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

**Friday, August 26, 2022**

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)

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**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 9:00 a.m. by Chairman Russell Noles. Trustee Albus Brooks, Trustee Mario Carrera, Trustee Emily Renwick Garnett, Trustee Barb Grogan, Trustee Mike Kopp, Trustee Kristin Hultquist, Trustee Mike Johnston, Trustee Marissa Molina, 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 George Middlemist, Assistant Secretary Melinda Olivarez, various faculty, administrators, and staff.

A short video was shown featuring Leon Duran, a student in the MBA Program who is being deployed to Africa. Christine Márquez-Hudson, Vice President University Advancement & MSU Denver Foundation, stated that over the five years of the campaign, four students will be followed as they experience their “zig-zaggy lives.” This is the first such video, featuring one student. As others come out, they will be shared with the Trustees, posted on the website, pushed out via social media, and shared in various ways with donors.

**III. CHAIR'S WELCOME & REPORT**

Chair Noles opened the meeting. Executive Session went a little longer than planned and he apologized for the delay in getting this portion of the meeting started. He noted that the presentation in Academic and Student Affairs Committee yesterday was particularly rewarding. Trustee Molina facilitated a speed networking session between a group of students and several Trustees who, through this experience, learned firsthand things of key importance to the students. Chairman Noles said that the Trustees better understand students' experiences and will be able to focus on the right things. He thanked Trustee Molina for arranging the session.

**IV. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Approval of June 3, 2022, Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes. Trustee Kopp noted that his name was missing from the June 3 minutes. Chairman Noles requested that going forward, references to outgoing Trustees include both first and last names.

Trustee Carrera moved for approval of the minutes of the June 3, 2022 minutes, with the modifications noted above, with a second by Trustee Garnett. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Office of Human Resources report of personnel actions for the Board's approval, which have occurred since the last Board Meeting on Friday, June 3, 2022

C. Approval of Faculty Emeritus Recommendation (carry-in)

D. Approval of Recommendation for Tenure Upon Appointment (carry-in)

Trustee Brooks moved for approval of Items B., C., and D. of the Consent Agenda, with a second by Trustee Garnett. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **V. STRATEGIC DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **A. Strategic Pillar III (Civic Engagement: Public Service Institute & Programming) – John Masserini, Dean, College of Letters, Arts & Sciences and Janine Davidson, President**

President Davidson announced that John Masserini, dean of the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences, has stepped into the leadership role for the handoff between the Hart Institute and the Public Service Institute being formed within the University. Dean Masserini will describe the role of public service in democracy and the role of this university in promoting it through the activities of the Public Service Institute and the educational opportunities being provided to our students.

Dean Masserini explained that MSU Denver is absorbing the activities, resources, and professional network efforts that were incubated in the Hart Center for Public Service to form a new MSU Denver Public Service Institute. The Institute will focus on inspiring, preparing, and enabling Roadrunners to serve with an emphasis on careers in government and in the nonprofit sector.

The purpose of the Institute will be to expose students to the world of public service. Students will be introduced to national, state, and local figures who have made public service their life's work. MSU Denver will provide students access to internship opportunities, scholarships, academic credentials, sponsored speakers and events, opening the door for them to pursue their own public service passions and goals. Public service work not only provides students the opportunity for a life of substance but also the chance to increase their social and economic mobility. Public service provides great jobs and great benefits with high impact.

MSU Denver's higher-level mission as an anchor institution serving and impacting communities as well as ensuring the health and protection of American democracy involves getting more MSU Denver students, who are high percentages of low-income, minoritized, and first-generation, into the halls of government at all levels: local, state, and federal, where policy is shaped and created. Historically minoritized and silenced voices must be in spaces where policy is shaped and decisions are made.

Public service fills a timely, essential need for current society in furthering democracy, social justice, systemic change and public policy. MSU Denver has smart and diverse students who have historically been excluded from the public sphere in society's decision-making spaces. The Institute for Public Service has an overarching structure that provides students an academic foundation for personal, meaningful engagement in public service, democracy, and citizenry. The University will continue to develop academic programming in courses focused on public service concepts, theories, and pathways. Faculty and high-profile public servants will demonstrate the crucial connection between public service organizations' systems and the need for a new generation of college students to embark on careers in public service. Students will engage directly with high-profile leaders and decision-makers in sectors that fulfill public service needs through events, guest fellowships, colloquia, and the classroom. Areas to be covered will include government, nonprofits, community-based organizations, environmental sectors, education, and public infrastructure.

In addition to the overarching role of the Institute for all MSU Denver students, specific cohort-based programming will be launched that includes curriculum, experiential learning through a paid internship, and the opportunity to earn a micro-credential or certificate. Students will not be required to be part of a cohort to participate in the events; however, specific, focused cohort models benefit students in providing them a group to travel with as they complete this journey, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will persist and earn a credential.

This model will demonstrate pathways from any discipline or major into meaningful opportunities in the public service sphere. Pathways to these opportunities starts with a focus on funding: the typical unpaid internship at all levels, local, state and national; then students will be prepared for that experience with guidance and support throughout. A credential is earned, an internship is secured, and connections are made to open doors to career opportunities upon leaving MSU Denver.

