



## A Message from the **PRESIDENT**

### **Dear Colleagues:**

It's hard for me to believe that a full year has passed since I came to North Carolina. It has been exhilarating, eventful, and productive—but most of all, it's been a privilege and pleasure to work with you and serve our system's students, faculty, and staff, and the citizens of this great state. We've accomplished some great things together already, and we have much work to do.

General Administration (GA) is a big ship, and I don't get to spend nearly enough time making the rounds and seeing all of you—the public servants doing the work every day. To help connect all of us a little better, I'll be sharing regular updates on what's happening across GA; what we're thinking and doing and seeing here in the President's office; and what we're hoping to accomplish in the days ahead.

I also want to hear from all of you and highlight the great work happening every day at the system level. Please continue to bring forward thoughts and ideas for how to improve our efforts and achieve our shared mission. The expertise and experience in this organization are phenomenal, and we're going to need them to meet the big goals we've set (see below, on progress with our Strategic Plan).

If you haven't already, please be sure to check out our [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages, which include updates and feature stories on students, faculty, and alumni of the UNC system. What we do here has a real impact, and I want to do more to share it. In addition, I look forward to seeing you next Wednesday, March 8 at 2 pm in the Spangler Board Room for our first Town Hall of the year.

Thank you for your continued leadership and service to our University and the citizens of this state, and I look forward to spending some time with all of you at our Town Hall next week.

## Strategic Plan

In January, the Board of Governors voted unanimously to approve our new Strategic Plan. As I said in my inaugural address last fall, I believe we have to raise our expectations for all North Carolinians and help a far greater number of our citizens earn a college degree or credential. This plan aims to do just that.

It's a short, focused roadmap for the whole UNC system, not a lengthy set of detailed policy instructions. The idea is to set measurable goals and let campus leaders, faculty, and staff get the job done in a way that fits each community. Different parts of the state have different needs and concerns, and we want to leverage the strength of our 17 institutions to meet those unique needs while working toward a common goal of greater access and completion.

We're encouraging innovative approaches to retention and graduation, and emphasizing the role of technology and data to help us make smarter use of resources. I encourage you to review the [plan](#) and identify where your work fits within these broader goals. I want to hear from everyone as we figure out how to harness GA's leadership. Please bring your thoughts and questions to our Town Hall.

## On the Road in February

I've been spending a lot of time in Raleigh meeting with legislators and other policymakers. Our 2017 budget and policy agenda is closely tied to the Strategic Plan goals, and I think lawmakers see the value in some of the targeted investments we've requested. We're also working hard to implement NC Promise and our Lab Schools initiative, so thanks to everyone who has been working out the details on those important programs. I look forward to sharing our progress as the session gets underway.

At the beginning of February, I [spoke to](#) the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce to discuss how the state's business community can help advocate for our work and support our institutions. The University is widely seen as a tremendous asset to our state, and we need private sector partners to carry that message to policymakers and the public.

I was also in Charlotte [and](#) sat for an interview with Mike Collins of *WFAE*. We had a great conversation on the Strategic Plan, changes at the Department of Education, and — inevitably — HB2. [Give it a listen.](#)

And just this week, I spent an afternoon at Graham High School in Alamance County, meeting with our future students and learning about the challenges of rural and low-income college enrollment. You can read about it [here](#).

## GA Organizational Update

We have made some additional [changes](#) to GA's organizational structure.

Alisa Chapman, Vice President for Academic and University Programs, has transitioned to Visiting Fellow in Public Policy and the Global Research Institute at UNC Chapel Hill. Given the heightened attention to college pathways as part of our Strategic Plan, Peter Hans is helping to coordinate GA's K-12 portfolio, and GEAR UP will move under the Strategy and Policy division overseen by Andrew Kelly.

Online education is now reporting to Academic Affairs overseen by Junius Gonzales, and HR and IT have moved to the Finance and Budget division overseen by Jonathan Pruitt.

Institutional Development, led by Tim Minor, has moved to the External Affairs division under Kevin Howell, and Communications will now report to Meredith Beaton Didier.

We are also glad to welcome several new team members to GA: Carol Harris, Auditor, Internal Audit division; Taylor Libby, Employee Resources Consultant, Human Resources division; Dr. Shun Robinson, Assistant Vice President for Policy Development, Strategy and Policy division; and Meredith Steadman, Special Assistant to the President, President's Office.

In addition, Scott Daugherty, State Director of the North Carolina's Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) and Assistant Vice Chancellor of Economic Development at North Carolina State University, is serving as the interim Vice President of International, Community and Economic Engagement as we look to fill the position.

### **Higher Ed Reading**

I am a firm advocate in having a “nose for news” and look forward to regularly sharing articles, research papers, and studies that are critical to our work together. To this end, I would encourage you to check out the following:

- This great [NYT piece](#) on the need for greater outreach to rural students. They're underrepresented in North Carolina, as they are across the country, and our Strategic Plan calls for specific strategies to boost enrollment from rural counties.
- The [kind words](#) the *News & Observer* had for our Strategic Plan.
- I [weighed in](#) on protections for DACA students in a *Washington Post* op-ed. I'm hopeful we'll see a fair, humane resolution for these young people.
- My good friend, John King, former Secretary of Education, is [taking over as President](#) of The Education Trust. I am looking forward to working with John to boost educational equity at all levels.
- Higher education plays a crucial role in social and economic mobility, and [this report from MDC](#) last year highlights the extent of our challenge here in North Carolina.

