



Board of Trustees Meeting

December 14, 2018

Report of the Board Chairman, Matthew Marko

When our Board last met in October, we had an agenda full of information on how we are restructuring ESF's business model onto a more sustainable path. Interim President Amberg continues to impress us with his dedication, acumen, and collaborative style of leadership and adaptive management. Our frequent and routine meetings continue to be honest and direct, innovative, and productive. We also continue to stay engaged with Chancellor Johnson and the impressive team she is building in Albany. We had a very productive Annual Conference for the Association of College Trustees at SUNY System Administration, where the Chancellor introduced us to her new Provost Dr. Tod Laursen. It is great to see the momentum they are building with SUNY, and I look forward to hearing her State of the University System address in January. ESF is well equipped to take full advantage of the direction SUNY is heading under Kristina's leadership. Thank you Trustee DeMarchi for your continued dedication and leadership as President of ACT, and to CDO Carter for your participation on the conference panel discussing Diversity and Inclusion across SUNY.

This last summer, the board asked the administration to pursue a restorative practice process for the College community. At our October meeting, we further explained that restorative practices embody an inclusive process intended to improve, repair, and restore relationships between people. We believed then, as we do now, that the College would benefit from this process. I am pleased to see progress with this effort. Vice Chair Talbot and Chief of Staff Lichtenstein started our initial exploration into options, including having a series of discussions with the International Institute for Restorative Practices, and subsequently, with The Consortium for Inclusion and Equity.

Related to this, on behalf of the Board, I want to applaud Dr. Amberg, and the ESF community for its broad engagement with the Discovery Challenge. We recognize

the sense of excitement it has generated across the campus. That process has certainly helped to bring our faculty, staff, students, and administrators closer together surrounding the development of many worthy potential initiatives. We'll learn more about these activities from the President this morning.

In addition, we support the upcoming joint faculty/administration consultation visit with SUNY's University Faculty Senate in January where issues such as shared governance and role clarification will be discussed. We see both the Discovery Challenge and UFS consultation as important components of a restorative process, and commend the College community for its commitment to both. We will work with the ESF community in the coming months as we collaboratively identify other specific restorative process approaches we would like to move forward with. Dr. Amberg and his staff, as well as the board of trustees are committed to fully participating in this overall process so that we can further heal the relationships across the breadth of the organization.

On November 28, a group of campus stakeholders kicked-off an effort to develop an ESF Clean Energy Master Plan, which I was honored to participate in, and look forward to President Amberg sharing more details with you later in his presentation. Our agenda is jam packed, with reports on financials, student affairs, report on diversity initiatives, and more. Another semester has flown by and we have many challenges before us, but we are invigorated by the influx of another remarkable class of first-year students and future leaders.

Last night at the Trustee dinner hosted by President Amberg, we toured the new home of the Roosevelt Wild Life Collection Research and Education Center below us here in the Gateway Center. We received a remarkable presentation led by Dr. Rebecca Rundell, Head Curator, and Dr. James Gibbs, Director of the RWLC. It was so impressive, I think I received a full college credit hour for participating.

To hear firsthand from undergraduate students James Lee and Monica Banghart about how ESF has in a short 4 years – transformed their lives, provides all the justification needed for our board and this institution to continue its mission for another 100 years. Masters student Emlyn Clark, and PhD candidate David Bullis, gracefully and passionately assisted our tour, and made sure we all got a turn to

hold an ostrich egg. Thank you Ron Giegrich, Collections Manager, for your relentless dedication and commitment to this world-class collection, finally in a home fit for its content. And, after all of this, what struck me the most, was not the polar bear, the zebra, or the minke whale skull – but the smiles on Jame’s and Monica’s faces in the photos of them conducting their research. As we all know, love what you do, and you’ll never work a day in your life.

It is clear the best days of ESF lie ahead, and I am excited to see the hard work from the last few years come to fruition.

Lastly, I am hereby asking Trustee Fitts to Chair a Nominating Committee for Election of Board Officers which will deliberate with fellow trustees as necessary to provide recommendations at our Annual meeting in early 2019. Trustees DeMarchi and Poisson are also appointed to this committee.

Thank you.