The Institute will be housed in the College of Letters, Arts and Sciences with a director to be hired, reporting directly to Dean Masserini. The Director will have various levels of support all the way from full-time Public

Service industry navigator to a faculty role as an Associate Director to Faculty Fellows and administrative support. Searches for a new Director and Associate Director will be under way this Fall. Curriculum that can be used for credentials is being researched. In Spring a search for a Public Service Industry Navigator will be undertaken.

The inaugural cohort program is the Public Service Leadership Academy, Government Affairs. This was intentionally chosen to build off the momentum of President Davidson's D.C. internship cohort. In Fall 2023 speakers will be recruited and events planned. In 2023-24 the Institute will be filled out to add additional cohort programming, events, and speakers.

Current MSU Denver students in good academic standing, pursuing any degree program, and who have earned a minimum of 60 to 70 academic units at the start of the program, may apply. This is to target students who are near the end of their degree experience and embedded in what they want to do, where they want to make a difference, and who have an interest in exploring careers and opportunities in the public space.

Once accepted, tuition and fees for the internship credits will be funded as well as a paid multi-week internship including travel if applicable, and a stipend for housing and food. Students will have free access to all Institute-related events and opportunities. The experiential learning opportunities are going to be access to public service and governmental events and conferences that are hosted on the MSU campus and in the community, professional networking opportunities, public speaking training and opportunities, exposure to the national, local, and regional public servants on the MSU Denver campus, priority enrollment courses taught as part of the certificate, an electronic badge, and access to diverse career opportunities and government public service.

The cohort will be required to complete a 3000-level course on civics, virtue, and public service, which is a course that already exists that will be tweaked specifically for this program. They will be required to complete a capstone course on public service and leadership and will enroll and complete an internship at the local, state, or national level. Their attendance at Institute-sponsored events and symposia will be required. As part of the requirements to earn a badge, students will also be uploading a program artifact demonstrating completion of a special project focused on research or some sort of event that they attended.

The credential will be a nine-credit electronic badge. There will be the opportunity later to add another certificate through completing six credits from a long list of public service-focused courses. Both are on the undergraduate level.

Based on the success of the programming, opportunities, and interest, future cohorts could offer public service leadership academies in sector partnerships such as nonprofit, environmental, infrastructure, and education, to name a few.

The number of students hoped for in the initial cohort is between 10 and 15, but Dean Masserini stated that more students would be welcome.

The program will be publicly launched, widely covered on campus, through media, marketing, and especially through CLAS. Department chairs will be asked to identify students who are very engaged in public service. The first tactic, Dean Masserini said, is pointed recruitment and a broad blanket, going big and then letting some fall off through attrition, leaving a solid core to start. Trustee Grogan suggested contacting a student named James, who wants to become President of the United States. President Davidson said James was a president intern.

MSU Denver has a partnership with PBS-12. Dean Masserini is collaborating with an external partner to create the "Solution Studio." Its goal is to invite gubernatorial candidates and U.S. Senate candidates to campus to meet with students. Prior to them coming to campus they will be presented with four problems currently being faced by students and the candidates must come up with solutions before they come to campus. It will be clear that this is not a debate; it is actually talking about solutions to four problems that students face right now. Trustee Carrera and Tom Cosgrove are partner on this, and MSU Denver is spearheading the event. A group of 25 students were recently selected to be part of two focus groups being conducted next week to get to the heart of what students are dealing with today. Once the focus groups are done, a report will be generated from which questions and

topics will be identified that will be available to media, and the University will report out on the findings. Partnerships with PBS-12, Univision, CPR, and *The Colorado Sun* have been secured to broadcast the findings. Ms. Gerhart is working to secure the candidates and three of the four of them have indicated that they are very interested. They are attracted by the fact that it is not a debate and they will not be sitting across from their opponents; it will simply provide the opportunity to talk to students about the issues they have and what some possible solutions might be.

Trustee Carrera said that CLARO, the organization he represents, coincidentally approached MSU Denver precisely with the idea of creating political forums in this election. MSU Denver was already considering the idea and later joined CLARO as a partner.

President Davidson added that PBS-12 is very open to partnering with the University on all sorts of matters associated with public service.

Chair Noles asked if President Davidson's D.C. interns could kick things off by coming to talk to the Board. President Davidson has already contacted them. Her uncle has volunteered his services to do a minidocumentary as he is a huge advocate of public service and already completed a documentary on it.

Dean Masserini added that the reason the cohort model is being layered is that the cohorts will begin in January, the internships will be in the Summer, and final projects in December. When they return from their internships, they can begin speaking to the new recruits in the next cohort. This timing will utilize the experience to then attract more students and keep the program rolling.

Student Trustee Gabriel Trujillo asked if the program is open to all students, including undocumented students. Dean Masserini responded that it is and it already has been open to them regardless of major. There is an interdisciplinary nature to public service and it does not require that a student major in Political Science. People from all walks of life, from the liberal arts, musicians, artists and historians, to environmentalists and others in the sciences, work in public service and make policy.

## **VI. REPORTS & ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Government Affairs & State Legislative Update – Kaycee Gerhart, Director of Government Affairs and Christine Staberg, Lobbyist**

Ms. Gerhart reminded Trustees of the ongoing priorities of the University and highlighted three takeaways from the successes realized from the Spring legislative season. With those takeaways in mind, the ongoing work is to make sure that the things the University is doing well and that are working are being amplified, and that it is turning down the things that don't. This is the season of planning, prepping, and advancing the University's budget and capital requests. Now the internal work is being done to gain clarity on what exactly are going to be articulated as the University's needs, and the communication and narrative points behind those needs when it comes to its budget request. This is the procedural season around two capital requests: the Health Institute and the C2 Hub. Those requests were submitted in May. The initial scoring was received, and then feedback from the legislature will start to come in beginning in the Fall. Legislators will be coming to campus and they will be given a formal presentation.

