Gratitude and Reflections | December 21, 2020

Dear Cardinal Community,

Watching the December commencement online, I was drawn to the reading of each student’s name during the program. As I heard each one, I was struck by the profound significance of what this meant.

A changed life. A dream realized. The final step taken to join our cadre of incredible Cardinal alumni.

I thought about the time, care, energy and expertise invested in each student life. How students are forever changed by their time here. How our student-first mission is not only our calling, it is the compass and foundation that will lead us in the years and decades ahead.

Collectively, we do wonderful, life-altering work.

Each of us -- from teaching faculty and classified staff to essential workers and professional staff -- can be proud. You are the success story, too. It is your effort and dedication that ensured we read those students’ names during commencement.

The end of 2020 is welcomed by us all. No year in our memory has taken more and offered less. It has prevented us experiencing many life passages, including traditional commencements. At the same time, our campus came together to support students inside and outside of the classroom.

The coming year holds promise to be better, but it will also have challenges that in some ways are no less daunting.

As we process the economic impact of COVID-19 and couple it with a structural deficit the college was already facing, we are on a budget trajectory we must alter. The uncertainty of New York state support adds to the criticality of this moment. This is not easy or pleasant news, here or at other colleges and universities.

Next month, we will initiate a strategic process and timetable to decide what we must do at SUNY Plattsburgh to ensure excellence in the years ahead. This work will be done together, with shared governance and care over the spring semester. It will be deliberate and transparent.
"A Proud Past. A Strong Future" has often been used to describe our college. That is what we will hold onto next year as we map our course ahead, keep students first, and take this opportunity to shape our future and thrive.

I am confident in our ability to do this work because of you. My first year as your president has not been what I imagined, but it has also been much more than I could have hoped for.

I am thankful for each of you who comprise Cardinal Country, who invest in the lives of our students and lead them to graduation and beyond.

Dr. Alexander Enyedi
President