



# CONNECTICUT COLLEGE

Katherine Bergeron  
*President*

October 30, 2015

Dear Members of the Campus Community,

I am writing with news of the October meetings of the Board of Trustees, which took place last weekend.

The weekend included a rich set of discussions around the College's past and current financial position; our progress toward a new strategic plan; the ongoing implementation of the Connections curriculum; past and future campus improvements; and ongoing efforts to clarify the College's identity and message. The Board also welcomed four new trustees: Lynn Cooley '76, Will Eglin '86, Robert Hale '88 P'19 and Eleanor Hardy '15.

At the same time, the Board welcomed 34 past trustees at the inaugural meeting of a new Council of Former and Emeriti Trustees. Linda Lear '62, Bill Barrack '81 P'18 and Zoe Klein Henriquez '99, serving as the Council's executive committee, developed the full-day program, which included a plenary session with the current Board, as well as presentations on the changing campus landscape, the Connections curriculum, and other topics. It was inspiring to welcome back so many past members of the Board and to recognize what they have done collectively to advance the College over so many years. We plan to make this joint meeting an annual fall tradition.

## **Financial strength, strategic planning**

The plenary session on Friday morning provided an opportunity to look back and look forward on several fronts.

Paul Maroni, vice president for finance, presented a 15-year retrospective on the College's financial standing as well as reflections on the opportunities and challenges of the current fiscal environment. He highlighted the steady growth in the College's operating budget, financial aid resources, and endowment during this period. Because of prudent fiscal management over the past 15 years, the College realized a total of \$30 million in cash-operating surpluses, funds that were reinvested not only in special projects and programs but also in the endowment. A total of \$22 million of that surplus was redirected to the College's endowment through actions of the Board.

Abby Van Slyck, dean of the faculty and co-chair of the strategic planning committee, offered a progress report of the planning process that the College has launched this fall. She discussed the composition of the planning committee, reviewed the work of our consultants, Keeling & Associates, and made a few early observations about the meetings that have already taken place with more than 200 students, faculty and staff. There will



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be further opportunities for the College community to participate in the planning process in November and in the coming months.

## **Connections curriculum update**

The Board also learned about the progress of the College in advancing our diversity goals, and our ongoing work around the principle of full participation. They heard a presentation from the working group on full participation about a pilot program this fall involving five departments and 47 faculty members at the College who are examining their pedagogic approaches in order to promote a learning environment where all students can flourish.

## **Fiscal Year 2016 budget and capital projects**

The financial health of the College continues to be strong. As of June 30, the endowment reached \$283 million — a record high — and our net assets have increased by \$10 million, owing to growth in the endowment and new gifts to the College.

In the area of capital projects, Ulysses Hammond, vice president for administration, discussed the College's \$100 million investment in facilities and infrastructure improvements over the last 15 years as well as goals for the next 5-10 years. Trustees also heard a report on the College's information security environment and near-term plans to further improve campus security.

## **Admissions and messaging**

Andy Strickler, dean of admission and financial aid, presented goals for the coming admission cycle and a longer-term vision for recruitment and enrollment. Among the areas discussed were strategies for increasing selectivity and yield, as well as for identifying and developing new areas of the country for admission.

I also updated the board on our ongoing efforts to tell the College's story, including a new partnership with Lipman Hearne, a Chicago-based marketing and communications firm. Lipman Hearne will be working with members of the College community over the next eight months to develop a set of messages around the Connecticut College experience and the new curriculum. Representatives will be on campus in early November to meet with students, faculty, and staff.

The weekend concluded with a tribute to Paul Maroni and Ulysses Hammond for their extraordinary stewardship of the institution through challenging times over the past 15 years. In recognition of their work, the Board resolved that the Power House would be renamed the Ulysses B. Hammond Power House and that a portion of the Board-designated endowment would be renamed the Paul L. Maroni scholarship fund.



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Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Katherine", with a long, sweeping horizontal line above the name.

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