



A Message from the **PRESIDENT**

Dear Colleagues:

Over the past few weeks, we have welcomed more than 60,000 new students to our UNC System institutions. They're coming because they see the value of learning and growing and preparing for a better future. We should all feel honored by that, and determined to let their hopes serve as a guiding light.

Speaking of light (or lack thereof), many of us who work in the Spangler Building enjoyed the near "totality" of the August 21st solar eclipse in the parking lot. Personally, viewing the eclipse made me think about how lucky we are to live in an era of expanding knowledge, when a phenomenon that once inspired fear and anxiety has become a moment for wonder and celebration. That's the power of uncovering and sharing knowledge, and it's the business we're in every day.

Kudos to all of the UNC institutions that held events to educate the public. For those who are curious, UNC Asheville put together a [great graphic](#) showing the level of eclipse coverage at each campus!

Charlottesville, Countering Hate, and the Role of Higher Education

It has been a trying few weeks for all of us — as University employees and as Americans. The images of such ugly ignorance on display in Charlottesville were not only jarring, but also a reminder that the world needs more of what higher education has to offer — more of our citizens schooled in the truth and complexity of history; more people able and willing to empathize with the experiences of others; and more people who understand the strength in pluralism, and the genius of civic institutions that recognize the equality of *all*.

I was proud to join the nearly unbroken chorus of civic and political leaders who have [resoundingly rejected](#) the hatred and bigotry. These are challenging days for colleges and universities, as we have become the [focal point for broader controversies](#). We haven't sought that role, but we must be prepared for it. As events develop at our own institutions — from the ongoing controversy around Silent Sam to the likelihood of controversial speakers seeking a venue in North Carolina — we'll keep you closely informed.

On the Road

After rereading and rewatching *Pride & Prejudice* more times than a person should, I decided to spend my summer vacation walking through the English countryside. It felt great to clear my head for a bit; since I came home I've been preparing for a new school year.

The [BOG meeting in Asheville in July](#) included a fantastic series of presentations on medical research at NC A&T, the College Advising Corps at NCSU and UNC-CH, amazing virtual reality work at School of the Arts, and a whole range of student research and public service at UNCA.

A sincere thanks to Chancellor Mary Grant and our friends at UNCA for hosting the traveling roadshow.

On the way there, I made a stop in Morganton with several Board members to see [the future home of the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics' western campus](#). Everyone in that region is incredibly excited about the chance to expand NCSSM's innovative model to more students, and I can't wait to see more of what Chancellor Todd Roberts and his team envision for the project.

Since then, I've been to Boone, Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem to meet with our chancellors and hear about their plans for the year ahead. It's always a good day when I get to see the work of our campuses up close. I'm excited for another round of visits as the fall semester gets underway.

I spoke to the North Carolina Chamber of Commerce earlier this month about the need to rebuild public confidence in higher education by reconnecting with people who feel cut off from opportunity. A spate of recent polling data raises troubling questions about whether colleges and universities are truly serving as engines of upward mobility, and whether the cultural divide between working-class communities and universities has become so great that it's affecting access for talented students. Read my full remarks [here](#), and check out a [great presentation](#) by early childhood education advocates who took part in the conference.

And just last week, I made an appearance on *Education Matters*, presented by the NC Public School Forum, where I discussed relevant hot topics. You can watch the full episode [here](#).

Jones Street Update

The legislature has been in and out this summer; and their main focus has been on redistricting. They are still finalizing the details, so check back here next time for additional information on what's new in Raleigh.

Employee Engagement

We have been doing a lot more on the employee engagement front—thanks to the creativity of and support from our colleagues Joanna Carey Cleveland, Chris Chiron, Will Johnson, and Taylor Libby. More recently, over 100 members of the UNC-GA staff spent the evening at the Durham Bulls game. It was a great evening (despite the loss)—hope we can do more of these events in the future!



(Re)branding UNC

Soon, the University of North Carolina System will (re)brand—including a new logo, enhanced messaging, and a revised style guide. Please join our (re)branding focus group on Tuesday, September 12 at 3:00 pm in the Executive Conference room of the Spangler Building. RSVP to Camille Barkley at ncbarkley@northcarolina.edu to reserve your spot.

Another Update from Internal Audit

May was Internal Audit Awareness month, and our friends in Internal Audit wanted me to remind you that they're here to help all year round. Everyone is encouraged to contact the internal audit team for advice about new policies and procedures or any activities that seem questionable. The internal [Hotline](#) is a great way to get in touch. See the attached flyer for more information.

GA Staffing Update

We have several new hires over the summer, and I hope you will join me in welcoming these colleagues to the team:

- **Stephanie Bailey**, Director of Community College Partnerships, Academic Affairs
- **Karen Boulas**, Banner Support Operations Specialist, IT
- **Lynn Duffy**, Senior Associate Vice President for Leadership and Talent Development, Human Resources
- **Daniel Harrison**, Associate Vice President for Academic Programming & State Author, Academic Programs, Faculty, and Research, Academic Affairs
- **Crystal Mitchell**, Technology Support Assistant, NCSEAA
- **Robert Myers**, Purchasing and Contract Analyst, Finance and Budget
- **Kevin Shropshire**, SAS Programmer/Analyst, Academic Affairs
- **Drew Smith**, Major Gifts Officer, UNC-TV
- **Rollinda Thomas**, Associate Vice President for Academic Programs, Academic Affairs
- **Sara Ulm**, Director, North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program, Strategy and Policy

- **Lisa Yanke**, Communications Director, Go Global
- **Catherine Zomberg**, Data and Analytics Associate, Academic Affairs

We've also had a few title changes over the past month, please help me in congratulating them:

- **Dennis Beiting**, Digital Media Manager, UNCTV
- **Tomekia Brown**, Program Assistant, NCSEAA
- **Sean Bulson**, Interim Vice President for Academic & University K12 Programs, Strategy and Policy
- **Virginia Hooks**, Mail/Scan and Facilities Operations Supervisor, NCSEAA
- **Lattina Riley**, Kids & Educational Program Assistant, UNCTV
- **Erica Starke-Knight**, Kids and Education Engagement Producer, UNCTV
- **Meredith Steadman**, Associate Secretary of the University, President's Office

And lastly, as we have sought to more strategically focus our policy work, we have moved the Office of Academic & University K-12 Programs, led by Sean Bulson, into the Division of Strategy and Policy, led by Andrew Kelly.

Nose for News

Time to set down those beach books and dive back into the nonfiction! To get the policy wonkery started:

- In the *Charlotte Observer* last month, I [highlighted the strong vote of confidence](#) our lawmakers offered with the strongest University budget in years. With major investments in data, research, and lower tuition through NC Promise, we've shown once again that North Carolina is a leader in public support for higher education.
- But nationally, that support is splintering. There have been a number of troubling surveys about the [partisan divide](#) in perceptions of higher education, and the growing [skepticism of working-class students](#) toward colleges and universities. We have to tackle these challenges head-on.
- There's a new book out by Brookings Institution scholar Richard Reeves called [Dream Hoarders](#), about the obstacles to social mobility in the United States. David Brooks mentioned it in [a July column](#), highlighting the role of higher education in *creating*, rather than lowering, cultural barriers to the middle class.
- Lengthy and [fascinating piece](#) in *National Affairs* by a lawyer and AppState grad from North Wilkesboro, writing about the view from our state's struggling rural communities.

There's plenty to enjoy on the UNC system's [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages, so be sure to follow. And let me know if there's something going on in your department or your corner of the higher ed universe that I ought to know!

