



A Message from University of Kentucky

PRESIDENT ELI CAPILOUTO



Dear Campus Community,

One of the most gratifying aspects of my job is each day I get to watch good people in positions across our campus do important work for our university and the Commonwealth. Not surprisingly, people at other institutions take note.

Such is the case with Provost David W. Blackwell, who recently informed me that he will not extend his tenure as our Provost following the end of his current term in June 2021 as he considers several solicitations about the possibility of becoming a president of another, outstanding institution of higher learning. Another university – and the larger community in higher education of students, scholars and staff – will be better for it.

I am so appreciative of Dave for giving several months' notice of his intent. It is a testament to who he is, and how much he cares about this place, that he wants to be transparent about his intentions as we continue to navigate a challenging period for our institution.

I strongly support Dave in this process and am appreciative that he will continue to be fully committed to our work ahead this semester. As Dave told me recently, and as I have heard him say often, "I love UK. I am effusive about this place."

He has demonstrated that commitment consistently as both Dean of the Gatton College of Business and Economics for six years and as Provost since 2018. As Dean, he placed the College on a trajectory for growth and added innovative programs such as our joint Executive MBA program with the University of Louisville, the Master of Science in Finance program and the Social Enterprise Scholars Honors Pathway. Further, his leadership of the \$65 million campaign to complete the new Gatton College facility will be a lasting legacy of his service.

As Provost, he has been a stabilizing force and steady leader as we have navigated the tremendous turbulence of the last year. He also has remained committed to diversity, equity and inclusion programs. Dave led enhancement of our academic excellence in a number of dimensions, including the hiring of eight deans during his tenure and setting the stage for growth in fully online programs contributing to Kentucky's workforce through UK Online.

As for the future, given the notice that Dave has so graciously provided, I will take the time to

explore how we should move forward.

I will begin immediately on a listening tour, talking to faculty, staff, students and administrators across this campus about where we are as an institution and what we should look for in our next provost. As I reach some conclusions about both process and what we need in our next provost, I will communicate to the campus about next steps, with the goal of being both comprehensive and expeditious.

It is a challenging time for our campus. But I know – without a doubt – that this community will emerge from this time poised and positioned to thrive.

We continue to show a sense of resilience and resolve – a commitment to keeping our community healthy and safe and a focus on how we ensure that we are ready to continue and to expand our presence as Kentucky's university in the months and years ahead. I want to thank Dave and all of you for your continued support for the work we do.

Eli Capilouto
President