Ms. Gerhart is participating in exciting brainstorming conversations with Academic and Student Affairs, students, community members, faculty and staff, around policy ideas, to identify the things that are standing in the way, where the University would benefit from more resources, and policies that might enable the University to improve, add onto, or enhance to better serve its students, its work and its communities. The end result is to determine what is viable, what has a clear path forward, and what has the sponsorship necessary to make a splash in the Spring.

Relationships with decision makers are constantly being nurtured, to build and strengthen them and to ensure that they are familiar with the good work happening at the University.

Thematically, this is the season of internal planning; then there will be a pivot towards education. After that comes the season of formal presentations. In the Spring, policy development and advocacy comes to the fore. At this time, on the cusp of the education season, formal and intentional, but also sometimes informal work, takes place to ensure that leaders in the public policy and political spaces know MSU Denver, know the meaning of “a Roadrunner student,” and understand the impact that MSU Denver has on the state in the local community as well as its vision for its impact in the times ahead. This is the place where Trustees’ voices have such a potential for impact, and Ms. Gerhart asked that Trustees consider offering their assistance two opportunities ahead.

First, the Department of Higher Education is in the process of revising its Strategic Plan. It had set some benchmark goals for 2025; it is approximately five years into a ten-year time horizon toward those goals and it is time to revisit it. The Commission on Higher Education, the appointed body that directs the state's priorities in higher education, is in deep work currently, elevating what the priorities should be potentially, the revised goals for the last five years of this ten-year timeline horizon. They are about to begin their feedback process. The Colorado Trustee Network is formally plugged into this process. For Trustees who are engaged in that network already, Ms. Gerhart asked them to keep an eye out for an invitation being sent to them to hear a presentation directly from the Commission regarding their mindset for this revised Strategic Plan. There will be a formal forum for feedback.

All meetings of the Commission are public. At this time MSU Denver is trying to understand where the plan is going and whether it aligns with MSU Denver’s mission and direction. Also, is the vision that the state has rightfully informed by the realities of MSU Denver and its students and where education is headed going forward. It is important that our perspectives are not lost. So, plugging in through the Trustees Network and through the internal opportunities that several of the University’s leaders have through the CEOs meetings that President Davidson is involved in or other committees that Provost Tatum’s team and Dr. Simpkins’ team have avenues into, as well as these formal meetings with the Commission where there is space for public comment and public forum, are all places where MSU Denver should have a presence. As soon as those invitations go out, both in the Commission and the Trustees Network, if Trustees have interest in showing up in the space, Ms. Gerhart asked them to contact her so that she can work with them to share what she is seeing and where the University is hoping the strategic plan lands so that they can be great advocates for the work in informing this strategic plan going forward.

There is an election this November and there will be many new members in the legislature that may not have deep knowledge of MSU Denver and where the University is working to effect change. Much of the work will be to take time to inform leaders about MSU Denver’s student population, about its goals, its own Strategic Plan, and the path being charted going forward. Many Trustees may be engaged in the community through events and other activities that tend to be prevalent at this time of year. Ms. Gerhart asked that Trustees make sure to chat about MSU Denver when they are in these spaces, raise the University’s name, talk about the fabulous students they recently met and the other great things that excite them about this work.

There will also be formal opportunities that are being cultivated on campus, specifically inviting elected representatives on campus for tours, meetings, opportunities to interact with students, to make sure that they leave with a deep understanding and have an authentic experience interacting with the campus community, in hopes that they see the beauty of MSU Denver and can become great advocates for the University community.

As these opportunities surface Ms. Gerhart said she would be in touch, but asked, if Trustees as community members and advocates for MSU Denver run into these sorts of opportunities themselves, that they keep MSU Denver in mind. Ms. Gerhart said that she is always available to be a resource and to offer talking points or intel.

Chair Noles said that he and Trustee Hultquist spent time with the Department of Higher Ed going through its strategic plan. He said that they are supportive but with caution. The Department is moving to a return on equities, or “ROP” metric. Chairman Noles stated that, as a financial person he appreciates that metric but feels that it does not always play out well for an institution like MSU Denver which has other positive outcomes for its students. That was the feedback he and Trustee Hultquist gave to them.

President Davidson will distribute fact sheets with facts and figures and talking points for the Trustees to use as they engage in these activities, that may help connect the dots.

Ms. Gerhart thanked Chairman Noles and said that the strategic plan is an iterative process. As they receive feedback from different groups, there may be some evolution based off of Chair Noles' and Trustee Hultquist's feedback, but she will receive a briefing on the current state of the strategic planning meeting. She will review it and take and talking points associated with it so that as Trustees are connecting in these spaces they will have this revised perspective as well, with facts and figures to inform that dialogue.

Ms. Staberg is out on the road, meeting with candidates. There are going to be a lot of new leaders in the legislature in the coming year and her group makes a point to visit every candidate in their home district. They have been meeting with candidates in the southern corridor and will end up at the State Fair Legislative Barbecue tonight.

