



CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Katherine Bergeron
President

October 27, 2017

Dear Members of the Connecticut College Community,

The Connecticut College Board of Trustees convened for its fall meeting on the weekend of Oct. 20-21. I am writing with a summary of the major topics discussed and actions taken.

The Board welcomed four new trustees: Peter Skaperdas P'17, Maurice Tiner '17, Eric Waldman P'20, and Cynthia Kossmann Wilkinson '84, P'19. Joining us on Friday were also twenty members of the Council of Former and Emeritus Trustees, who convened for their third annual visit. It was invigorating to have so many current and past Board members on campus to discuss the College's future.

NEASC

A central topic of discussion was our forthcoming reaccreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). The Board offered comments on an early draft of our report to NEASC's Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. We will be sending the draft to faculty, students, and staff in the next week or so to make further refinements. The College will submit the final draft in February, and a visiting committee from NEASC, led by Kathleen McCartney, president of Smith College, will be on campus April 8-11, 2018, to meet with members of the campus community.

Connections

Connections was another focal point during the weekend. The Board discussed our new approach to Orientation this year as well as a report on this year's entering class, the second class to participate in the new curriculum. In a beginning-of-the-year survey, 88 percent of the class of 2021 cited Connections as one of the main reasons they chose Connecticut College. The Board heard about the new integrative pathways being offered for sophomores and reviewed print, web, and video materials incorporating a new visual identity and messaging for Connections. During the plenary session on Friday, Andy Strickler, dean of admission and financial aid, discussed Connections in the context of a broader presentation on the art and science of recruiting future Connecticut College students.

The Student Experience

Dean of Institutional Equity and Inclusion John McKnight gave a report on the new staffing and structure in his division, including the new opportunities for student leadership that have been created. The Board also discussed the results of the recent reviews of Campus Safety and the changes made since January 2016, and had a chance to meet Mary Savage, the new director of campus safety and emergency operations. A tour of Hamilton House, led by Sara Rothenberger, assistant dean for residential education and living, and Trina Learned, director of facilities



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management and campus planning, highlighted the recent renovations of the space and the positive impact they are having on first-year living.

Capital Projects and Information Security

The Facilities and Infrastructure committee reviewed the work the College has been doing with Sasaki Associates on a new campus Master Plan. Through the late summer and fall, the master plan steering committee has been evaluating the ideas that have been generated about the future campus landscape based on feedback from interviews and surveys of students, faculty, staff, and administration. A preliminary report of findings is planned for the Board meeting in February. The Committee also considered a list of capital improvements to be undertaken in summer 2018 while reviewing the overall state of facilities operations. Finally, trustees met the campus team responsible for information security and heard about short- and longer-term plans to enhance the information security environment on campus.

Finances and Fundraising

As is the practice every October, the Board assessed year-end cash results for fiscal year 2017, and once again the College ended with a balanced cash operating budget. Investments performed well, earning 12.7 percent for the year, with our endowment closing 2017 at \$299 million. The Finance Committee continued evaluating five-year budget models based on conservative enrollment targets and assumptions for bringing the College's spending in balance with the revenues, including strategies for additional operational efficiencies and revenue growth.

The trustees have begun planning for Connecticut College's next, most ambitious campaign, and so fundraising was a prominent topic of conversation during the weekend. On Friday, two trustees stepped forward to announce their intention to make significant leadership commitments to the College. The Board also acknowledged the receipt of some recent gifts: from an emeritus trustee in the Class of 1962, a \$225,000 gift to support the endowment and Connecticut College Fund; and from the Air Force Office of Scientific Research, a \$300,000 grant to support research on bioluminescence by Vahlteich Professor of Chemistry Bruce Branchini. The Advancement Committee reviewed the success of the Connecticut College Fund, which ended the 2017 fiscal year with a record \$6 million and an increase in alumni participation to 36 percent. Our goal for the annual fund this year is \$6.25 million and 38 percent participation.

Other business

The Board conferred emeritus status on former trustee David Palten '76 P'04 '09. Admission fellows and tour guides joined trustees for lunch on Friday to talk about their interactions with prospective students and families, and Gary Parker, professor of computer science, along with computer science students, facilitated a robotics demonstration for trustees that received rave reviews.



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The weekend concluded with the establishment of the Anique Ashraf '17 Art Prize that will be awarded to one or more students each year whose work pushes the boundaries of creativity in the spirit of Anique's life and art.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial "K".

Katherine Bergeron