



Across the Green
April 2017

TO: University of Vermont Academic Community
FROM: David V. Rosowsky, Provost and Senior Vice President

Investing in our Future: Driving to Excellence

INTRODUCTION, REFLECTING ON CHANGE

Spring is in the air at the University of Vermont, and while we wait patiently for telltale signs and scents of the new season, we can't help but notice the signs of change all around us. As we prepare to say goodbye to the Class of 2017, we welcome new academic programs, new campus facilities, and a new university-wide institute. This also is the season of hiring new faculty who will join us in the fall, along with our newest students – the UVM Class of 2021 and an impressive new group of graduate and professional students.

Our campus is undergoing significant and exciting physical changes. Work continues apace on a number of high-profile [capital projects](#) for the University. The new first-year residence hall opens in August and will be home to nearly 700 first-year students. Among the novel features of UVM's newest residence hall will be the bridge to the Bailey/Howe Library, connecting the residence hall to innovative new learning and discovery space in a renovated section of the library. The first building of the STEM Complex, 'Discovery,' will open in May, after which demolition of the Cook Building will commence, followed by the construction of the second building, 'Innovation' (to be completed in summer 2019). Votey renovations continue, with significant activity occurring this summer such that teaching and research activities in Votey can resume at the start of the fall semester. Work has already commenced on renovations to the Taft School to create a new center for the arts, complete with new galleries, studio classrooms, and exhibition/performance spaces. Two projects are expected to begin immediately after Commencement in May. The first is an expansion of Kalkin Hall (to be named Ifshin Hall) for the Grossman School of Business. Billings Library renovations also will begin this summer, creating a beautiful new home for many of the University's humanities programs/centers. And construction also has commenced on the new patient tower at the UVM Medical Center across the quad from the new STEM Complex. These projects join two other large capital projects that were completed this past year, the Miller Research and Educational Center expansion and the new UVM Alumni House and Silver Pavilion complex.

As I reflect on the academic year quickly drawing to a close, I cannot help but be impressed by the progress each college and school has made in adapting to the new budget model, and seizing opportunities afforded by its transparency and relative simplicity. At the core of the new model, and all it has enabled, is the elimination of complexity and opaqueness, and the removal of unnecessary and counterproductive barriers to innovation, collaboration, and program evolution. We now operate, as a University, within a resource framework that is predictable, easy to understand, transparent, and equitable. Above all, the new model enables multi-year planning and investment. The model is largely decentralized in that resources, responsibility, and decisions reside at the college/school level. The colleges and schools share responsibility, in a fashion that makes sense and is predictable year-to-year, for university-wide (shared) functions. And as colleges' and schools' enrollment patterns change, they can plan and adapt accordingly – with the ability to monitor these trends and work in partnership with Enrollment Management to understand and respond to changes.

We are just completing our second full year under [IBB](#). The new budget model was developed and implemented over two years through the hard work of literally hundreds of faculty and staff colleagues. We have created a framework within which we can – together – responsibly manage resources to deliver on our promise of academic excellence and student success, while identifying and investing in our highest strategic priorities and those of each college/school. As we move into Year 3, as planned, we will undertake an exercise (starting in December 2017) to develop IBB 2.0 – which may include modifications to elements of the original model and/or new elements. As with the development of the model, this effort will be coordinated by a campus-wide Steering Committee of approximately two dozen faculty and staff, including some from the original Steering Committee. It is expected that the work of the Steering Committee will engage many more faculty and staff through task committees, and will complete its work by December 2018. Once again, the Steering Committee will present its recommendations to President Sullivan for his review and approval, with IBB 2.0 becoming effective July 2019 (the start of FY20). As has become customary, both the processes and the recommendations will be fully transparent. We will continue to use the IBB [website](#) to post and archive all information relative to the development, implementation, and adaptation of the University's budget model.

So this has been, and continues to be, a time of exciting change for the University of Vermont. This includes new levels of campus-wide engagement around strategic visioning and planning, the launch of new academic programs and both disciplinary and cross-disciplinary initiatives, and investment in existing buildings and the construction of new buildings to support new learning and discovery modalities. Another area of significant strategic investment, namely the many ways we are investing in our *Teacher-Scholars*, is the subject of the next section.

INVESTING IN UVM'S TEACHER-SCHOLAR MODEL

For many of us, this has been a year of reaffirming and reinvesting in the *Teacher-Scholar* model at UVM. The year started (last summer) with a series of retreats among university leadership, academic leadership, and the Board of Trustees. Throughout the year, President Sullivan and I have spoken often about our *Teacher-Scholar* model, have committed significant new resources

to its success and to its visibility, and have posited the model as a hallmark and a discriminator for the University – something we do well and aspire to do better than any other university.

