MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Presidential Search Committee, University at Albany

FROM: Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor

DATE: December 7, 2016

SUBJECT: Charge to the Search Committee

It is my pleasure to work with you to identify the next president of The University at Albany.

The University at Albany is well-positioned to attract an outstanding pool of candidates. You are truly a “university on the move,” having launched two new colleges and offering new degrees in high-demand fields, like computer engineering, homeland security, and cybersecurity. The University at Albany has a longstanding national reputation for excellence, with high rankings for many of your programs. The Rockefeller College, the School of Criminal Justice, the School of Social Welfare, and many more programs are very well regarded across the academic community. The University draws many notable speakers—for example, I have just learned that Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor will be there in the spring. And UAlbany is a model of diversity and inclusion: just a few weeks ago Secretary of Education John King praised UAlbany in his report on best practices for diversity in higher education.

The University at Albany’s extensive track record of public engagement—including work that supports The Albany Promise—makes the University an example of how public research universities can work collaboratively with their surrounding communities to create collective impact. The next president will succeed Robert Jones, who is well respected nationally. Many candidates want to succeed a high-profile leader because they know that they are inheriting a legacy of quality. As one of the four research campuses in the nation’s biggest system of higher education, you are a lead campus in a system that has made major strides in supporting student success. SUNY is a real draw for talented and ambitious leaders. In short, I can assure you that UAlbany’s “time is now,” and I have every confidence that you will draw exceptionally talented people in this search.

As chancellor, the selection of campus presidents is of utmost importance to me. I greatly rely on their leadership and counsel, and their support helps strengthen the effectiveness of my role as system head. This is why the diversity of our presidents in both culture and experience is a major priority for me. We are committed to expanding on SUNY’s “systemness” to ensure that we move the University forward as a national leader and a major driver of economic revitalization in New York State. I increasingly look to our campus presidents to work collaboratively with other SUNY colleges, administrators, faculty and staff, and surrounding communities to lower cost, enhance productivity, and elevate the importance of degree completion at each of our institutions.

Nancy L. Zimpher
Chancellor
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To Learn
To Search
To Serve

the Power of SUNY
To that end, the Board of Trustees recently enacted the SUNY Excels performance system, which is tied directly to our strategic plan for the next five years, *The Power of SUNY 2020*. This step underscores our commitment as a university to transparency and continuous improvement toward excellence at every level: system, sector, campus, faculty, staff, and students. I am counting on every president in our system to drive the public commitment to document our performance. Presidential leadership is critical in demonstrating our excellence, and regular presidential reviews will help us monitor our progress.

Through our system’s incredible network of 64 institutions, nearly a half-million students, 88,000 faculty and staff, and more than 7,500 degree programs, we are leveraging our assets to maximize SUNY’s educational and economic impact for New York. In pursuit of that vision, the Search Committee is hereby directed to recruit a highly diverse group of candidates with the highest personal and professional qualifications to fill this position. The University at Albany’s top three candidates will be sent to me for review, and I will recommend one candidate to the SUNY Board of Trustees; the new president will serve at the pleasure of the Board. As dictated by “The State University of New York Policies of the Board of Trustees,” before making its recommendations the University at Albany College Council shall consult with the presidential search committee. The president shall report directly to the chancellor.

As chief administrative officer of The University at Albany, the president will be responsible for the development and effectiveness of the campus. The president’s broad areas of responsibility include working with the University at Albany College Council; academic affairs, which encompasses development and ensuring sufficient support of the curriculum; oversight and maintenance of facilities; fundraising and communicating the image of the college; community engagement; financial management of the institution; and resolving issues of student life. I have already mentioned the increasing importance placed on campus presidents working collaboratively with one another. I ask the search committee to be very intentional in identifying candidates with the experience and skills to lead such efforts. This list is by no means exhaustive and includes additional responsibilities detailed in a job description to be developed by the University at Albany College Council and Search Committee.

I want to extend a special thank you to Michael Castellana for his dedicated leadership as chair of the University at Albany College Council. I would also like to recognize and thank Eileen McLoughlin, who will be serving as my liaison to the committee and Harvey Stenger, president of SUNY Binghamton, who will be serving as my designee to your committee. They will work directly with the council, search committee, and search firm.

I have every confidence in this process and stand ready to assist in any way I can. I truly look forward to working with you to find the person who will develop University at Albany already tremendous successes and elevate the College to the next level.