

President's Report

Board of Trustees Annual Meeting

July 13, 2023

Thank you, Madam Chair

The 22-23 Academic Year was in so many ways a fantastic year for the University of Louisville. I was fortunate to join the university and its community in February and sharing this year-end report is both my honor and indeed my pleasure to do so.

From welcoming one of our largest freshman classes ever to graduating almost 5,900 students in the fall and spring semesters, the University of Louisville faculty, staff and students realized significant achievements, national recognitions, and tremendous progress in advancing our mission as a preeminent national university committed to excellence in teaching and learning, research, scholarly and creative work, and engagement with our business and community partners – all the while serving as an anchor institution for Louisville and Kentucky.

Here are just some of the highlights in student success, research, philanthropy, athletics and community engagement during the past year.

We start of course with Student Success

As I mentioned, the university welcomed its **largest freshman class ever** this past fall – almost 3,700 students were welcomed as first year students. As a preview, the data is pointing to welcoming an even larger class for this upcoming year.

UofL added to two new residence halls – **Belknap Village South** on the site of the old Threlkeld Hall, and **Denny Crum Hall**, named of course in honor of beloved Coach Crum who, very sadly, we lost this past spring.

Together, these two residence halls are now home to 580 students. Combined with Belknap Village North, these beautiful new facilities house more than 1,000 residential students.

Belknap Village South also is home to our new **Center for Engaged Learning**, which collaborates with campus, community and industry partners to provide real-life experiential learning opportunities for our students – a high impact practice that research indicates supports academic success and provides a big leg up on career readiness for our students as well. `

Already, hundreds of students have sought out the services and support offered by this amazing center, and the demand only continues to grow.

The university – once again - earned the prestigious **Military Friendly Gold** designation and **Military Friendly Spouse** Award for its leading practices, outcomes and programs for military-connected students.

U of L is just one of 10 R-1 institutions – nationally - to earn the gold designation and one of only 23 to receive the military spouse designation. The university also earned **Military Times Best for Vets College** again this past year.

Our commitment to these students and their families will further expand this fall when we cut the ribbon on the University’s Center for Military-Connected Students. This new center will be a one-stop shop for services and provides a home base for our military-connected students.

I hope you all can join me for that ribbon cutting celebration.

For the third year in a row UofL was recognized by Campus Pride as a five star **“best of the best”** university.

Campus Pride is the preeminent national resource for LGBTQ+ leadership development, diversity inclusion and advocacy within the higher education sector.

This five-star rating was awarded to only 40 universities – nationally – UofL is one of only 5 schools earning that designation in the Southeast region and the only university -public or private - to do so in Kentucky and Tennessee.

Our students are indeed also excelling in the classroom.

Two students, Madeline Martinez and Klemmer Nicodemus (Nick-o-DEEM-us), won prestigious **Barry Goldwater scholarships**. Klemmer was also awarded a **Harry S. Truman Scholarship**, one of only 62 nationwide and the only student from Kentucky to receive this highly prestigious honor.

And six of our graduates won **Fulbright Awards** to teach and to conduct research abroad. UofL has been recognized with 168 Fulbrights since 2001, **more than all other Kentucky public universities combined**.

With regards to Research

University of Louisville faculty are conducting leading-edge internationally recognized research and receiving more funding than ever for their efforts. This past year, **research expenditures totaled \$229.5 million**, a record for the university.

The research being conducted is significant in its impact as well as the critical nature of the areas of investigation our faculty are working hard to better understand,

... and in doing so are making substantial contributions to contemporary research surrounding the great challenges of our time including climate change, population health and cybersecurity.

Last summer neuroscientist Ajmal Zemmar (AZH-mall Zem-MAR) received national and international media coverage resulting from **his recording the activity of dying brain – the first time it has ever been done on a human**.

Dan Popa of our Speed School of Engineering received a Department of Education grant to conduct **research in robotics**. Professor Popa was also recognized this year with Office of Research and Innovation's Catalyst Award for his leadership in building a culture of innovation at LARRI – UofL's Automation and Robotics Research Institute

The University of Louisville Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute researchers Dr. Brad Schuck and Dr. Rachel Keith released a study **showing the significant impact of workplace factors on human health**. The study is the first to connect bio markers for chronic disease risk factors with the workplace environment.

In another study, Envirome researchers teamed with colleagues from the University of Pennsylvania to conduct the first study that examines environmental factors **that lead to sleep deprivation** which is linked to heart disease, type 2 diabetes, depression and dementia.

Our Speed School received a \$3.4 million National Science Foundation grant to help **grow the nation's cybersecurity workforce**. The funding through the NSF's CyberCorps Scholarships for Service will cover full tuition and stipends for dozens of UofL students over the five years of the program.