In my [September 2016](#) ‘Across the Green’ memo, I first wrote about how and why our *Teacher-Scholar* model can serve as a discriminator, how we can advance and promote the model, how we can enable and engage our faculty, and how we can recognize our best teacher-scholars at the University. This “roadmap” informed future discussions among deans and within colleges and schools over the course of the year

The [January 2017](#) ‘Across the Green’ memo included a section “The Teacher-Scholar Model and Boyer’s Definition of Scholarship” in which I relate the *Teacher-Scholar* model with the three pillars of the land grant university mission, and the four categories of scholarship described by Ernest Boyer (1990) in his seminal report, “Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate” published by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. This, too, inspired discussions across the campus this year, and helped departments and colleges as they articulated their goals, priorities, and metrics for scholarship and for success. If you have not yet read that section in the [January 2017](#) memo, I encourage you to do so. And as always, I welcome your feedback.

It is not enough to recognize, celebrate, and promote the *Teacher-Scholar* model at UVM (although doing each creates great value and shines brightly on our academic community), we must also reinvest in it. Reaffirmation with reinvestment nurtures the model, broadens opportunities for engagement, and solidifies our reputation as a national leader in the effective integration of teaching and scholarship.

Our investments in UVM’s *Teacher-Scholar* model and its core elements and principles fall into four categories: (1) investments in faculty, (2) investments in faculty professional development, (3) investments in facilities, and (4) awards and recognitions. I have written about each in [previous](#) ‘Across the Green’ memos, and of course we are surrounded by evidence of these strategic investments – new people, new programs, new facilities, new awards, but also a new energy around our shared values, shared aspirations, and shared commitments.

To provide a quick summary:

(1) *Investments in faculty:*

We have hired between 35 and 40 new full-time faculty in each of the last five years (not including faculty-rank appointments in the Larner College of Medicine). All are outstanding scholars with deep commitment to teaching. We make clear in our recruitment, not that all faculty are expected to teach, but that all faculty are *privileged* to be able to teach. We provide startup resources, mentoring, and support to enable our new faculty to be successful in the roles for which they were hired, whether teaching, research and scholarship, or a combination. We also remain committed to our robust faculty sabbatical program, into which the University invests more than \$5M annually, as part of our on-going commitment to faculty professional development, renewal, and success.

(2) *Investments in faculty professional development:*

[Associate Provost for Faculty Affairs](#) Jim Vigoreaux has been working over the past year to organize, re-design, and expand professional development offerings for all faculty ranks. The goal is to have a “one-stop shop” for faculty professional development opportunities available on the Office of the Provost website by this summer. Deans are working with department chairs to ensure faculty are both aware of and encouraged to participate in all relevant professional development opportunities at the appropriate time in their career. No longer just a consideration for early career faculty, the Provost’s Office believes intentional professional development opportunities should exist and be accessed throughout one’s entire faculty career. I want to take this opportunity to thank Associate Provost Vigoreaux for his commitment to this priority and the tremendous progress he has made this year.

Beyond these professional development opportunities and the University’s commitment to faculty reinvestment and renewal in the form of faculty sabbaticals, we also have invested significantly in faculty research, scholarship, and creative activity. This year, the [Office of the Provost](#) and [Office of the Vice President for Research](#) invested more than \$1M in competitively awarded grants to faculty. This includes support through the SPARK-VT program; the REACH program; the Faculty Activity Network (FAN); the UVM-Industry Fellowship Program; the Fostering Interdisciplinary Scholarship, Arts, and Research (FISAR) program; the OVPR Express program (for new faculty); as well as direct financial support (cost-share, equipment, or matching funds) for large center-level grants identified by the Vice President for Research as strategic priorities for the University.

In the coming year, another \$500K in support for faculty research and scholarship will be made available through new research initiation (seed) funds awarded through the [Institute for Environment](#), bringing our annual investment to more than \$1.5M. Growth in extramural research and increased interdisciplinary activity are two of the [Academic Excellence Goals](#) underpinning the President’s [Strategic Action Plan](#).

These investments in scholarship are in addition to specific funds targeting innovative pedagogy and new course delivery models (through the Engaged Practices Innovation or [EPI grants](#) administered by Associate Provost Brian Reed) and resources being invested by all of the deans in creating new pedagogy, new courses, and new curricula. Taken together, the University is investing several millions of dollars each year in faculty professional development directly supporting the values and ideals of the *Teacher-Scholar* model.

