

**METROPOLITAN STATE UNIVERSITY of DENVER
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Friday, March 17, 2023

Executive Session: 8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. | Full Board Meeting: 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Jordan Student Success Building
890 Auraria Pkwy., Room 400 (University Advancement Boardroom)

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Russell Noles read the Trustees into Executive Session at 8:00 a.m. and asked for a motion. The motion was made and seconded, and unanimously approved.

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board of Trustees business meeting was called to order at approximately 9:13 a.m. by Chairman Russell Noles. Trustee Albus Brooks, Trustee Jerry Glick, Trustee Olivia Mendoza, Trustee Emily Renwick Garnett, Trustee Mike Kopp, Trustee Kristin Hultquist, Trustee Mike Johnston, Trustee Marissa Molina, Alumni Trustee Jim Qualteri, Faculty Trustee Meredith Jeffers, Faculty Senate President Liz Goodnick, Student Trustee Gabriel Trujillo, were also in attendance, along with President Janine Davidson, Board Secretary David Fine, Vice President/Chief Operating Officer Larry Sampler, Treasurer/CEO, Jim Carpenter, Chief Financial Officer, Assistant Secretary Melinda Olivarez, various faculty, administrators, and staff. Maya Ries, student.

III. CHAIR'S WELCOME & REPORT

Chairman Noles stated that excellent committee discussions were held yesterday. The most crucial matter at the University currently is faculty workload. The committee conversation yesterday afforded faculty, staff, and the Board the opportunity to hold a common understanding of the issue. The Board of Trustees first heard about the issue of faculty workload at its January meeting, and learned only yesterday that this issue has been festering for at least 15 years. The Board paused in January to gain a better understanding of the issues around faculty workload, and the conversation yesterday provided structure and a common understanding that will help in working toward a solution. Chair Noles cautioned that the solution will likely be complex because the issues are complex. The important element is to establish the right structures and involve the right people so that appropriate accountabilities are established. The task force working on the issue will ensure that faculty, staff, and the Board are all working in concert without information deficits. The Board, he said, now understands the sense of urgency and will move expeditiously on the matter. He applauded President Davidson, her team, the faculty, deans, Faculty Senate, Faculty Trustee Jeffers, Interim Provost Dr. Marie Mora, and Chief Financial Officer Jim Carpenter, for working in concert with one another. He asked for updates on the matter at each upcoming Board meeting.

IV. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of January 27, 2023, Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes.

B. Office of Human Resources report of personnel actions for the Board's approval, which have occurred since the last Board Meeting on Friday, January 27, 2023.

C. Approval of Award of Posthumous Degree

Trustee Glick moved for approval of the Consent Agenda, with a second by Trustee Mendoza. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. CCHE Strategic Plan Briefing – Kaycee Gerhart, Director of Government Affairs

Ms. Gerhart stated that leaders from the Colorado Commission on Higher Education ("CCHE") will provide an in-depth presentation of its Strategic Plan at a future Board meeting. CCHE is the advisory board for the Department

of Higher Education. Its members are appointed by the Governor to provide strategic advice to the Department of Higher Education on a variety of initiatives. They hold working groups and advise on policy decisions that dictate the Department's operations as well as the Department's priorities. Ms. Gerhart said that while this Strategic Plan is framed as the Department of Higher Education's Strategic Plan, it is very much the work product of the CCHE. It is an influential body as it relates to the work of the University, both operationally and programmatically, and can be a partner and advocate with respect to the state legislature.

Ms. Gerhart provided a list of CCHE members and stated that Board members may have relationships with some who are very helpful to the University's work. Ana Temu Otting is a current MSU Denver student who will graduate in the Spring. She has a career in advocacy and works with the ACLU. She was appointed to the CCHE board because she is a Roadrunner and because of her work in advocacy. Ms. Gerhart expressed gratitude for Ms. Otting's work as an advocate for the University who has been able to speak to her direct experience as a student. Part of Ms. Gerhart's work is to build and maintain relationships with members of the CCHE board, whose voice has grown appreciably from five years ago when it was essentially an approving body, to today where it acts as a very active board. Engaging with the CCHE board has become increasingly important.

The CCHE Strategic Plan is relevant and important for many reasons: the document signals the direction and intentions of the Department of Higher Education over the next five years. The executive director of the Department of Higher Education is an appointee of the Governor. The Strategic Plan is usually not refreshed until a year or two into a new administration. The expectation is that this Strategic Plan will extend beyond Governor Polis's remaining time in office and will likely signal the trajectory of higher education as envisioned by the state over the next five years or more.

The Strategic Plan is drafted by the Commission in collaboration with the Governor's staff and is reflective of his priorities. This tends to drive state legislation. The Plan was released in December 2022-January 2023, and legislation beginning in 2024 will reflect the priorities laid out by the Department and the Governor.

Ms. Gerhart noted that the operational funding for public higher education in this state will soon be revisited and the funding formula is likely to be revised. This presents opportunities for the University. It is a general expectation that elements of the Strategic Plan will be seen as part of any revisions made to the funding formula. Those discussions are expected to begin in the Summer and Fall.

The guiding principles named by the Department and the Commission in the Strategic Plan are as follows:

- Economic Mobility, a value that several of the Commissioners hold and exercise in their roles outside of the Commission and one that has been a priority of the Governor in advancing opportunities for individuals because of their participation in higher education. Coincidentally it is part of this University's mission as well.
- Equity in opportunity was a core component of the former Strategic Plan, aiming to increase the number of degrees awarded and closing equity gaps specifically those along lines of race related to degree attainment. This remains a priority but may not be the most visible priority in the new Strategic Plan. The Commission made clear, however, that it will work to ensure equity in their work going forward.
- Lifelong Learning is a strong component of the Strategic Plan and is viewed as expanding educational access at different points in a person's career. Lifelong Learning refers to adult learners and the role that micro-credentials, or stackable credentials, play as people enter and exit the higher education system with a little more fluidity than in the past.
- "Value" is a component of the Strategic Plan and is defined as the benefit of higher education being in excess of the time and dollars required to participate in higher education. This component guides the Plan, ensuring that higher education institutions are held accountable in producing experiences that are valuable for their students.