This is an opportunity to connect with and get to know all of the candidates who are running, learn what it is that motivates them, what their interests are, and connections they may have with MSU Denver and other clients. She has discovered several MSU Denver alums among the new faces that are likely to be seen in the legislature next year. There is already a great contingent, but with term limits and turnover, some of those folks will be leaving and new alums will be added in the legislature.

This is a very competitive election this year. Some years in the off session there is a lot of policy development, but this year the focus has been heavily on the midterm election and very little on the policy side.

Three state legislators are running for Congress. Major statewide offices are open, including the Governor. In the state legislature, very competitive races are coming out of the redistricting process that occurred. Colorado was at the forefront in setting up a mixed partisan redistricting commission and they managed to draw a number of competitive seats.

In the State Senate, specifically, there are 17 seats open. Five of those, the most competitive, have registration within a 5% margin, Republican/Democrat split. Others have a 7 to 8% margin and they are also considered competitive, especially since this is a non-presidential election year.

State Senator Kevin Priola switched parties, from Republican to Democrat. As a result the State Senate is much closer than the State House. It could go Republican or Democrat, depending on many factors that will come into play between Labor Day and Election Day.

In the State House of Representatives, all 65 seats are up for election. 15 seats are within a 5% Republican/Democrat registration margin, and many more are within a 6 to 8% margin. Both the Speaker and the majority leader are term limited. Significant changes in committee makeup are expected as well.

After building relationships Ms. Staberg and Ms. Gerhart will begin laying the groundwork for education efforts that are beginning now, even before the election, educating candidates about MSU Denver, letting them know key issues, key demographics, so that those issues are on their radar screens before they step into the General Assembly in January. Ms. Staberg offered to meet individually with any of the Trustees to delve into the details on any of the competitive races. Those competitive races include both incumbents and open seats that don't have a returning member. At least half of the competitive seats have seated incumbents in them now. On occasion, incumbents are facing off against one another because of the new lines that were drawn with the redistricting process.

There are issues initiatives that are going to be on the ballot this November; two were referred by the state legislature: the Healthy Meals for All proposal and the fiscal summary required to be submitted with ballot measures. Three initiatives have been approved to date. Those are initiated by the community and were submitted to the Secretary of State in August. Thus far the Secretary of State's office has validated that three of those have sufficient signatures to be on the ballot. Initiative 108 is related to affordable housing; Initiative 31

would reduce the tax rate, if successful; and Initiative 55, the Natural Medicine Act, which is mushrooms. Three measures have been submitted that have petitions that are still pending signature review. All of those are related to alcohol and who can sell it, what they can sell, and delivery.

#### **B. Finance Committee Report – Mike Kopp, Committee Chair**

Trustee Kopp reported that Ms. Marquez-Hudson's team and the Foundation have exceeded their Foundation goal by nearly \$3 million. Similarly, the HLC is in very good shape. Will Simpkins provided an enrollment report. Nationally, enrollment is a challenge and it is at MSU Denver as well. This is reflected in the finance action that is needed. Enrollment is down approximately 6.7% going into the Fall which is a little bit less than anticipated. Obviously, enrollment is a big revenue driver for the University.

Dr. Simpkins indicated a goal to push the current four-year graduation rate of 12% to a 30% graduation rate over the next eight years.

There are two recommendations concerning the Phase II budget. The first goes to faculty and staff. The majority of the new investment is targeted at supporting faculty and staff with a flat increase of \$2,100 per employee. In addition, a 3% increase would go to affiliate faculty. That is approximately \$4.2 million and is viewed as a stabilizing activity.

Other recommendations from the Finance Committee include allocating \$400,000 to Advising to increase retention through digital capacity.

\$1.1 million will be allocated toward the very successful Pathways to Possible Program which will allow another 285 students to join that program.

\$1 million in the University's Experiential Learning and Internship Program. Students who participate in internships form a greater bond to their education and their university.

MSU Denver wants to expand public service opportunities for students to participate in the civic life of the state and nation.

The new Cybertopia Program will focus on creating a cyber and virtual learning environment so that students can gain cyber certificates. It is anticipated that this will generate a positive cash flow in a very short period of time, approximately eight months.

These recommendations for the Phase II budget received unanimous support from the Finance Committee.

#### **1. Approval of Fiscal Year 2022-23 Phase II Budget**

Trustee Kopp **moved for approval** of the FY2022-'23 Phase II Budget, **with a second** by Trustee Carrera. The motion was unanimously approved.

Trustee Kopp noted his appreciation for the candor with which Dr. Simpkins presented the facts surrounding enrollment at the Finance Committee meeting, and stated his feeling that it is an issue of great importance to nurture that environment of candor, as the Trustees do in the boardroom environment, and support faculty and staff as they navigate major social changes that have yet to be understood so that they can succeed in increasing graduation and enrollment rates.

Chair Noles added that as of the date of today's meeting, enrollment is down only 5.8%.

#### **C. Governance Committee Report – Kristin Hultquist, Committee Chair**

Trustee Hultquist said that Governance Committee discussed the nomination process for Trustees, the relationship with the Governor's office and putting forth ideas for the Governor to consider in making appointments.

An evaluation will be circulated among Trustees to assess their perception of the Board's effectiveness as an operating board. This will be done in a prudent and time-saving manner.

The new Trustee newsletter is working very well. It will continue to be a work-in-progress as content becomes available.