(3) *Investments in facilities:*

Earlier in this memo I summarized the major [capital projects](#) being constructed at the University. In nearly every instance (including the new first-year residence hall and the Bailey/Howe Library), these projects include new spaces for teaching, learning, and discovery. These spaces are more adaptable, flexible, and easily reconfigured to accommodate different class sizes and pedagogies; more technologically enabled; and more appropriate for group work, hands-on learning, and creative activities.

New laboratories for physical sciences and engineering in the STEM Complex complement the new laboratories for life sciences in Jeffords Hall completed in 2010. And new instructional and research space for computer science, math, engineering, and complex systems in the STEM Complex will bring together these disciplines in one integrated facility, in which cross-disciplinary teaching and learning can give rise to new discoveries and innovation. The renovations to the Taft School and Billings Library will create similar opportunities for integration, synergistic activity, scholarship and innovative pedagogy in the arts and humanities, respectively.

The move to “learning commons” types of classrooms can be seen in all colleges and schools. Flipped classrooms, innovation classrooms, and design studios are replacing traditional desk-and-chair classrooms. And we continue to invest significant resources each year into upgrading and augmenting technological capabilities in all of our teaching and learning spaces. If you haven’t seen them yet, I encourage you to visit the Larner Classroom (Medical Education Room 100) or Hills 20 (our first innovation classroom, with more being planned). ‘Discovery’ (opening next month) and the renovated Votey Hall (coming back online this fall) will bring many exciting new teaching and learning spaces online, as will the expansion to Kalkin Hall.

(4) *Awards and recognitions:*

This year we added two new awards for faculty excellence, the [President’s Distinguished Senior Lecturer and Lecturer Awards](#). These new awards join many awards and recognitions of our outstanding teacher-scholars including the University Distinguished Professor, University Scholar, Kroepsch-Maurice Excellence in Teaching Award, many college and school-based awards for faculty excellence, and our growing number of endowed professorships and chairs. This fall, the Office of the Provost, in collaboration with the Student Government Association (SGA), will announce a new award recognizing outstanding advising. We must commit as a University to recognizing and celebrating our best teacher-scholars, both as points of pride and as exemplars.

INSTITUTE FOR ENVIRONMENT

This month we [announced](#) the launch of the [Gund Institute for Environment](#) at the University of Vermont. The launch marked the culmination of four years of work dating back to the first university-wide *Envisioning Environment* report (2013), and following the recommendations of both that first report and the subsequent faculty-led *Envisioning the Institute* report (2014), which was then followed by thoughtful faculty-led reports with specific mission statement, scope, organizational structure and governance, and resourcing recommendations – all of which are available [online](#). I extend my sincere thanks to the many faculty members who dedicated countless hours of time and effort to imagine, re-imagine, and ultimately converge on recommendations that led to this exciting new initiative for the University. Faculty from all UVM colleges and schools participated at every stage. It is because of this shared visioning that we now have this shared reality, and I believe this will quickly become a signature program for the

University of Vermont, underscoring and amplifying our commitment to the study of the environment writ large.

Throughout this process, I stated often that we would not launch this ambitious institute unless and until it could be properly resourced. Thanks to a significant new gift from the Gund Family, we are now in a position to fully fund the Institute and ensure the success of this ambitious and exciting campus-wide initiative. We are profoundly grateful to the Gund Family for their vision, for their generous support, and for the trust they have placed in us and our commitment to excellence and to success. They believe in our transformative vision and our bold aspirations.

In the coming weeks and months, you can expect to hear much more about the Year 1 plans and many opportunities to become engaged with the Institute from Dr. Taylor Ricketts, inaugural Director of the Institute for Environment. My thanks to Professor Ricketts for his steady leadership, and congratulations to everyone involved in making this ambitious vision a reality. Well done.

UPDATE ON 'MOVE MOUNTAINS,' THE COMPREHENSIVE CAMPAIGN FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

With just over two years remaining in the [Move Mountains](#) Comprehensive Campaign, we are more than 80% toward our \$500M goal. It appears increasingly likely we will exceed our goal when we conclude the campaign in summer 2019. This is very exciting, of course, but also provides clear affirmation that we are moving in the right direction, that we have established the right strategic priorities and goals, and that we have developed a compelling case statement for the future of the University of Vermont. This is the largest campaign in the history of the University and already is enabling transformative changes throughout our campus. Already we have doubled the number of endowed professorships and chairs, from 52 to 105 (and counting). We have added a substantial number of new scholarships and fellowships, and we have raised critically needed support for some of our most ambitious capital projects. But by far the largest category of new support raised in the campaign has been support for academic programs. These are resources that go directly into the colleges and schools to support specific academic programs. The deans report regularly to their colleges/schools on development priorities, efforts, and successes. I hope you will follow the campaign's progress and join us as we celebrate a successful conclusion to the ambitious and important *Move Mountains* campaign in 2019.