- Career Skill-Building is a component of the Plan that is increasingly important to the Commission. It not only refers to attainment of a degree but also to ensuring that the skills gained while investing in higher education truly translate to the needs within the workforce.
- The Plan includes a deep focus on data in terms of ensuring that institutions of higher ed have strong data systems and are disaggregating that data so that meaningful intervention can be made where appropriate to ensure that other components of the Plan, particularly Equity in Opportunity, are achieved.
- The single strategic goal driving the totality of the revised Strategic Plan is to “Increase the number of Coloradans benefitting from valuable career skills, obtained in high school or via postsecondary education that – at a minimum – enable additional lifetime earnings greater than the cost of attendance.”

“Increasing the number...” speaks to the continuing commitment to increase credential attainment. That formed the core focus of the former Strategic Plan and will be the core focus of the Strategic Plan moving forward. In addition to increasing the value of degrees, increasing the number of degrees awarded continues to be a priority for the Governor and for the Commission because many Coloradans have some college credits but no credential.

- “Valuable career skills” refers to the Classroom to Career connection in ensuring that the credential held has meaning in the marketplace and is in alignment with industry and workforce needs.
- “Additional lifetime earnings greater than the cost of attendance” is how the Commission is defining and quantifying “Value” in the Plan; in other words, capturing lifetime earnings based on the credential obtained by the student while acknowledging the costs associated with attaining the credential. The Commission refers to this as the “sticker price:” tuition, fees, and foregone wages for those who are not in the workforce as a result of focusing full-time on their education. Nearly 80% of students at MSU Denver work while attending college, and this is relevant to discussions of foregone wages: some students have a stream of income which supports their ability to attend college and work while enrolled.

Three strategic pillars uphold the Principled Statement of the Plan:

- To identify and improve pathways with a negative ROI.
- ROI refers to the calculation of future wages against the cost of attendance and foregone wages. The Commission is focusing on credentials offered across the state that do not result in greater economic mobility or greater future earnings compared to the investment of time and dollars required to earn the credential and seeks to work with institutions in shifting that dynamic.
- To enable learners to succeed in programs and pathways that offer a positive ROI.
- The Commission's high-level analysis indicates that most programs offered across the state do offer a positive ROI where the investment of time and dollars results in greater economic benefit. The Commission hopes to apply what is being done correctly in those programs to correct the “negative-ROI programs” referred to in the first strategic pillar, and ensure that programs that are new, in development, or are being revised, also have a positive-ROI outcome.
- Underpinning all of these is increased collaboration with the workforce, ensuring that the ROI calculation does not become a reactive strategy but rather is applied hand in hand with industry and employers while remaining cognizant of the needs of the workforce.

Concurrent enrollment and stackable credentials are offered by MSU Denver. Work-based learning through apprenticeships, internships, and other for-credit work experience are a major focus of the state and are also available at this University, where student-interns frequently transform their internships into full-time permanent jobs.

“Industry-informed curriculum” refers to the connection between students’ learning and the needs of the workforce. Along with skill-building, the expectation is that students will learn the value of composition and other communication skills, conflict resolution, and interpersonal components that are valuable in workforce settings.

MSU Denver’s Stuff that Works initiative squares with the Commission’s desire for disaggregated data and predictive analytics, and what the Commission describes as a university’s ability to scale and invest in strategies that are working. Conversely, when an intervention in a program is needed because it is not serving students well, the university is expected to work towards resolution.

The Strategic Plan is a vision document, and the Commission acknowledges that it has tangible and tactical work to do before the Plan is complete. At this stage the University can make suggestions to the Commission.

There is good alignment between the practices that the state wants and what MSU Denver has already implemented. The Classroom to Career initiatives drive workforce collaboration and ensure that the credentials offered by MSU Denver have meaning in the workforce.

Regarding the ROI equation in terms of cost of attendance in time and dollars, MSU Denver has committed strongly to maintaining an affordable and accessible price point.

Accommodating students’ needs or desires to work while learning is facilitated by MSU Denver programmatically and operationally. MSU Denver holds a unique role in the state ecosystem of higher education and is in alignment with the Commission’s goals.

In ROI calculations, there are other components of “value” that are not strictly reflected in capturing an individual’s future economic earnings after attaining their credential, including the benefits around civic and other non-monetary impacts of holding a degree. Individuals who hold a credential are less likely to require public benefits, are more likely to vote, are more likely to volunteer, and to donate. This vibrancy which Dr. Davidson has spoken about in advocating for the value of higher ed to the legislature is not reflected in the language in the Plan. The civic benefits that extend beyond earnings as a result of obtaining a credential must become part of the dialogue with the Commission.

The roles of teachers, social workers, those engaged in public service and health care and who oftentimes have suppressed wages despite being key to functioning communities must also become part of the dialogue with the Commission. There are those who enter those professions knowing and actively choosing to forego wages that they might earn in other professions because they care deeply about the impact they can make in being a classroom teacher or social worker. The cost of a degree as compared to market wages, and the economic impact of these professions, must form another part of the dialogue with the Commission.

It would be detrimental and an unintended outcome of a vision statement that is geared only to high-paying jobs. MSU Denver has a role to play to continue to push to ensure this is being captured in the implementation of the Plan.

Dr. Davidson and Ms. Gerhart will meet with CCHE leadership to discuss MSU Denver’s alignment with and questions about the Strategic Plan. They are the University’s partners and will recognize that the uniqueness of MSU Denver continues to be important.

Ultimately the document will dictate policy which in turn often defines grant opportunities and reflects the state’s priorities going forward. The University can ensure that its perspective is part of the formation of those opportunities.

Chair Noles added that CCHE is focused on this direction largely as the result of the state’s disinvestment in higher education which significantly shifts costs to students. MSU Denver has always been committed to maintaining affordability, but the state’s disinvestment in higher education leaves it no choice but to increase tuition. The higher cost of an education and students’ concerns over taking on significant amounts of student debt

coupled with a strong labor market have created more obstacles for higher education. The qualitative benefits of higher education must be balanced against ROI so that the calculations in the Strategic Plan are not simply reduced to numbers. Chair Noles said that he looks forward to hearing back about the meeting with CCHE and learning how the Strategic Plan might evolve in a more balanced fashion.