Following each Board meeting, Trustees will be asked to share their feedback on how the meeting went.

David Fine and President Davidson helped Trustees understand shared governance, explaining that unlike a corporate board with the simple structure of shareholders, executives, and owners, it is much more complex in higher ed. The governance structure at MSU Denver was streamlined some years ago but there are a number of stakeholders, necessitating more time in decision-making and a focus on bringing people along. It is the appropriate structure and ensures all the stakeholders have a vote and a voice at the table.

Mr. Fine encouraged Trustees to take the post-meeting survey on the portal following this Board meeting.

**D. Academic and Student Affairs (ASA) Committee Report – Kristin Hultquist, Trustee (subbing for committee chair, Marissa Molina)**

Trustee Molina thanked Trustee Hultquist for filling in for her at the meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee held yesterday. She thanked Dr. Tran and Dr. Simpkins for their work in arranging the student networking event. She said that it is important that Trustees hear the voices of students and faculty in continuing to build the vision of what MSU Denver can become.

**1. Approval of Liza Amon Staff Emeritus Nomination**

Trustee Johnston **moved for approval** the recommendation and nomination of Liza Amon for staff emeritus, **with a second** by Trustee Carrera. The motion was unanimously approved.

**E. Sustained Racial Justice (SRJ) Committee Report – Mario M. Carrera, Committee Co-chair**

Trustee Carrera reported that the committee heard a substantive presentation from Dr. Manuel del Real, Executive Director for HSI Inclusion. Dr. del Real presented to the committee an overview of MSU Denver's journey to HSI designation and defined HSI Servingness, which is Goal 3 of the Diversity Strategic Plan. Effective HSI Servingness requires three criteria:

- 1) maintain expertise about laws, regulations, policies, issues and trends pertaining to HSI funding, programs and designation;
- 2) inform policymakers and other stakeholders about HSI issues and advocate for enhanced funding, new initiatives and programs and services;
- 3) strengthen the process and criteria for the identification, review and prioritization of HSI/MSI grants and provide support for the implementation of grants awarded.

For each objective Dr. del Real described and provided examples of the work being done as part of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities' (HACU's) Annual Capitol Forum. Dr. del Real travels to Washington, D.C., to advocate for equitable funding for HSI initiatives, programming and services as well as immigration reform. He provided examples of initiatives underway at MSU Denver which include providing faculty with opportunities to enhance culturally responsive teaching, a course for STEM faculty and HSIs, and a grant writing academy to pursue the grant funding available to MSU Denver as an HSI. This past fiscal year, HSI grants received by MSU Denver totaled \$6.5 million.

Dr. del Real provided an overview of Excelencia in Education's rigorous application for achieving its Seal of Excelencia, a three-year designation recognizing exemplary HSIs practicing servingness.



Dr. del Real reviewed the events for HSI Week at MSU Denver which is between the 12th and the 16th of September. An effective advocacy forum on September 13 will be followed by a reception at the Marriott SpringHill Suites between 6 and 8:00 p.m. The University will recognize leaders who helped MSU Denver achieve the Hispanic Serving Institution designation, including Dr. Luis Torres, Dr. Isa Rodriguez, Dr. Angela Marcus. Trustees, legislators, and senior leaders at MSU Denver who have been part of this are invited to attend.

Significant discussion ensued because of MSU Denver's journey to becoming an HSI and everything that it represents. Trustee Brooks asked how the University can take servingness to the next level and what milestones is the University aiming for. Dr. del Real provided feedback from Excelencia from MSU Denver's Seal application which includes feedback as to what the University needs to improve to be a model HSI. Trustee Brooks also would like MSU Denver to be seen as the school of choice for BIPOC students and like to see more information going into the community, as well as community relationship building to get the word out.

Vice President Dr. Michael Benitez noted that the goal is to become a national model HSI. MSU Denver is currently a regional leading HSI and has been receiving calls from other institutions in the Mountain States asking what MSU Denver is doing so they can replicate the University's work.

Trustee Grogan asked if at the next meeting, Trustees could learn what MSU Denver is doing to support all BIPOC students as well. Trustee Carrera pointed out that Chairman Noles mentioned that the foundational promise of higher education is social and economic mobility. Dr. del Real noted that ample data shows HSIs do that better than other institutions. MSU Denver is exceeding and doing service to its constituents, its students, much better than any other institution in Colorado. It needs to be known that HSIs are the rising tide to better serve all students. Trustee Carrera stated that he was very proud of the team and the presentation given by Dr. del Real.

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

Trustee Brooks recapped activation on the AHEC campus, construction, campus operations, and the kickoff to Fall semester.

In activation, this was the most activated Summer in a long time. There were five events for the Aves Watch Party at this campus. 45,000 people were on campus for those, and Trustee Brooks suggested nurturing more of that activation and recruiting MSU Denver's students in those efforts.

CCD hosted First Lady Jill Biden in March, bringing national prestige to the campus. Governor Polis rededicated the Golda Meir House Museum.

A significant refresh is occurring in the Arts Lounge and specifically with regard to Wi-Fi in the Arts Lounge. The Board adopted the public safety building program plan which was very helpful for many construction projects that are going on throughout the campus: CCD's Boulder Creek Project and MSU Denver's Nursing Wing remodel in the West Classroom Building. The next 24 months should have significant construction activity, which means people will be employed and dilapidated facilities on the campus will be updated.

