaying their names as they went. We've had some very positive comments about this addition. Also, many of you noticed that we have new bleachers, greatly improving seating comfort and safety, despite slightly reducing our seating capacity in Bobcat Arena.

I look forward to a successful spring semester and wish you the very best in 2020. Go Bobcats!

Ronald Nowaczyk, PhD
President

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