Ms. Gerhart added that two years ago House Bill 2113-30 launched the development of a statewide data system. A working group continues to define what the data should include and institutions' ability to disaggregate it.

Trustee Hultquist inquired about the gap between individual-level ROI and state-level ROI. Ms. Gerhart responded that the calculation is largely individually driven due to the state's contracted financial position which applies pressure at the institutional and individual levels. The University has been working hard to ensure that the state remains a responsible partner in the calculation of ROI.

President Davidson stressed that the University must ensure that the people of Colorado, the legislature, the CDHE, and the CCHE are aware of what is at stake in the state's disinvestment of higher education, which is the competitive edge that Colorado loses as compared to that of other states where the state is funding higher education.

Trustee Molina added that for students coming from marginalized backgrounds, a college degree does not equate with social mobility. MSU Denver through its Classroom to Career Hub provides essential support to those students by teaching essential skills such as developing networks and negotiating salaries and benefits. The University can lead a narrative and messaging campaign that, by the state's disinvestment in higher education, the cost is shifted to students. She looks forward to hearing how the Commission plans to invest in careers that have a community ROI, such as teaching and nursing, which the state desperately needs. The state has a responsibility to invest in higher education so that positions that are critical to communities can be filled.

Ms. Gerhart stated that the Commission leaders will provide the Board with more depth and visibility into their plans for operationalization as well as provide an opportunity for the Trustees to continue to give feedback as they have more time to digest and understand the intent and the purpose behind the document.

Ms. Gerhart concluded by stating that the vision document is not an abdication of responsibility: several individuals are working very hard to optimize the resources that come to higher education and many friends in the legislature have supported MSU Denver without regard for the cost to them personally. The macro reality is that the available funding in the state continues to put downward pressure on the roles that those individuals can play and the tools they have to support the vision set by MSU Denver.

III. CHAIR'S WELCOME, CONTINUED

Coach Todd Thurman introduced Maya Ries, who was recently featured on 9News. Ms. Ries finished second in the 60-meter hurdles at this year's RMAC Indoor Track and Field Championships. She holds the record in the 60-meter dash at 8.76 seconds and has broken her own record in the 60-meter dash nine times in the last two years. Maya was the 2022 All-RMAC First Team in the 100-meter hurdles. During her time at East High School she was named to the Denver Public Schools All-Century Team. She was a first finalist in both the 100-meter hurdles and the triple jump at the 2016 Classify the State Championship. She is the fastest hurdler in the history of MSU Denver.

Ms. Ries told the story of how she came to enroll at MSU Denver. She completed the most recent semester with a 4.0 grade point average and expects to graduate in 2025.

Trustee Molina thanked her for sharing so vulnerably and said that students like Ms. Ries are the reason the Board works tirelessly to ensure that MSU Denver continues to be a place for everyone regardless of where they have come from or where they are going.

Trustee Hultquist shares a background in track and offered her support to Ms. Ries as she continues her journey.

V. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION ITEMS, CONTINUED

B. Refreshed Brand Platform – *Whei Wong, AVP University Communications and Marketing*

Ms. Wong provided an update on the University's first Statewide Sentiment Survey.

The Statewide Sentiment Survey indicated where, beyond the seven-county metro area, MSU Denver has a reputation and name recognition. It is being used to determine where to begin introducing MSU Denver in communities outside the seven-county metro area.

An external creative agency has been brought in to help the Marketing and Communications Team set forth goals and develop a brand campaign that reflects the new brand strategy which aligns with those goals.

The student body at MSU Denver is unique; therefore, the University's brand platform should position it as a disrupter in higher education in Colorado and beyond, solidify its position as an excellent academic institution, and own its identity.

In tying everything back to the Statewide Sentiment Survey, the information is used to assess awareness of MSU Denver and understand the factors that students, parents, and school counselors, the people who hold the keys to the information for prospective students, to understand the factors that they used to evaluate colleges and universities, which were they promoting, and why those and not MSU Denver. Perceptions of the MSU Denver brand have changed quite a bit, from being considered a community college to a college that transformed into a university. M&C wanted to understand what that should mean in terms of messaging.

The Statewide Sentiment Survey indicated that there are many communities where MSU Denver needs to reinforce who it is and what it can provide. This is especially true outside the metro region, and brand awareness will continue to be built. Many alumni have a love of the University and know it simply as "Metro." No confusion is created by allowing this to continue while also referring to the University as MSU Denver and Metropolitan State University of Denver. It is absolutely part of who the University is, Ms. Wong said.

The top four decision factors that emerged from the Statewide Sentiment Survey that were consistent across all groups, in the metro area, statewide, across age groups, across all other factors that were looked at, are, in order:

- Affordable tuition.
- "Programs that I want." While there is some redundancy with competitors, MSU Denver has programming that is unique and it is key to make certain that that programming is visible.
- "Campus is safe." Denver is a vibrant city and students want to come here because of that vibrancy but not feel afraid. They may come from a small town. They need to be shown that there is life on the campus after dark.
- The availability of scholarships and financial aid, making sure students know what's available to them, what's possible, and what kind of support there is to ensure they can stay here and complete their degree.

Audiences are specific to prospective students. The target audience is aged 13 to 65 and brand awareness must be cultivated along with programmatic advertising. There may also be niche audience groups. Prospective non-traditionally aged students are being targeted, but also their student advocates: family, friends, the other influencers in their life. Those in the 24-to-40 age range do a lot of research online and will sometimes research higher education for three to five years before they decide; they want to find the right degree for them that will result in the ROI they have in mind.

The M&C Team does geofencing and geotargeting around 14 community colleges and 17 four-year institutions, to convey that MSU Denver is the number-one transfer school in the state.

As they travel around their campus, these advertisements remind students that MSU Denver is here to get them from where they are to where they want to go.

In the Front Range MSU Denver has billboards that are near high schools. These have a compounding effect in conjunction with digital advertising, radio, video, YouTube, Spotify, and Tik Tok, and ads on the back of a bus.

For the first time in the current ad campaign, efforts are being turned toward retention and designing digital messages for students to remain at this University.

Prospective students from Greeley and Colorado Springs are visiting MSU Denver's website and doing research on the University, as well as students who are accessing online learning.