UofL also received a **\$10.8 million grant** to support the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute's Superfund Research Center's study on toxins and their environmental impact. This award is a renewal of funding that represents a 62% increase over the Center's previous award. The Envirome SuperFund Research Center is just one of 23 multi project centers nationally conducting research into the health effects of chemicals and compounds found in Superfund sites.

The U.S. Department of Commerce awarded the university \$13 million to launch the **Kentucky Manufacturing Extension Partnership**, which is expected to generate between \$150-\$200 million in economic growth across the Commonwealth.

And building on a discovery made while treating patients at UofL Health during the pandemic, UofL researchers lead by Dr. Jun Yan received a **\$6.1 million grant** in June from the National Institutes of Health to study and prevent immune system dysregulation responsible for acute respiratory distress, a leading cause of death among COVID-19 patients.

This research is a great example of the partnership between UofL Health and the university that directly links the work of UofL scientists and clinical care outcomes. I know Dr. Jason Smith, Chief Medical Officer at UofL Health is thrilled about the important treatment possibilities that might stem from this work.

Regarding **Community and Business Partnerships**

When Eastern Kentucky experienced record flooding last July, **UofL stepped up to help**. The university's schools of Medicine and Dentistry, Kent School, Athletics, UofL Health and almost all schools and departments provided services, supplies or donations to aid the victims.

UofL School of Medicine and UofL Health partnered last fall with Central High School on a **pre-medical magnet program** giving 33 Central High students from West Louisville personal experience with a career in medicine.

Students were able to shadow UofL Health doctors, witness surgeries, and earn academic credit and scholarship opportunities. They even participated in a White Coat Ceremony – just another example of the great partnership between UofL and UofL Health and its positive impact on the Louisville community.

Our Speed School of Engineering partnered with GE Appliances to expand a **guaranteed entrance to its engineering program** to include Bullitt County Public Schools. This program furthers UofL's and the Speed School's commitment to expanding the pipeline of K-12 students into STEM fields. This partnership with GEA I know is a real point of pride for Dean Collins and the Speed School faculty.

Philanthropy - a most important resource that is so necessary to advance UofL's impact and reputation - also had a truly standout year.

The **Trager family donated \$1 million** to help create an urban microforest adjacent to the Christina Lee Brown Envirome Institute's New Vision of Health Campus in downtown Louisville.

The Humana Foundation provided \$1.2 million in partnership with UofL to increase access to cardiac screening and nutritional interventions to address cardiac health disparities among older Black adults. Their generous gift supports the university's strategic goal to be at the forefront of efforts to eliminate health care inequity in our community.

Retired **U.S. Rep. John Yarmuth donated his congressional papers** to UofL, providing students and researchers with an inside look at life while serving the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The university's annual **Raise Some L** campaign secured almost \$3.3 million in a 24-hour period.

And our amazing UofL students raised more than \$550,000 to fight pediatric cancer and support patients and their families during their annual **RaiseRed** dance marathon.

Last but certainly not least, **Brent Pieper**, a nationally recognized leader in higher education philanthropy with an extensive background in leading successful comprehensive campaigns, has joined UofL - after a highly competitive national search - to serve as the university's Vice President for Advancement. Brent would you please stand so you can be recognized.

In Athletics

I'm pleased to share that AD Josh Heird, his coaches and staff continue to do an outstanding job, and our teams continue to be successful in competition, in the classroom and in the community.

UofL's Athletic program finished **32nd nationally** in the Learfield Cup, and our women's sports programs finished **12th** in the Capital One Cup standings.

Huge kudos to Women's Volleyball – the team electrified this community en route to the National Championship Game against Texas – the best-ever showing by our volleyball program.

UofL's football **team** followed that with a big and very special win over the University of Cincinnati in the Wasabi Fenway Bowl.

Women's Basketball progressed to the Elite Eight, the only team in Division 1 to do so in all of the past five seasons.

Great national recognition for Women's Swimming and Diving which finished Fourth in the nation along with the **men's team** finishing 13th.overall.

UofL **softball team** had its most successful season since 2014, earning a spot in the NCAA Knoxville Regional.

And this past year UofL Athletics partnered with L&N Credit Union on a \$41 million naming rights commitment for Cardinal Stadium, now called L&N Stadium.

The Angel's Envy Bourbon Club also opened at L&N Stadium with the support of a \$4 million gift from this Louisville-based distiller.

And in one of my first events after my appointment as president, I was able to share in the announcement that we were **bringing Jeff Brohm home** as our new football coach. That announcement has indeed generated so much excitement and anticipation for start of the upcoming season that is now just weeks away with our season opener on Sept 1 against Georgia Tech.