RTD around the city is free for the month of August. Also, Auraria students will have free RTD passes.

The City is kicking off the Speer Boulevard planning effort to really make the connection between downtown Denver and Auraria much more seamless. Trustee Brooks encouraged members of the public to make sure their voices are heard along with those of city planners. Oftentimes people of color are impacted the most and they are not at that table when important plans for the city are being made. President Davidson noted that MSU Denver and the Auraria community is at the table.

#### **G. Alumni Representative Report – *Jim Qualteri, Alumni Trustee Alumni Association Report***

Brandi Rideout, Senior Director of Alumni Engagement, filled in for Jim Qualteri. This is Alumni Award season. The Annual Alumni Awards Luncheon at Homecoming is approaching. The Alumni Association will recognize the

Alumni Award winners. The top four are Elsa Holgren, Distinguished Alumna of the Year, who was recently named among the Top 25 Women in Business; Russell Noles is being honored as the Philanthropist of the Year; Amber Mose is being honored as Alumni Volunteer of the Year; and Eric Lansing is inaugural recipient of our Alumni Campus Employee of the Year Award. Eric works in Athletics, is a dedicated Roadrunner who works many hours and volunteers his time to help the Alumni Association with a number of initiatives.

The AA board will hold a planning retreat in October at which it will review data from a recent engagement survey sent out to non-engaged alumni to try to understand why they are not engaging with the University and to identify the of services and programs they want to see offered.

The Student Engagement Subcommittee is helping staff build the Student Alumni Association, launching next week, to build a pipeline of engaged students who move into being engaged alumni.

Vice President Leon Duran is being deployed to Africa in September.

#### **H. Faculty Trustee Report – *Meredith Jeffers, Faculty Trustee***

Dr. Jeffers stated that faculty are excited to be back. As Dr. Davidson noted yesterday, the energy on campus is overwhelmingly positive. Students and faculty appreciate the time and effort that has been put into implementing the week-long Welcome Back festivities, which provided opportunities to connect with new and familiar faces on campus.

Faculty also expressed appreciation for senior leadership's ongoing investment in campus infrastructure. They are specifically grateful for the attention given to existing learning spaces on campus. Dr. Jeffers teaches in the newly renovated Plaza Building. The remodeled classrooms have new, improved lighting, acoustics, seating, and technology and make much better use of the overall space. This is a tremendous value-add for faculty, she said, as they continue to try to foster a meaningful and engaging learning environment for students.

The topics that continue to be discussed by faculty are enrollment, the implementation of the new differentiated workload model and compensation, Dr. Goodnick will expand on some of these topics during her report and Dr. Jeffers offered to talk about these topics further.

Faculty are energized and they continue to work hard to serve MSU Denver students and the campus community.

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

Faculty Senate President Liz Goodnick stated that faculty take their role in the shared governance of the university seriously, and they look forward to participating in policy development and the decision-making process in the coming academic year.

The first meeting of Faculty Senate this semester was held Wednesday. Although some meetings are being held in a high-flex format, a large percentage of Faculty Senators appeared in person. There is excitement about being back on campus.

Faculty appreciate the classroom renovations and look forward to teaching in these updated spaces. Additionally, Trustee Goodnick said that faculty will be thrilled about the compensation increase that was voted on today as well as other investments aimed at stabilizing enrollment and promoting student success.

Faculty look forward to the expansion of internships and experiential learning. At the same time they are concerned that increasing these opportunities for students will fit into faculty workload. Faculty Senate will continue to work with Provost Tatum and senior leaders on the reduced differentiated workload proposal, and Trustee Goodnick asked for Trustees to support them in this process.

Trustee Grogan thanked faculty for their exemplary service to MSU Denver's students in the face of the many challenges presented by COVID. They rose to the occasion and continued to serve students in innumerable ways, providing new avenues for students to succeed.

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

Brandi Rideout reported as Vice President of Staff Senate on behalf of Rebecca Reid. She thanked the Trustees for the additional compensation voted on at this meeting.

New senators and officers assume their roles on July 1. A strategic planning retreat will be held in July, focusing on generating norms and guiding principles for the coming year to be in alignment with the Strategic Plan, and to make MSU Denver one of the most desirable places to work.

Subcommittees have been established and began their work this week.

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

Student Trustee Gabe Trujillo reported that Student Government has changed its name once again to Student Government and Advocacy Council. Their focus this year will be on helping students and finding the best resources for them. A school supplies drive went well, helping approximately 20 students. SGA has a goal of raising \$10,000 to \$15,000 for the food pantry. It is also developing its own internal accountability structures and better handbooks, aiming for a higher presence on campus, attending events and getting the word out that Student Government represents the students and is their voice. At this stage SGA is gathering data from students to determine their most pressing needs and issues they want SGA to advocate for.

An agreement was passed which encourages student organizations to purchase green products when possible.

**L. Athletics Report – Todd Thurman, Director of Athletics**

Athletics Director Todd Thurman reported that the sports teams are excited to have emerged from 2020-'21 when COVID determined so much of their lives and activities. They have grown together as a family through adversity and have become a strong, unified group.

The mental health of student-athletes is of highest concern now. Athletics is conducting suicide awareness and teaching warning signs to be aware of. Staff is being certified in suicide prevention.

Additionally, Athletics is focusing on nutrition this year, and has developed a nutrition table with information and recipes for students to cook at home.