Brand platform is what breathes life into the next brand tagline, Ms. Wong said. Following information-gathering and after bringing the creative agency on board, each of the senior leaders was interviewed to ensure that previous brand platforms, such as "Run Your Own Road" and "Reimagine Possible," were incorporated into the new description of the University. A group from across the campus of marketing representatives have met monthly to share information and best practices and gather feedback.

While new billboards are popping up and radio ads and videos will be coming out next week, this is considered a soft launch. Staff, faculty, and the community will be engaged in the Fall. The new moniker is "Changemakers Wanted." In the Fall there will be more specific copy about programming, and this year the University's graduate programs will be featured. Advertisements aimed at retaining students will be positioned around the perimeter of the campus.

VI. REPORTS & ACTION ITEMS

A. Government Affairs & State Legislative Update – Kaycee Gerhart, Director of Government Affairs

Ms. Gerhart reported that the public institutions came together to request what amounted to nearly double the Governor's budget request for higher education.

One of the proposals that came from the JBC was to look at an approximate 10% increase to overall higher education funding alongside a 4% increase in tuition, which equates to approximately \$126 million in additional funds that would be distributed across all the public institutions. The JBC has not acted on that. Once the numbers are known, a more concrete picture can be painted of what the JBC decides on and will end up in the legislative long bill, compared to what the needs of the institution. At any rate, this significantly compromises the ability of the University to continue to put forth initiatives that the state has historically invested in, particularly ones that serve first-generation students, Pell-eligible students, and underrepresented racial minority students. The final budget figure would be for the period between July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Members of the JBC acknowledge that Colorado is ranked 49th in the country in terms of per-pupil funding from the state, and that greater investment in higher ed is needed. However, the JBC did not see a path to continued viability of the amount requested by the institutions. Essentially, the downward pressure on the state's fiscal situation makes it very difficult and high-risk from the analysts' perspective, to invest at the level that was indicated is needed because the JBC felt it could not be sustained.

Ms. Gerhart said that this will result in increased pressure on the University to look critically at its own resources. There will be questions at the legislative level that each of the institutions will be expected to answer in terms of seismic investments that they may be making to address graduation, retention, and enrollment, alongside the reality of a challenged future fiscal position.

MSU Denver has capital requests in front of the legislature this year, around construction as well as IT infrastructure. The legislature favored capital projects that prioritized controlled maintenance. The two projects that the University had were both new-build projects; as a result they were de-prioritized and are not currently on track to be recommended for funding this year. Those two projects are the C2Hub and the Health Institute Tower. Because of the macro context in which the state has chosen to put its limited dollars toward controlled maintenance and prioritize very few new-build projects across the state, it is unlikely that either of those projects will receive state funds. The requests will be revisited, however, and that process has already begun as the University is considering the revised scope of the C2Hub request as well as an increased and evolved message for the Health Institute Tower.

AHEC had a request for the continuation of its HVAC upgrades, which fell into the maintenance category. These improvements will impact buildings that MSU Denver students and faculty learn and operate within. These are critical updates for the campus and the project is expected to receive funding.

MSU Denver has two projects on the capital IT front: one is around modernizing network infrastructure, essentially allowing internet speeds to move faster, along with improvements to ensure that the online demands of instruction can be met on campus. The second project is one that the Board is very familiar with, which is investing in a system to increase operational efficiency. The network project is on track to receive its third and final year of funds this year, and work continues to attract funds for the continuation of the systems upgrade. The price tag for the continuation of that project is just under \$5 million for this next year. A fourth year of funding is expected to be in the same amount. The committee ran out of funds. Higher ed was not prioritized overall; the state and particularly the Joint Technology Committee felt that there were other priorities in demand, including tech debt of the state, that were more critical. A significant project is being put forth by the Department of Corrections. One-time funds are limited and requests are coming in from other institutions and departments. All of higher education was at the bottom of the list. Because of the large price tag of MSU Denver's systems project, it is at the very bottom of that list. However, because it is a continuation project, a strong and important narrative exists around the risk that would be created by stopping the project midway. The University continues to put pressure on the state to make clear the need for it to continue this work so that it isn't left in a half-completed state.

House Bill 1001 expands the pool of eligible students who may receive payment for their student teaching. Some final amendments are coming through on this bill but it is nearing the final stage of passage through both chambers.

House Bill 111 is a bill that would create a first-generation-serving designation in the state, somewhat akin to the HSI designation that the University holds, specifically focusing on first-gen students at the state level in the absence of a similar national designation. This was seen as a tool to elevate the dialogue around the institutions that serve first-gen students and the inequities in funding that come to universities that enroll the majority of these students in the state. Several other institutions witnessed the dynamics of what MSU Denver was seeking to do and testified in opposition to the bill, seeking to expand the conversation to include many additional institutions. Because of the stresses around the state's limited resources, MSU Denver and Colorado Mesa University, its partner in running the bill, decided to lay the bill over for the remainder of the session.

Another bill regards a change in the selective service requirement. To enroll in a public institution of higher education in Colorado, a person is required to register with the Selective Service, often associated with the draft. Colorado is currently the only state in the U.S. with that requirement. It is an antiquated policy that sometimes creates a barrier for students to enrollment. MSU Denver has been working with the Department to remove the requirement and instead shift to informing students that they may enroll in the Selective Service and providing them with educational materials that indicate that such enrollment is no longer a requirement to enrolling in higher ed. President Davidson served on the committee recommending to the Commission that the enrollment in Selective Service be dropped as a requirement of the FAFSA.

The Governor has introduced a proposal for a universal scholarship which every Colorado high school graduate and GED earner would be eligible for should they decide to pursue certain high-needs fields of study. The scholarship is \$1,500 to be used in the following academic year.

Ms. Gerhart said that the Summer will provide a good opportunity to meet with the many new members of the legislature. She asked the Trustees to play a role with her and invited them to contact her if they would like to arrange lunches, dinners, campus tours in the Fall.

B. University Advancement & Foundation Update – *Christine Márquez-Hudson, VP University Advancement*

Christine Márquez-Hudson stated that total funds raised for the current fiscal year, \$11.3 million, break all records ever set by the University. Last year, \$10.5 million was raised. This year's goal is \$15 million. She thanked the

Trustees who have made commitments. Just 18 months into the five-year Campaign, \$35.76 million, or 48% of the total Campaign goal, has been raised thus far.