Also this spring AD Heird announced that Joe Franklin, three-time Coach of the Year, would be joining UofL - after a 16 year career at New Mexico that included two national championships - to lead our track and field program.

Our student-athletes also excelled in the classroom. We just learned last week that **404 out of 575 of our student-athletes earned a spot on the ACC Honor Roll**, signifying that they had earned at least a 3.0 grade point average.

Excellence in competition, in the classroom ... but also in the community – our student-athletes completed more than 4000 hours of community service this past year through the Cards Care Program working with organizations such as the Grace James Academy, the Ronald McDonald House and Peace Hospital.

Other points of pride and achievement include -

This past year, we announced the months-long celebration of our 225th birthday, on April 3. We kicked off the celebration with a faculty-staff tailgate at the spring football game and more special events are planned for this fall.

Our Office of Research and Innovation recognized more than 70 faculty and staff for their work in bringing big ideas to life at the **2023 Innovation and Entrepreneurship Awards**. Faculty and staff from five schools were recognized for their developing new technologies, working with industry and launching research-backed startups.

Our Employee Success Center also recognized about 50 outstanding employees for their work in 2023. The honorees included **Margaret Pentecost**, assistant dean in the College of Education, who received the George J. Howe Distinguished Staff Award, and **Dr. Nefertiti Burton**, chair of Theater Arts, who received the Trustees Award.

With Melanie Jacobs who joined us from Michigan State University last summer to serve as dean of the Brandeis Law School, two more accomplished academic leaders are joining UofL as deans – **Drs John W. Miller Jr.** at the Kent School of Social Work and Family Science and **Dayna Touron** at the College of Arts and Sciences. Will you both please rise so you can be recognized and welcomed!

And last summer Lee Gill joined the university's senior leadership team to serve as Vice President of Institutional Equity. Lee came to us from Clemson University where he earned accolades for his leadership and transformational work in the field of DEI.

I hope these highlights give the Board a great sense of the achievements and positive impact the university's students, faculty and staff are making on the university community, the City of Louisville, the Commonwealth of Kentucky, our nation and the world.

UofL and its impact are truly extraordinary.

Now instead of looking back — we look ahead to this upcoming academic year, and we start with the university's strategic plan and its focal pillars – Learn, Discover, Connect, and Work.

In 2022, the university community - lead by the Strategic Planning Committee - worked collaboratively to develop a strategic plan that was unanimously approved by this board earlier in the academic year.

The plan lays out strategic goals and objectives for university leadership and the campus community to prioritize and realize over the next five to ten years.

This past spring, I asked members of the senior leadership team including those leading the divisions of – academic affairs, student affairs, communications and marketing, legal affairs, risk/audit and compliance, athletics, academic medical affairs, institutional equity, community engagement, Human Resources, research and innovation, and finance and administration – to identify 4-6 key goals to complete in FY2024.

I described these goals as big boulders – because they will create substantial and sustainable change for the university and require a thoughtful, collaborative, and transparent implementation process.

These 'big boulder' goals will indeed need a full year to push uphill with great intention and effort to be completed.

The process of annual goal setting in support of advancing and realizing the strategic plan has not been an established management practice here at UofL. But I can share that the senior leadership team leaned into that practice with great enthusiasm and thoughtfulness.

The result is that there are over 50 divisional goals for FY 2024 – each one directly and clearly tied to the strategic plan - that the team is committed to realizing. This is a pioneering and innovative effort by my colleagues, and I am very grateful for their hard work and their support.

I look forward to supporting them as they work towards those goals with each other and their own teams throughout this upcoming year.

I want to point out that Brent just came on board this past week so he and I will indeed be discussing his division's goals and I will be updating the board on that conversation at the next board meeting.

As part of my own contribution to the process and at the request of this board, I provided a subset of those divisional goals as my own. I will now take some time to review them - in no special order –

The first goal clearly articulates our commitment to our students and their success. The goal is to create and begin the implementation of a 5 Year Undergraduate Success Plan that will not only increase our 4- and 6-year completion rates but address gaps between the overall rate and those of black, Latinx and Pell-eligible students.

Much has already been done across the campus community to determine strategies and tactics to increase those rates and best practices are indeed currently in place within various departments and colleges.

Now it is all about completing a comprehensive and systemic student success plan that includes the entire university, begin its implementation plan and realizes those results.

This effort has already been jump started, with the implementation already underway for this fall in areas such as advising and the first-year experience.

I want to acknowledge Interim Provost Gerry Bradley for this leadership of this priority.

The second goal is to establish and begin implementation of an Institutional Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan that emphasizes our commitment to diversity and our commitment that all members of our university community – inclusive of all identities, demographics, life experiences, abilities, and ideologies - will be welcomed and supported so they can thrive and reach their fullest potential.

