

Progress on our Priorities

June 19, 2015

Dear Members of the UK Community,

Since our founding in 1865, the University of Kentucky has been more than a public research university; we have been home to the state's greatest aspirations — an idea of a new and brighter tomorrow. This afternoon, our Board of Trustees reaffirmed its commitment to building upon this idea through a number of important initiatives and plans for our future.

In addition to regular business, the Board:

Discussed the University's next Strategic Plan:

For the past several months, a leadership team from across our campus has been working in earnest to develop the Strategic Plan. Our plan focuses on the future by leveraging our greatest strength — our people — and setting forth ambitious, but achievable objectives for how we nurture their potential and help them succeed. Provost Tim Tracy provided the Board an update (similar to the information provided in a series of forums held across campus at the end of the spring semester) on our progress over the last several months.

There is still more work to do. A successful plan requires concrete implementation steps and definable, measurable methods for assessing progress. During the summer and early in the fall semester, the leadership team will continue its work in developing implementation steps and metrics. The Trustees have decided to make the Strategic Plan the focus of their October 2015 Retreat, at which time they will discuss our vision and action plans in depth.

We will continue to keep you informed and offer additional opportunities for input. Your engagement has already been, and will continue to be, critical to the successful completion of the plan. We look forward to our work, together, to make this vision a reality.

[You can learn more about the Strategic Plan here.](#)

Approved the University's 2015-2016 Operating and Capital Budget:

With the Board's approval, our operating and capital budget for fiscal year 2015-16 totals nearly \$3.4 billion. This budget fundamentally represents the priorities that have directed our work thus far and our role as a flagship and land grant research university.

This budget, more than mere numbers, is about people — our people. We are investing our resources toward creating access and quality for students and their families, while giving them the tools they need to succeed. And we are investing in our faculty and staff, who create an innovative and welcoming environment of learning, scholarship, healing and discovery that promises advances for our state.

[You can learn more about the budget here.](#)

Approved the Next Phase of Our Student Housing Transformation:

The investments we've made across our campus center upon creating one of the best residential, public research institutions in the country. Our continued housing transformation, focused on student success, is a cornerstone of that effort. Today the Board authorized a lease with EdR for a \$74 million, 771 bed housing facility – to be built along University Drive and Complex Drive.

The facility – which will be known as University Flats – will provide apartment-style units for upper class, graduate and professional students. This is the first new housing construction focused on these students.

[You can learn more about this phase of our housing transformation here.](#)

Finally, Provost Tracy also provided exciting news that deans for our colleges of Dentistry and Design will be joining us this fall.

- Dr. Stephanos Kyrkanides will become Dean of the College of Dentistry. Kyrkanides is currently Associate Dean for Research and Faculty Development and Chair of the Department of Orthodontics and Pediatric Dentistry at the Stony Brook University School of Dental Medicine. Stony Brook, part of the New York State higher education system, is one of the leading public research institutions in the country. A release about Dr. Kyrkanides can be read here: <http://uknow.uky.edu/content/renowned-dental-pain-researcher-become-uk-dentistry-dean>
- Professor Mitzi Vernon will assume the position of Dean of the College of Design. Vernon is currently Professor of Industrial Design at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Vernon has works of architecture, furniture, interiors and product design in Phoenix, Los Angeles and Chicago. A release about Professor Vernon can be found here: <http://uknow.uky.edu/content/distinguished-educator-inventor-new-dean-college-design>

Our University is, without question, continuing to build a brighter future. That's a testament to our people — the students, faculty and staff who make this such a special place. I continue to be gratefully sustained by the work we do together, forged through shared values and emboldened by a shared commitment to this place and the Commonwealth that we serve.

Eli Capilouto
President