Ms. Márquez-Hudson said that the investment the Trustees made in Advancement is paying off: ten additional staff members have been added; the CFR Team now has a Director of Corporate and Foundation Relations, with a pipeline of approximately \$7 million; relationships are being cultivated, and resources are coming to MSU Denver.

\$15.2 million in campaign dollars has gone toward scholarships and Student Success. The financial barrier to a college degree is critical for many MSU Denver students. \$15.2 million will support students in gaining access to college and will also fund wraparound supports that are so important to their success. \$5.4 million has gone into the Talent Pipeline, which is the Health Institute, the Office of Education Solutions, and the Advanced Manufacturing and Sciences Institute. C2Hub has received \$716,000 to date, and several gifts are in the pipeline to benefit it. Inclusive Excellence has received \$264,000.

- MSU Denver Day of Giving is March 30. Ms. Márquez-Hudson asked each Board, staff, and faculty member to make a gift, even if they have already given this year and even if they have already made their campaign commitment. More than 90 student- and faculty-led projects are on the campaign platform. A donor may choose a campaign to give to or give to the Philanthropy Fund which is used to match and stimulate giving across the Day of Giving. This year's Day of Giving theme is a video game called "Road Runner."
- Alumni Weekend is April 14-15.
- Commencement is on May 12, and the May 11 VIP event will be held at Barb Grogan's house for Mayor Hancock and Marathon Award winner Dawn Burkhardt, who is also current chair of the Foundation. Invitations will be sent out to Trustees.
- The Athletics Silent Auction is June 2.

The Classroom to Career Hub is a critical initiative for the University. The C2Hub is a physical and programmatic space, as well as being a program to help solve the talent pipeline crisis in Colorado. Many students lack the personal or professional network to get their first job, despite having earned their degree. MSU Denver facilitates the network connections between students and their first job through internships and apprenticeships. 91.4% of all the top jobs in Colorado require some form of post-secondary education and yet only 65% of Coloradans have a degree. There is a desire for diverse employees. The C2Hub strives to connect MSU Denver students to these opportunities. The facility is also being opened to serve Community College of Denver students.

The C2Hub is a combination of student services and industry and employer resources. Student services includes career exploration, planning, job search resources, experiential learning from the enrollment in college until students graduate. It includes mentoring and student cohort programs, all of which are integrated into students' collegiate experience. The information they receive helps design students' career paths.

In industry and employer resources, MSU Denver offers concierge services to employers in an industry partnership program to facilitate their connection with the University: meet interns, recruit for talent, gain access to the classrooms as guest speakers, and engage their employees as mentors.

Mr. Mejia spoke about affordable housing. He explained that the University will not have bonding capacity until 2027 when some of its obligations begin to sunset. MSU Denver is reliant on the state for funding, such as the Sim Labs. It is also reliant on collaboration, P3 partnerships, and the philanthropy being cultivated by Advancement.

The University has begun to investigate affordable housing on the faculty/staff side and the student side. The two are separated into different projects because of logistical opportunities. Housing offered at below-market rates will have high demand.

Ms. Márquez-Hudson added that construction is very expensive and the operation of affordable housing structures is a massive undertaking. The University was approached by AHEC last Fall regarding an opportunity to partner with it and Gary Community Ventures to construct a new building that would be adjacent to the Tivoli Garage. The developer, Columbia Ventures, specializes in affordable housing projects and other types of structures, such as the Burwell Institute on the DU campus. The concept for the office building is a four-story building that would house the offices of Gary Community Ventures, AHEC's administrative offices, the Classroom to Career Hub, retail space, as well as the Auraria Early Learning Center.

Mr. Mejia said that the affordable housing for staff and faculty is envisioned as 350 to 400 units in a 13-story building. MSU Denver would not occupy the entire residential facility. Gary Community Ventures as philanthropist, and Columbia Ventures as the development company, must recoup their initial investments and as a result some market rate housing would be mixed into with the University's below-market faculty and staff housing. The first floor is envisioned to have mixed-use and retail space, taking advantage of the relationship with Ball Arena and the traffic going back and forth between the campus and Ball Arena. The office building would have more of a Quad-facing orientation, with much of the first floor being early childhood education with permanent childcare spots, and hopefully drop-in childcare as well.

Gary Community Ventures would occupy the upper floor, AHEC the third floor, C2Hub the second floor, retail and Early Learning on the first floor. The square footage is approximately 25,000 square feet, which is less than was planned for in the Tivoli.

Gary Community Ventures' event space will be made available to the University. With its easy access and increased visibility, students will visit the C2Hub frequently. The location is adjacent to the Tivoli Garage and across from the Tivoli Student Union, as well as being on the way to campus from the light rail station.

Gary Community Ventures (GCV) is a foundation begun by Sam Gary. According to his wishes, the foundation will sunset in 2035. GCV will vacate their space and the hope is that MSU Denver will be first in line to occupy the space in the future. The foundation's three areas of grant funding are affordable housing, early learning, and workforce development, aligning well with MSU Denver's mission and adding synergy. The co-location presents opportunities to partner with GCV on initiatives that will be beneficial to the University: The Early Learning Center is currently located on the north end of campus, and there is huge demand by faculty, staff, and students for more spots. The current building has limited space and cannot meet that need. The new space is designed with children in mind and will be in proximity to the affordable housing.

The University partners frequently with AHEC and their new proximity would be beneficial to both.

The architect and engineering firm are being selected. Construction is expected to begin one year from now. The remainder of this year will be for planning and design phases. Move-in is expected to be in the Summer of 2025.

The construction cost of one floor is \$15.5 million plus furniture, fixtures, and equipment estimated at approximately 20%, or roughly \$18.6 million. The building will be condominium-ized so that the University would own its space but not the ground beneath it. The financial plan is being worked out but the hope is to request approval by the Board at its next meeting. The University would need to earmark 30% of the total construction costs, or \$5 million, by November of this year to embark on the project. \$500,000 has been raised from UMB, and \$1.5 million has been verbally committed by a family foundation which should be closed on in the next few weeks. A \$1 million gift to the project from GCV is being discussed but has not been finalized. The University would need to raise the remaining \$2 million by November, and a mini-campaign plan has been established to raise those dollars philanthropically. \$13.6 million would be needed by June of 2025, from state funding, philanthropy, institutional funds, or financing.

