

Goddard College

PLAINFIELD, VERMONT | PORT TOWNSEND & SEATTLE, WA

December 22, 2021

Greetings Goddard College Community:

I bring you greetings from the Goddard College Board of Trustees as we approach the end of this year 2021. This year perhaps even more than in previous years has been filled with unprecedented challenges and opportunities.

The year started with the announcement of the resignation of President Bernard Bull with a negotiated exit date of August 1, 2021. We launched an inclusive Presidential Search, and Dr. Dan Hocoy was selected as the new President. We were keenly aware there were several existing challenges that any new president entering Goddard College would face. We included meetings with the incoming and outgoing Presidents to assure a bridge from one to the other. President Hocoy's official entrance on duty was August 1, 2021.

A formal Presidential Transition Plan was launched. The plan included a listening tour before he arrived at Goddard College. President Hocoy spoke with several constituents referred to him by the Board and others, to all Board members, and to various staff, students, faculty, and alumni. He later traveled to Washington State and met with Goddard College Alumni, staff, students, and faculty in the area.

Within the first 90 days of his tenure, the first leadership retreat was held with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Additionally, an agreement was reached with the faculty bargaining unit and ratified by the faculty. This new agreement had been in negotiations for months before the arrival of the new President, and though not deemed ideal by either group, it was a starting point.

COVID 19 and its variants intensified in its spread across the USA. Many in our Goddard family experienced unexpected disruptions in their personal and professional lives. There were new uncertainties necessitating realignments of life's priorities for many. There was the constant presence of the unknown. There were disagreements and differences.

New policies and procedures related to health and safety had to be put into place quickly than what was consistent with typical Goddard timelines for action. Virtual residencies initially started in response to the COVID 19 surge were destined to become a part of academic life. The term HyFlex became a reality and placed an unexpected strain on the technology infrastructure of the College. Buildings in Plainfield, historically brought to life with the presence of predictable residential student cohorts, now lay empty. Long-standing issues of deferred maintenance were brought to light, and the College is now committing funds to improve facilities. These and other adjustments to new realities may at times include canceling services and activities. We experienced this when the President had to decide, after recognizing staffing and technology infrastructure limitations, to switch the previously scheduled on-site Alumni

weekend to a fully virtual event on short notice.

As the uncertainties of the COVID pandemic continue to emerge, colleges and universities across the country will continue to face unexpected realities, changes, and demands. So will Goddard.

Even in the face of these realities, The Board works at the vision and policy oversight levels, and we will continue to share the vision and direction for the College. Goddard College has a long-standing history of being a leading voice in progressive education in the 20th Century during turbulent times. We envision Goddard as a fully accredited leader in 21st Century Progressive Education. That will take time.

All non-negotiable policies required by our NECHE Accreditors and other legal/regulatory agencies are under review to assure compliance. We envision internal policies open to input and development by internal policy-making systems and processes. Clarification of Democratic processes at Goddard College is acknowledged as being foundational as the College moves forward. Every member of the Goddard College Community has a role to play, and when all roles are respected and executed in an accountable manner, Goddard will thrive and grow. Policies and Procedures assure that we are all working from the same playbook and seeing the same requirements.

Goddard students continue to reflect their individuality, and that individuality expands the mission and vision of Goddard College as a leader in progressive education. The Board of Trustees applauds the students for choosing to enroll in Goddard College at this time in their lives. You are the reason for the existence of Goddard College. This has been true since Goddard's beginning.

We applaud the faculty whose roles are informed by the individual students they serve. Your understanding of Goddard students and your flexibility in assuring that their pedagogical journey is student-driven with your support is what makes Goddard unique and valuable in higher education.

We applaud the staff who provide the systems and structures, often behind the scenes, that assure our students receive the services promised as a part of their journey through Goddard College. We applaud the administrators who are accountable for the oversight of the day-to-day operations - the conductor of the Goddard train as it moves along the tracks on its ever-changing journey from its past destinations to its future stops.

We applaud the Alumni as you support this College through its ups and downs and serve as ambassadors in bringing the best of Goddard forward into the world. We applaud the bargaining units for searching for ways to assure that Goddard College staff and faculty can positively impact Goddard's success and align with their personal and professional success.

We applaud our President who is the designated accountable leader of this College and responsible for implementing the Board vision with the daunting task of final decision making.

We are all investors in the success of this College! As we prepare to enter the New Year 2022, let us all stand together "for" Goddard College.

With that in mind, we wish you all the best during this season of Holidays and a Happy New Year!

Standing in Gratitude,

Goddard College Board of Trustees

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