Summer Update from President Enyedi

July 22, 2021

Dear Campus Community,

I am writing to share with you an update of ongoing activities and preparations for the fall semester.

First, I want to thank everyone who has been a part of this work, and particularly say thank you to every member of the Cardinal community for all you have done over the past 18 months. I understand how challenging this has been, but please know how much this has meant to our students and their success here.

We are finalizing the fall restart plan, including health and safety requirements that will be put in place due to COVID. We are following the guidance of state directives and the SUNY system and will share this with you and all students soon.

As a residential comprehensive college campus, we are focused this fall on providing for in-person instruction, close and persistent interaction among students, faculty and staff, and student engagement in robust co-curricular and extracurricular programs to the fullest extent possible. We will also outline procedures that account for the ongoing public health risks of the pandemic. Consistent with this philosophy, we anticipate that our campus community will largely be one of vaccinated individuals. While planning for this has consumed much of our time and thought over the summer, we've also been preparing and thinking beyond the fall semester.

Areas of progress and development include:

- **Fall class enrollment on target.** We are on pace to reach our new student enrollment target for fall. We currently have 1,679 deposits, which is 99.4 percent of our goal. In fact, we are ahead of where we were this time a year ago (1,630). The Admissions office continues to process domestic transfer and readmit applications. EOP and Cardinal Achievement Program deposits are both at or above their enrollment goals. We will know more about our total fall enrollment as we get closer to the start of classes in late August.

- **Dedication to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.** Our designation by the Association of American Colleges and Universities as a Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation campus center is moving from paper to action. We intend for our campus to be an active place for conversation that can dismantle historical racial narratives and broaden our recruitment and retention of a racially diverse student body, faculty and staff. This work will encompass curriculum and the full campus and wider communities.

- **Added Multicultural Success Coach.** We are in the process of hiring a staff person to focus on retaining and successfully graduating Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) students who are not affiliated with existing campus student support programs. Housed in the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, the role will fill a gap in our student services and contribute to the development of the overall institutional DEI goals and strategies, as it relates to multicultural student recruitment, retention, graduation and alumni engagement. This new community member will help students navigate both academically and socially, and gain a
sense of being integrated to the campus community. Support for this position comes from a generous donor to the college.

- **Advancing on Plattsburgh Next.** As we ended the spring semester, the Strategic Planning Steering Group (with representation from all divisions as well as student representation) conducted 47 focus groups involving students, faculty, employees and leadership from across the campus, external community and alumni. Additionally, an online survey was distributed. The committee members used the SOAR model (strengths, opportunities, aspirations, results) to process the information collected. I, along with Provost Dr. Anne Herzog and outgoing Faculty Senate Chair Dr. Gary Kroll, have reviewed the summaries and initial drafts for our Plattsburgh Next strategic plan. Early this fall, I plan to share this out with the campus community and identify specific action items that will support essential goals, each of which is dedicated to guide our decision making over the next three years.

- **Capital improvements across campus.** Workers have been busy this summer, from repaving the Kehoe parking lot and restoring masonry on the building itself to replacing a roof on Champlain Valley Hall and continuing to renovate Memorial Hall (expected grand re-opening in Spring 2022). Details of these have been shared previously, so I want to draw attention to two other projects: a refreshment of the first floor of Kehoe and renovating the Field House gymnasium. In Kehoe, we are working to create a welcoming space for prospective students and their families. Updated carpeting, a fresh look and undergraduate admissions offices will be located on the first two floors, with the Global Education Office moving to the 10th floor. We will retain the special view from the top for prospects while building the central visitor point we have long lacked. At the Field House gym, the existing track surface will be removed, the new flooring will include an artificial grass playing surface and the existing bleachers will be replaced. This work was delayed due to COVID but will ramp up this fall and be finished in March.

- **Shepherding our resources.** We completed our 2020-2021 fiscal year at the end of June. As described in previous budget updates, a combination of state-directed and institutional spending constraints and targeted stimulus dollars has enabled us to manage our funds wisely. As we align Plattsburgh Next with our resources, we will be able to leverage some of our one-time reserves to invest up to $2 million in strategic initiatives identified in the strategic plan. The New York State Department of Budget and SUNY have yet to release guidelines on the allowable uses of the institutional stimulus funds, but the college is expected to receive the remaining federal funding so earmarked. We will share more details on this and the overall budget this fall. With respect to my work, I will be prioritizing more face-to-face fundraising and travel to enhance the college's ability to ensure students have access to an affordable degree.

- **Centralizing Communications and Marketing.** We have also started this summer to centralize the coordination of campus communication and marketing efforts, shifting the marketing unit to the Office of the President. The combined unit will continue to provide leadership in functions from market research to design, with a tighter communications alignment to better advance strategic priorities and the profile of the college. We will soon be hiring an executive director to lead this work. That person should be selected in August.
Finally, I hope to see many of you at 5 p.m. on Thursday, July 29 at the Cardinal Cookout at Hawkins Pond. This is a special opportunity for faculty and staff to reconnect, have some fun and visit with some local alumni and friends over food, music and conversation. It is also a way to strengthen our entire Cardinal Family as we prepare to return this fall.

If you haven't registered yet, you can do so today at alumni.plattsburgh.edu/cookout.

With Warm Regards,

Alexander Enyedi
President