President Davidson added that Community College of Denver is partnering with MSU Denver on this project and may be able to bring funds to the table. That the two institutions are partnering will amplify the message to legislators and the business community.

Mr. Mejia stated that the University is in the process of negotiating an MOU with AHEC to ensure that it has a voice at the table on all programmatic aspects and the type of retail going in. AHEC is in the middle of its master planning process.

Trustee Hultquist asked about the University's messaging for the \$5 million it hopes to get from the state or donors pointing out that it is all about economic viability and ROI, and that the evidence-based approach that the University has on this campus in the Stuff That Works is the way that the state can contribute to the University in aligning its work with what the state needs. Dr. Simpkins said that MSU Denver is now known to be the institution in Colorado that is working and collaborating on workforce development and filling the talent pipeline. The University's reputation is no longer being driven by it; rather, it is being driven by the people who work with it. Dr. Davidson's message, "Davidson's Desk," covered the talent pipeline report. Space for the C2Hub is critical, Dr. Simpkins said, as it is currently spread across three different buildings on campus, none of which are adjacent to where students spend time. A central convening spot will be extremely useful. He said that his impression has been that the message resonates with legislators and donors.

President Davidson noted that she recorded a podcast with the Colorado Business Roundtable regarding the ways in which the University is leaning into the workforce issue and offering suggestions on how the business community can help. The Colorado Business Roundtable is a good partner for the University on this, and it sees MSU Denver as offering solutions.

Ms. Márquez-Hudson added that momentum is already building on the philanthropic front. This week alone, a \$75,000 planning grant from Kaiser was received, which could lead to a multi-million-dollar grant for healthcare. A COPIC grant for \$141,000 for healthcare for the Health Institute was received, along with a \$250,000 grant from Western Union. Their first grant was \$25,000, and now it is \$250,000 for immigrant students. Companies are investing and the message is beginning to resonate. Most importantly, Ms. Márquez-Hudson said, MSU Denver must be able to deliver on its promise when it receives these resources.

Mr. Mejia said that the first project, faculty and staff housing, is part of the two-building development, opening by Fall of 2026. Lease-out will begin during that time. The mechanisms for the number of units and how they are drawn down has yet to be developed.

He said that to be first in line for funding, the University must be ready to take advantage of Prop 123's financial mechanism by demonstrating that its project is shovel ready. A coordination effort with the City of Denver requires that baseline data be put in regarding affordable housing and projected affordable housing by November. This is a process whereby the City must be a partner with local entities in construction.

Ms. Márquez-Hudson explained that Mr. Mejia will continue working to develop the MOU with AHEC to refine the financial path; revise the proposal to the state which would be submitted in May; and then bring a full plan to the Board of Trustees for review and approval in June. She thanked Trustee Glick for being such a helpful partner on the entire project.

Chair Noles asked, considering the University's constrained debt capacity, that the Board be kept informed of any implications of long-term funding commitments.

Trustee Molina pointed out that the C2Hub provides the opportunity for faculty to see how what they're doing in the classroom can lead to students being successful, and understanding how they can refer students to the C2Hub. As those pieces on faculty workload are evaluated through the Task Force there is an opportunity to ensure that synergy is enhanced among all those pieces moving forward. Chair Noles agreed, repeating Trustee Molina's earlier point that economic mobility is more than simply obtaining a degree. This aligns with the CCHE Strategic Plan. The C2Hub plays a critical role in postgraduate student success. The capabilities being provided, which go beyond the traditional college or university job placement office, distinguish the C2Hub.

On behalf of the faculty, Trustee Jeffers asked for reassurance that this type of an investment does not preclude the investment in compensation or changing long-term goals for faculty workload. Ms. Márquez-Hudson responded that affordable housing would attract talent to the campus and will not mean that the University is not going to continue to strive to pay people better and more competitively.

Mr. Mejia noted that the plan does not include construction of additional parking. AHEC has determined that capacity will be created by the new tenants who will vacate parking spaces during the day, when students would be on campus. This may be the last occupied infrastructure project that is not built with parking. Given the value of property on the campus, the idea of parking up or parking down, as opposed to surface lots, is being given consideration.

President Davidson expressed skepticism over the parking issue and said that it is a macro debate among campus and urban planners the world over who envision a carless future. Another consideration is the current state of the RTD system as well. This development is being built by an outside developer that the University is partnering with. The MOUs must be crafted in such a way that the University's needs, wants, and dreams are clearly expressed, because the property and land belongs to MSU Denver and AHEC as partners.

President Davidson thanked the faculty who dialed into the meeting. She reiterated her vision of a campus where leaders are leading at every level, and said that if leaders are going to lead at every level, they must be very cognizant of what's going on at the University with respect to its budget. She thanked faculty for paying attention to the matter, and pointed out that there is a difference between capital money and base money. Capital construction is a one-time investment that has carry-on costs. Faculty salaries come from the base budget, which is an every-year, all-the-time base cost.

Trustee Glick stated his feeling that this will be a great project for the campus. The partnership is unique. He echoed what was said about parking, that there is a movement afoot within the City of Denver to decrease the number of parking spots provided with new buildings. Whether that will be effective or not has a lot to do with public transportation, bike lanes, and other things that the City is working on.

C. Finance Committee Report – Mike Kopp, Committee Chair

Chair Noles reported that three topics were discussed at yesterday's Finance Committee meeting: audit findings, the budget process, and the fiscal state of the University.

Two significant deficiencies were discussed under audit findings. The first concerned awarding financial aid to a family member, and the other involved HEERF reporting requirements. There was an additional observation in the auditors' management letter regarding shutting down system access when employees have terminated employment in a timely fashion. The management team agreed with all issues and have put controls and strategies in place to address those issues going forward. There will be follow-up in early 2024 to ensure the controls are effective.

Mr. Carpenter explained the budget process redesign and processes that drive data, drive transparency, and focus on students. The redesign is intended to unlock the opaqueness of the budget process. While that has been an issue with this institution, it is an issue nearly everywhere.