'COFFEE WITH THE PROVOST' REFLECTIONS AND CLOSING THOUGHTS

As I write this, I have hosted three "Coffee with the Provost" sessions this spring, with a fourth scheduled for May 1. This was a new concept, started this spring, to provide casual opportunities for unstructured dialog. I didn't know what to expect – active listening, exchange of ideas, making suggestions, sharing concerns, or even offering criticism – but was open to anything. The idea was simple: I would be available for an "office hour" at a designated café on campus and anyone was welcome to stop by to chat or just say hello. More than 100 individuals (faculty, staff, and students) stopped by during the first three "Coffee with the Provost" sessions. Our conversations ranged from academics, to athletics, to the election, to the budget, to hybrid

learning, to design thinking, to sustainability, to economic development, to academic and industrial partnerships, to community and statewide engagement. Some just drifted over to say hello, introduce themselves, and ask a question. But many others stayed for the hour to listen-in on other conversations or to have side conversations with new colleagues. While I came to each session not knowing what to expect, I always came away energized. Talking with colleagues in such an informal setting, without a plan or agenda, is something I enjoy immensely. (Those who know me know that I cherish the opportunity to speak before large groups as well, but that my favorite part is the unstructured, often unpredictable “Q&A” session that often follows.) I hope you will join me at a future “Coffee with the Provost” session. Our final session this spring is May 1 (10:30-11:30am in the Scarlet Lounge across from Henderson’s Café in the Davis Center), however we will continue these in the next academic year.

Earlier this month, we [announced](#) that UVM was selected to receive the STARS Gold Rating for Sustainability Efforts. This rating places us among the top 12% of all rated higher education institutions. We were among the top 10 universities in the country for percentage of sustainability courses and percentage of academic departments with sustainability course offerings. With our 37% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from 2007 to 2015, UVM was ranked #1 for clean and renewable energy use, #4 for total GHG emissions reduction, and #9 for energy use reduction. Finally, we ranked #3 by STARS for diversity and equity coordination, affordability and access, and support for underrepresented groups. I could not be prouder of the University and our faculty, staff, and students. A special thanks to [Associate Provost for Teaching and Learning](#) Brian Reed for his leadership and to the staff in the Office of Sustainability for their dedication and hard work over the last year to complete UVM’s successful application.

I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge what a great year this has been for our Catamount athletes and teams. While some teams are still in season this month, others have concluded their seasons with impressive results, garnering significant conference and national honors, and attracting considerable national attention. Our student-athletes are points of pride for all of us at UVM. I have had the great honor of meeting all of our teams this year and getting to know many of our student-athletes, coaches, and athletics staff. (I do not take the “cheerleader-in-chief” role lightly!) I encourage all UVM faculty and staff to support our teams and our student-athletes. Attend games, meets, and matches; get to know our athletes and coaches; and become a part of the excitement that is [Catamounts Athletics](#). I extend special congratulations to UVM Men’s Soccer, Women’s Hockey, Men’s Hockey, Swimming and Diving, and Men’s Basketball teams for their outstanding seasons. This was a GREAT year in Catamount Country. As for next year, whether building on success or building toward success, the future looks very bright indeed. GO CATS!

As spring slowly but surely arrives in Burlington, our campus begins preparations for [Commencement Weekend](#) and the related end-of-year activities. A big THANK YOU, in advance, to the grounds staff, the events staff, and the many faculty and staff throughout the University who assist in making Commencement Weekend such a success every year. This is something we do exceptionally well at UVM, and it creates a lasting impression on our graduates and their families. Our campus never looks more beautiful than it does for the week of Commencement. Students and parents are so grateful to see so many faculty and staff over the course of the weekend. Indeed, we show “the best” of UVM – our campus *and* our people – that weekend.

Thank you each and all, in advance, and I very much look forward to seeing you across the green and throughout our beautiful campus in the weeks ahead and during Commencement Weekend.

With my thanks to all that you do for our students, for one another, and for the University of Vermont. Go Cats!

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