

**Metropolitan State University**  
**Alumni Association Board Meeting**

September 29, 2020, 6-7:30 p.m.

Via Zoom

**Board members attending:** Sandy Best, Steve Campos, Fowsiya Dahir, Ron Edlund, Samuel Farrand, Kjersten Jaeb, Thulani Jwacu, Lucky Lee, Salman Mian, Sam Mwangi, Fidelis Odozi, Scott Pilgram, Andrea Steen, Nancy Uden, Shanasha Whitson, Jolanta Young

**Guest:** Timothy Berry

**Staff attendees:** Virginia Arthur, Rita Dibble, Kristine Hansen, Noriko Ramberg

Nancy Uden convened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

**University update by President Arthur:**

President Arthur gave an overview of what's happening at the university:

- The university is in a financially sustainable state despite the COVID-19 pandemic. The enrollment for the fall semester is down about 3%, but the head count of the students remains the same as before.
- The university is a recipient of over 2 ½ million dollars in federal grants. These grants allow us to fulfill our mission in helping underserved students to be successful in higher education.
  - One and a half million dollar over 5 years for us to serve our Asian-American, Native American, Pacific Islander students.
  - A little over \$1 million grant over 4 years for the TRIO program, which serve low-income, first-generation students, and its students who are majoring in the STEM fields.
- The university's student engagement team has developed a variety of programs to get students connected to the university during the pandemic.
- In a study by the Georgetown Center for Education and Workforce, which examined the lifetime earnings after the completion of a degree compared to the amount that students paid for their degree, also known as the Return of Investment (ROI), Metropolitan State ranked 478<sup>th</sup> on the list of 4,500 colleges and universities for the 40-year ROI. When focused on the adult-serving colleges and universities like Metropolitan State, we are 10<sup>th</sup> out of 178 such universities on the list. This proves that Metropolitan State provides a remarkable value to its students.
- Metropolitan State was the winner of the All-in Democracy Challenge last year for having the highest voting rate in the country for regional public universities.
- This fall semester, about 90% of the university's courses are taught remotely, and among those online courses, we have a fair number of synchronous courses, where students and professors have required meeting times that are facilitated via Zoom. Ten percent or so are hybrid/blended courses which requires some online instruction with limited in-person class sessions, such as nursing or lab-science courses. The spring semester will follow the same format of instruction as fall.
- The university has a screening protocol for the university community. As of 9-29-20, no one has contracted COVID-19 at the university.

- Three things President Arthur hopes the Alumni Board could do to help advance the university:
  - Become involved in programs that support the students, such as mentoring, speaking in the classroom, or giving advice to students by sharing your own experience.
  - Activate your networks to bring more alumni back to connect with the university as well as telling your Metro State stories to promote the university.
  - Support the university financially—the university is often asked what percentage of our alumni provide financial support to the university. The alumni participation rate is as important, if not more, as the actual dollars.

### **Highlights of the School of Urban Teacher Education by Dr. Timothy Berry:**

- The Urban Teacher Education Program was created with the legislative mandate of the state of Minnesota to address a severe shortage of teachers of color.
- The school prepares teachers who can build on the talents and resiliency of diverse urban learners for success, particularly in elementary and secondary schools, and also provides graduate education to educators of diverse youth seeking additional licensure or professional development. Recently, the school has been working on the proposal for the approval for undergraduate licensure in special education.
- Its pedagogy centers in a couple of key ideas:
  - Humanizing aspect of teaching preparation by loving students—it's a holistic pedagogy to supports students who don't have the same kind of accesses and resources.
  - A collective group effort towards a common cause in partnership with the urban K-12 school districts for concurrent enrollment to provide a pathway for underserved students who are interested in the teaching profession and complete a teaching degree.
- The school recently received an emergency relief fund to support those who have been hit and affected by the pandemic, economic and racial turmoil with either loss of jobs or the technology barriers that exist for online learning. The grant allows the school to provide some development, as well as the equipment, necessary to adjust to remote learning environments.
- Dr. Berry's hope is to create the loop of having our Metro-educated teachers in the field to inspire underserved, young students in urban schools to come into the Urban Education program. The school is leveraging a number of successful alumni who are often invited to classrooms to share their experiences on the field and gives feedback to the students in the program.
- Dr. Berry is happy to be connected with the Alumni Board if they have further questions or interest at [timothy.berry@metrostate.edu](mailto:timothy.berry@metrostate.edu). Also, a Zoom event, "A Night with Dr. Timothy Berry" is scheduled at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 14. The invitation to the Board has already been sent.

### **Goals for the coming year:**

Uden requested each member to set a goal so they can be revisited at the end of the fiscal year.

- Sandy Best – Indoctrination of this robust board of highly experienced individuals, especially her mentee, Thulani Jwacu and Fowsiya Dahir, for their smooth transition to the board.
- Fowsiya Dahir – The Board to be "less talk and more work" to grow.
- Ron Edlund – The Board's continuous growth in numbers, talent and diversity.

- Sam Farrand – To support students by mentoring, to activate network, and to make a gift to the university and encourage other members to do the same.
- Kjersten Jaeb – To support the College of Management with the building of a real estate program; to get 10% of alumni participation in fundraising efforts by the end of 3-year term on the Board.
- Thulani Jwacu – Career network and job mentoring for students.
- Lucky Lee – Finding networks around the community for students.
- Salman Mian – To work with the Career Center to spread the word to companies about our students and alumni and get them to come to campus; to reach out to student organizations and associations to keep them involved in the student activities even after they graduate.
- Sam Mwangi – To look for ways to engage other alumni and raise more money.
- Fidelis Odozi – To identify, through a test and learn approach, strategies and tactics to help drive the alumni engagement through events and donations, and figure out the right process over time.
- Scott Pilgram – To meet the board member in person by July, and do events by summer.
- Andrea Steen – To carry the momentum to figure out ways to increase Metro State's visibility in the community
- Nancy Uden – To help Kristine Hansen to increase our alumni engagement from the current 2.7% to 5%.
- Shanasha Whitson – Pay-it-forward the knowledge, experience, energy, expertise of the Board to students to inspire them.
- Jolanta Young – To help with fundraising drive and also refining the way to get more alumni involved.

**Board expectations:**

- Attend board meetings and committee meetings.
- Engage in at least 2 volunteer opportunities.
- Give to Metropolitan State to achieve the 100% participation by the Alumni Board.
- Leverage our networks to help Metropolitan State by recruiting board members or committee members.

**New Business:**

- Board meeting occurrence  
Motion to approve the board meeting 6 times a year moved by Uden, seconded by Edlund, and the motion passed by a unanimous vote.
- Board meeting time change  
The change of the meeting time was proposed from 4:15-6:30 p.m. to 6-7:30 p.m. Hansen will send a Survey Monkey link to poll members' preference and feedback.
- Gift to the Max Day is November 19.
- Dates of the Lifelong Learning Series with college deans are sent to the board members, and meeting appointments will be sent by Noriko Ramberg. Feel free to invite others to this series.

Hansen adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Noriko Ramberg, Office Coordinator