This will be a relentless pursuit and I want to acknowledge that there will be times my own leadership may fall short. But you have my commitment that we will indeed be relentless, transparent and accountable to our community and each other.

I also want to offer my sincere thanks to CODRE and COSW for their ongoing leadership and for laying the foundation from which this plan will be built.

I want to especially thank all members of CODRE and our community who worked to develop the Cardinal Antiracism Agenda or CARA. That work is important and fundamental to this strategic plan and will clearly inform its priorities. I know there has been much frustration in our community about the lack of response to CARA – this plan is intended to correct that.

I want to acknowledge Vice President Lee Gill for his leadership of this priority.

The third goal is to establish and begin the work to implement a University Community Engagement Strategic Plan and it is very timely as it will support the university's efforts to receive reaffirmation as a Community Engaged Institution by the Carnegie Foundation in 2025.

This plan will advance not just our leadership as an anchor institution for the City of Louisville but also expand our efforts beyond this region to further support Eastern, Western and South Central Kentucky as well. Again lifting UofL up as an anchor institution for our city and our commonwealth.

I want to acknowledge Vice President Douglas Craddock for his leadership of this priority.

The fourth goal is a benchmarking and strategy development effort that when completed will provide much insight into UofL's competitive positioning as well as how to more effectively communicate our value proposition – that is the reason or reasons why UofL matters and how UofL can further its preeminence as a national university.

I want to acknowledge Vice President John Drees for his leadership of this priority.

The fifth goal is all about the UofL and UofL Health partnership.

I think you heard in my recap of last year's achievements the tremendous work done by these two great institutions -together- to advance important and impactful research, train the next generation of health care professionals, support the health care needs of our community, and address health disparities in that community.

I am excited to be working with the deans, faculty, staff and students at our Health Sciences Campus – where I will be spending one week a month beginning this fall – and Tom Miller and his leadership team on this most important priority.

The sixth goal is to review and revise the current budget model and process so that any changes and improvements can be ready for implementation for the FY25 budget cycle.

As I think members of the Board are aware, since this past February I have had over 30 listening sessions with over 1200 members of our community participating – the current budget model was a theme that arose time and time again.

Although I am well aware that any budget model or process is not perfect, I came away with the notion that we could indeed improve the process and in doing so hopefully address several of the questions and ideas voiced during those listening sessions.

I want to acknowledge Executive Vice President Dan Durbin for his leadership of this priority.

The seventh goal is to establish and begin implementation of a Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity Strategic Plan.

We are an R-1 Doctoral institution which means that we have high research activity. As such we are leaders in research and innovation and one of only 146 universities that have achieved that Carnegie Classification out of the 1580 institutions they classify -or just 9%.

It is truly a designation that sets us apart and deeply impacts our mission, structure, curriculums, faculty, staff, students and facilities.

It is also a result that requires intentional investment and a contemporary leading-edge strategy to be advanced, so we indeed continue to be successful and to attract and retain the very best faculty staff and students.

I have talked about AAU – the Association of American Universities – that is comprised of America’s 71 leading research universities – and how they can act as a tremendous benchmark to inform and guide our efforts as we continuous invest in and improve our research enterprise. This plan is very much needed to advance this important work.

I want to acknowledge Executive Vice President Kevin Gardiner for his leadership of this priority.

The eighth goal is a most important one. It is to complete the implementation and to operationalize the Compensation Study for University Staff.

A major milestone was achieved this past week as the rollout of position descriptions, career ladders, and market informed and competitive salary ranges began.

Almost 20% of staff – as part of this study – received a salary adjustment in addition to the 2% COLA that was effective on July 1.

I want to thank the Board for providing their support for the budgeted funds to support these salary adjustments.

In addition, this upcoming year we are planning to complete phase one of the compensation study for faculty with any requisite funding request in support of the faculty study to be part of the FY25 budget request to the Board.

I want to acknowledge Vice President Mary Elizabeth Miles for her leadership of this priority.

I plan to further discuss these goals as part of my first address to the university community that is planned for the beginning of September.

At that time I will also be sharing what I learned from my listening tour that took place during the spring semester.

As I shared, I had over 30 sessions with over 1200 individuals participating – students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, business partners, community partners, legislative leaders – from campus, Louisville, around the Commonwealth and beyond Kentucky's borders – those over 1200 folks gave me an incredible gift when they shared their hopes, concerns, and unbelievable passion for our incredible university.

Meeting with all of them was truly inspiring for me and just confirmed what I already knew –

that the University of Louisville is an incredible institution with rich traditions, a very bright future, supported by a community that is indeed very passionate about its success, and greatly impacts Louisville, the Commonwealth, our nation and the world.

That is my report Madame Chair – thank you and the board for your support of this outstanding university and its amazing people.