Student-athletes and coaches contributed approximately 2,400 hours of community service this past year and Director Thurman expressed his pride at their service to the community.

Student-athletes have an average 3.25 overall GPA, a graduation rate of 65% which is rising. Athletics has an academic success rate, which includes transfers, at 75%.

The Sports Complex is showing wear and tear and has become unhealthy and unsafe. It is used by the community, club sports, and MSU Denver Athletics. The fields are going to be redone and the volleyball and tennis courts will be resurfaced. The turf, padding, and netting on all three fields has been replaced, and the lights are new.

**Homecoming**

John Kietzmann, Associate Director of Athletics for Marketing and Promotions/External Relations provided an update on Homecoming. A handout with a QR code was distributed that provides a guide of Homecoming activities, including multiple games, events, reunions, and an open house that will bring together prospective students, current students, and alumni. Homecoming begins during the last week of September and runs through October 2.

- Soccer match on Thursday night followed up with fireworks at the Athletics Complex.

- Soccer on Friday with a tailgate party and multiple activities scheduled, including the cornhole tournament which was very competitive last year, and a volleyball match as well.
- Roadrunners 5K on Saturday put on by the Cross Country Track teams as a fundraiser to the Road Riders event. There will also be the Alumni Awards Luncheon mentioned by Brandi earlier.
- Four athletes will be inducted into the Roadrunner Athletics Hall of Fame: Courtney Ryan who is a Paralympic gold medalist in Wheelchair Basketball for the USA; Philip Owen who was all-time leading point scorer for Men's Soccer; Jonathan Morris, Men's Basketball player who was the all-time leading rebounder when he left MSU Denver and competed on the runner-up National Championship team in 2013; Breanna Hemming, multiple All-American and Cross Country in Track and Field. Those four will be inducted into the Roadrunners Athletics Hall of Fame on Saturday night.

Christine Márquez-Hudson, Vice President University Advancement & MSU Denver Foundation commended the Homecoming team for the remarkable improvements they have demonstrated each year following COVID.

- The Banking Program is sponsoring Charles Hoskinson, who is an entrepreneur and crypto-blockchain millionaire. Mr. Hoskinson attended MSU Denver for a time and the University looks forward to welcoming him back for this event.

A short video was shown highlighting students in the Roadrunners Hall of Fame sharing their story of what it means to them personally to be a Roadrunner.

Chairman Noles introduced and welcomed Dr. Marie Mara as the new Deputy Provost, who joins MSU Denver from the University of Missouri, St. Louis. Dr. Mara is a scholar and an economist.

#### **M. President's Report – Janine Davidson, President**

President Davidson welcomed new Trustees to the Board: Dr. Meredith Jeffers, Faculty Trustee, is an associate professor of Spanish in the Modern Languages Department whose teaching interests include all levels of Spanish language, literature, film and culture. Dr. Jeffers has been part of the faculty at MSU Denver since 2014. Gabe Trujillo, Student Trustee, is a DACA recipient, studying Psychology.

The University will be hiring a Chief Strategy Officer to replace Kelly Brough and elevating the position of campus planner. Another search is under way for an External Affairs Officer as well as searches for two new deans.

The University has a three-phase plan, discussed at the budget meeting, which is to Recover, Stabilize, and Launch.

COVID revealed weaknesses that were deferred for a long time. Robust systems are required to successfully pivot online in the classroom and in the office space, and the pandemic revealed deficiencies now being faced by the University. The first measure undertaken in the Recover phase was to invest in online learning, the transition to Canvas, and development opportunities to assist faculty in making that transition.

As new funding from the federal government was released, the University was able to invest in long-deferred maintenance in its IT systems which form the backbone of the University. The goal is, by January, to have all-new systems helping with HR and financial aid processes, currently being done with paper and pencil. President Davidson said that by this time next year, these investments will make MSU Denver a completely different place. She thanked Larry Sampler, his team, and the IT team for their work in this regard.

Mr. Sampler and George Middlemist are spearheading efforts to modernize the way in which the University's budgets are built. These changes have to do with technology as well as processes, and Trustee Noles lent his expertise in this regard, working toward a more strategic, multi-year approach.

The University is also investing in its academic spaces and classrooms. Mr. Sampler and his team are spearheading the renovation of the West Classroom building for the Nursing Labs, an 18- to 24-month project. President Davidson said that the University made a deliberate decision to focus not only on new buildings but to ensure that the places where faculty, students, and staff are working and learning every day are of high quality. Auraria owns and operates some of the buildings on campus, such as the PE Building, and that fact has prevented other institutions from investing in them. MSU Denver is the only institution that has invested in these neglected structures, resulting in their ownership by the University.

The budget plan is focused on retention, enrollment, and support in helping MSU Denver's students succeed.

The University is making investments in Advising and in faculty and staff. President Davidson thanked the Trustees for supporting the investment in compensation for faculty and staff. Despite the fact that the University is making significant investments in technology, between 65 and 70% of its budget goes to people, because the University is a human-centric enterprise. President Davidson said that faculty and staff must have the tools they need and be given the compensation they deserve.

The tuition lock that was supported by the Board of Trustees appears to be encouraging more students to either come back or to take an extra class. As data is collected and assessed the Trustees will be updated with actual numbers and the effect of the tuition lock.