There have up to now been two phases of the budgeting process. The first phase would be done during the time of this meeting, or roughly in June, and the second phase would be done in September. Going forward it will all happen in one phase. This will be an improvement to the process and will also require more focus on estimates and the ability to do forecasting.

There was additional discussion regarding customizing dashboards to the needs of the University to ensure that changes to the Strategic Plan are captured in the budgeting process.

Regarding the fiscal state of the University, budget development is positive, but fragile. The University has not heretofore had a fund balance policy. The Finance team will be developing a fund balance policy to maintain a

prudent level of financial reserves. In reviewing the macroeconomic backdrop in terms of projected economic growth in the state, the limited state funding for higher education, and the fact that the University has invested some of its fund balances in Stuff that Works, its current fund balances may not provide sufficient resiliency to the University if the economy does become more challenging.

D. Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) Committee Report – *Marissa Molina, Committee Chair*

Trustee Molina reported that ASA Committee heard an update from Trustee Jeffers and Dr. Mora about the faculty workload issue, and a more nuanced understanding of what is at the core of the problem and the issues impacting faculty most when it comes to burnout and workload. Additionally, feedback was given stressing the importance of considering solutions that ensure that the needs of faculty are being met while maintaining a strong commitment to student success.

1. Approval of New Program: Associate of General Studies Degree

Trustee Glick moved for approval of the New Program: Associate of General Studies Degree, with a second by Trustee Garnett. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. Approval of Emeritus status award to Dr. Renee Ruderman

Trustee Glick moved for approval of the Emeritus Status Award to Dr. Renee Ruderman, with a second by Trustee Garnett. The motion was unanimously approved.

E. Auraria Higher Education Center (AHEC) Board Report – *Albus Brooks, Trustee*

Mr. Mejia reported that AHEC has two open positions: police chief and Chief Operating Officer. Budget issues have forced AHEC to increase fees. Event rates have increased for external organizations and the University is in conversation with AHEC regarding rates for events on campus in AHEC facilities. As permitted by state regulation AHEC has increased student fees by 8.1%, or approximately \$7 per student per semester, to mirror inflation. As soon as the effective date of the increase is confirmed, the University will communicate the increase.

Barnes and Noble has exercised the exit clause in its contract for the bookstore and there is conversation about a succeeding vendor. Merchandising will be covered in a separate conversation.

CU Denver is pursuing renovation funds for some of the houses along the historic Ninth Street Corridor. MSU Denver is supportive of those efforts and supports learning about, and highlighting, the experience of displaced Aurarians. The financial aid that MSU Denver has made available to displaced Aurarians is working well and feedback from students in the program has been positive.

The Auraria Campus Master Plan is targeted for completion date in June of 2024 at a total cost of \$700,000. Because of the funding formula, MSU Denver is responsible for approximately half of that amount. Again, the University is looking for more structure about who can build, and where, and what the process will be for infrastructure.

F. Alumni Representative Report – *Jim Qualteri, Alumni Trustee*

Trustee Qualteri reported that the Alumni Association added three new board members in the month of February, bringing the total to 18.

Trustee Qualteri invited everyone the Alumni Weekend on April 14 and 15. There will be happy hours, networking socials, and campus tours. The Alumni Association recently voted to allocate \$5,000 to two scholarships for \$2,500 each for prospective students and will award those during the softball baseball games.

Alumni Association board is presenting a seven-foot bronze statue of a roadrunner as a gift to the campus. The Alumni Association is paying half the cost and will raise \$38,000 for the statue. The statue is expected to be complete in September of 2023.

There are 7,600 engaged alumni for the fiscal year, and the target to reach by June 30 is 10,000. As a basis of comparison, the national average is 10,000. That would be the largest number of engaged alumni in a year.

G. Faculty Trustee Report – *Meredith Jeffers, Faculty Trustee*

Faculty Trustee Jeffers ceded her time to Trustee Trujillo and Dr. Goodnick for their reports.

H. Student Trustee & Student Governance Report – *Gabriel Trujillo, Student Trustee*

Student Trustee Gabe Trujillo reported that candidate packets for the new term for Student Government are open and active, and are due Monday, March 27.

Upcoming election events will promote more student engagement within Student Government, and Trustee Trujillo encouraged all to join in this opportunity to connect with students.

A fair housing event will occur on April 25 to highlight the rights people have when it comes to housing and especially for those who have intersecting identities that could create another barrier for them.

Trustee Trujillo read the resolution that Student Government created in support of faculty.

(The Student Government Resolution was read into the record.)

Trustee Trujillo said that the resolution indicates that students are aware of the issues of faculty and staff. The resolution shows that students stand with faculty and staff, and that students ask the Board to collaborate and find a solution to these issues. They are excited to see the implementation of the task force, the inclusion of students on the task force, and that it is cross-functional across the entire University.

I. Faculty Senate Report – *Liz Goodnick, Faculty Senate President*

Faculty Senate President Liz Goodnick reported that since the last Board meeting, Faculty Senate has been following the developments surrounding the workload implementation pause and the subsequent organization of the cross-functional task force. She expressed appreciation to the Board and senior leadership for approaching the issue with careful and thorough attention, and for the many faculty who are involved in the task force, on its working teams, and the degree to which faculty are involved in the conversation. She expressed optimism for the development of creative solutions to solve the faculty workload problem and thanked the Trustees for the productive conversation had at yesterday's meeting.

Faculty Senate passed a resolution on Wednesday, March 15, with 87% of the faculty voting Yes; 13 abstaining or voting No. The resolution details the primary areas of concern that faculty hopes are addressed in the task force's forthcoming solutions, including student support, quality teaching, and contributing to faculty's goal of being an anti-racist institution. The resolution also includes faculty's recommendations for transparency and robust faculty involvement in the development of procedures and practices undertaken by the task force, senior leaders, and the Board of Trustees as decisions are made that will greatly impact the future direction of MSU Denver.

She thanked Vice President Jessica Weiss for leading the committee that wrote the resolution that was a response to the pause.

(The Faculty Senate Resolution was read into the record.)

Chair Noles noted that the resolution was downloaded to the Board portal so that it is available to the Trustees. He said that the context could be used to develop guiding principles and stated that he presumes that this will be a part of the information that the task force considers in its next meeting. He stated that there is some very specific, thoughtful language and principles in the resolution that the task force would be well advised to embrace.

J. Staff Senate Report – *Rebecca Reid, Staff Senate President*

Brandi Rideout, Staff Senate Vice President, appeared for Rebecca Reid. She thanked the Alumni Board for their creativity and willingness to impact the campus with their gift of a statue.

Staff Senate is in election season. It is focused on restructuring to better align with the new college structure and is accepting nominations for new senators right now. Over 100 nominations have been received so far, and it is

exciting to see so many staff wanting to participate in the shared governance experience. New senators will be elected in May and will start their terms in July.

The group's recent work has focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion work, working with Dr. Julie Claxton from the Social Work Department who has put together a series of trainings for Staff Senate to provide an opportunity to reflect, process, learn, discuss different structures that might be oppressing, marginalizing, alienating, or creating and enhancing systems of privilege and power. An excellent in-depth workshop held yesterday provided nearly four hours of content, leaving staff better prepared to interact and support the University's diverse students and staff faculty on campus.

K. President's Report – Janine Davidson, President

President Davidson began her report with a video of the MSU Denver Presidential Internship Program which inspires and prepares students for careers in public service, provides enriching experiential learning, invaluable skills for multiple career pathways, and critical firsthand experience to support the governmental process and the important work of community organizations.

Sean Lebar was recently hired as Director of the University's Public Service Institute. President Davidson thanked Dean John Mazzarini and Dr. Will Simpkins for their leadership in recrafting the Public Service Institute and helping to keep this internship alive.

President Davidson recalled that three years ago the COVID pandemic created an upheaval in all the traditional ways of providing education at the University. She thanked everyone for how expertly they pivoted in that moment of crisis, noting how the University has undergone transformation as evidenced by the differences in classrooms compared to pre-COVID. Some courses were offered online, some were hybrid, and the University has gone from crisis to transformation. She expressed appreciation for the task force looking into the stresses these changes have put on faculty and staff as the result of these changes.

As part of its post-COVID budgeting process, the University determined to recover, stabilize, and launch. It is recovering; it is moving into a new era of being able to utilize its administrative backbone in a much more high-tech way with the transition to Workday. The task force will reassess the roles of faculty and staff, recommit the institution to its student-centric vision, and launch it into a university that is a model for serving students in the 21st century.

The way forward, President Davidson said, will be focused on retention. There is information in the meeting packet about enrollment and recruiting. The numbers are phenomenal in terms of applications and acceptances, and now those must be converted into registrations. At the same time, students are still lost from the other side, in retention. Retention will then become the focus and data will inform the way in which dashboards are built out and the tools which will enable the University to track its performance in these areas.

At the Spring Update discussion centered around people: what the University's people strategy and professional development is, and how budget is also so much about people. The reason for focusing in on those kinds of things at the Spring Update is because of the University's emphasis on leadership and professional development and leaders who lead across the organization. President Davidson said that when leaders are leading, it is imperative that they understand how the budget works, how the processes work. She thanked Jim Carpenter and his team for bringing the budget process into a more modern, sophisticated fashion. MSU Denver is the third largest university in the state and the most important university in the state. It deserves to have processes and systems that allow it to do its work in a sophisticated way, President Davidson said.

Several retirees were honored at the Spring Update who President Davidson said represent outstanding dedication to this University:

Carlos Fresquez, Professor of Art

Dr. Karen Lawler, Professor of Speech Communication

Rob Ingle, senior program manager for Learning and Development

Lynne Hoffman, Professor of Management

Anne Sanders Madison, executive assistant to the Provost

President Davidson thanked Kaycee Gerhart for attracting the state's investment in the Nursing Simulation Labs last year. (A video was shown of the Sim Labs.) President Davidson said that renovation in the West Classroom will require faculty and staff to move out and then move back in, but the renovation of such a large portion of the University will be well worth it. The move back in will be delayed somewhat because AHEC will be undertaking asbestos mitigation as part of the renovations. She thanked the people involved in leading the project.

One-third of MSU Denver students are majoring in one of the ten departments associated with the University's Health Institute. The Simulation Labs expected to open in 2024 will allow the University to enhance or expand its enrollment up to 34%. Last year there were 900,000 unique healthcare job postings in Colorado that could not be filled, evidencing the huge need in the state. This is an area in which MSU Denver is leading and is fulfilling its community duty by completing the Health Institute Tower and related projects.

Upcoming Events:

- Day of Giving is March 30, and the President's Internship Program is listed on there.
- Roadrunners Who Soar will be held on April 6.
- As part of the City Summit of the Americas, MSU Denver is hosting four different events on campus in partnership with the Carter Center.
- A panel on April 26 will address gender-based violence in cities. An agenda will be circulated. Speakers include the mayor from Buenos Aires, the mayor from Sao Paolo, Sara Rose Sarin-Crist from the Oakland Department of Violence Prevention, Catherine Miller from Victim Services Coordination, Phoenix Center, Nelly Diosodoto, an MSU Denver student and a minor in Gender and Women's Studies.
- There will be a State Department reception in the Tivoli on April 27 from 4:30 to 6:30. Lee Satterfield, Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, has confirmed that he will attend; Carol Spann, Director of the Peace Corps; and a local Fulbright and Peace Corps alum to be determined. The topic to be discussed will be "U.S. Government International Exchange Programs."
- A State Department Recruitment Panel in collaboration with MSU Denver's Institute for Public Service and the Classroom to Career Hub, will host a lunch and learn.
- Gen. Laura Richardson, MSU Denver alumni and Commander of the Southern Command, will join President Davidson for a fireside chat on leadership and careers in international affairs.
- Commencement is May 12, with Mayor Michael Hancock and Dawn Bookhardt speaking.

President Davidson welcomed Marie Mora, interim Provost; Jim Carpenter, full-time, permanent CFO; and Taylor Tackett, Dean of Students and Associate Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-Being.

The Community Cabinet is being reconstituted and recommitted to with Yolanda Ortega as chair. There will be a kickoff in a few weeks with a special luncheon.

President Davidson thanked those present for their leadership and support of MSU Denver.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Human Resources report of personnel actions for the Board's information, which have occurred since the last Board Meeting on Friday, January 27, 2023

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was none.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.