The Roadrunner Promise and the Indigenous and Native People's Grant are guaranteeing that MSU Denver is able to provide high-quality education to as many Roadrunners as possible, and President Davidson thanked the Trustees for their support of those initiatives.

The Biden administration's student loan forgiveness program has been met with strong pushback. President Davidson provided data and information supporting student debt forgiveness and talking points that can be used to inform and correct commonly heard misconceptions.

The Biden administration's program made a point of focusing on those in most need. Student debt disproportionately affects students of color, both across the country and those enrolled at MSU Denver. Sixty percent of students of color at MSU Denver are Pell-eligible. Pell grants are only available to undergraduate students who display "exceptional financial need."

The critiques of student debt forgiveness provide opportunities to explain that the student debt crisis is caused by the ballooning cost of higher education which, in turn, is caused by disinvestment in public higher education. A commonly heard critique from other generations is that this is a form of handout. They argue that they put themselves through school and paid off their student loans. While this may be true, it is also irrelevant because, for those generations, higher education at public institutions was subsidized by the state by as much as 70%. Baby boomers and many Gen-Xers were subsidized by the American people, which helped them climb their way up the ladder to the American Dream. Those fortunate recipients of publicly subsidized higher education then turned around and pulled the ladder up on their own children and members of the current generation of college students. The disinvestment in public higher education has shifted the cost of higher education at public institutions from the state to the student. This is what has driven student debt in America to astronomical levels. To the commonly heard complaint that the Biden program is not fair, one could argue that the greater inequity is leaving this generation hanging. That inequity is what the Biden administration is trying to correct.

The last phase is Launch. President Davidson said that MSU Denver is poised to be the most consequential university in the state, if not the country, and has the leadership and the plan to do it. President Davidson thanked the Trustees for their belief in leadership. At the upcoming retreat there will be more discussion around the ways in which the University can innovate and position itself to meet, first, the demands of today's youth and also, the charge given by Governor Polis to be more innovative and provide more flexible options -- all things that the University is already doing and will do more of.

The focus of the retreat will be MSI Servingness, applying all the lessons learned about HSI to become the university of choice to other communities of color and all of Colorado, and to provide flexible options and meet students more where they need to be met.

There will also be discussion at the retreat about MSU Denver partnering with Auraria to make the campus an even more amazing place.

President Davidson said that areas where she will focus her attention during the year ahead include all the Launch innovations that have been discussed, focusing on people and professional development for staff and faculty. The University is a human-centered enterprise and its leaders need to know how to lead. President Davidson said that she is very optimistic about the investments made in that area.

Mr. Sampler's team is assessing changing needs created by remote work and current infrastructure, rebalancing free space to use for other needs.

President Davidson will spend more of her time contributing to the fundraising efforts in this second year of the fundraising campaign. She commended Christine Márquez-Hudson, Vice President University Advancement & MSU Denver Foundation and her team for laying a phenomenal foundation.

She will also be involved in modernizing a strategic focus on the use of resources.

MSU Denver has a robust partnership with Cleo Parker Robinson Dance which provides so much to the community. The University's Dance Program is connected with Cleo Parker Robinson Dance. MSU Denver was the primary sponsor and co-chair for the Dancing with the Stars fundraising event. Their representative works with Provost Tatum in that regard.

MSU Denver recently established the Gloria Tanner Scholarship in honor of Gloria Tanner, a distinguished alumna of MSU Denver who passed away in April. Ms. Tanner was an Air Force veteran. She became the first Black woman to serve as a Colorado State Senator and had a long career in public service. In her 16 years in state government she worked to provide a safe-haven law for abandoned babies, civil rights for women and minorities, and parental rights for adoptive parents. In between her time in the military and the legislature, she raised a family in Denver and earned a Political Science degree in 1974. The scholarship was funded internally and was established with the approval of Ms. Tanner's children, to honor her memory by supporting students who have an interest in community leadership, including running for public office. Students for this scholarship must have a financial need and should submit a short essay describing how they relate to the experience of African American women. The first Gloria Tanner Annual Scholarship will be awarded this academic year and is renewable for two years. President Davidson thanked everyone, including those in Advancement, Financial Aid, Political Science, and others, who worked on this scholarship. A short video was shown of an interview of Ms. Tanner. MSU Denver has agreed to be the major sponsor of the Black Business Roundtable's event this year honoring Ms. Tanner.

MSU Denver will be an exclusive sponsor for LAEF Student Success Programs for a three-year period. The University is partnering with CLARO on events for the fundraising campaign.

The School of Education was recently chosen to receive a national award for its trauma-informed practices with equity and teacher education programs. Dean Liz Hinde and President Davidson will be accepting that award on behalf of the University at the American Association of State Colleges and Universities Conference in November.

Angie Paccioni attended convocation last week. President Davidson thanked those who were able to attend.

Trustees are welcome and are invited to attend the President's Welcome Back on September 13. This is the State of the University Report, and faculty and staff will be in attendance.

Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser, former Colorado Secretary of State Wayne Williams, Dr. Katia Campbell from Communication Studies, and President Davidson will be panelists at the upcoming Free Speech and Art of Democracy Panel. David Fine will moderate the panel. President Davidson thanked Mr. Fine for leading the University's efforts on free speech and free expression.

**VI. INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. Human Resources report of personnel actions for the Board's information, which have occurred since the last Board Meeting on Friday, June 3, 2022.

**VII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was none.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT**