



July 24, 2009

Dear Campus Community:

Although I recognize that many members of the campus community may not be on campus due to well-deserved summer vacations, I want to share information about the Board of Trustees retreat that was held July 12-15 in Henderson, Nev. The site for the retreat was chosen because it was the most economical in terms of facilities and transportation costs for the trustees, who have to travel from many different locations.

Board members agreed that this was a necessary and highly productive meeting. During the retreat we had a number of excellent work sessions designed to address many important issues that time prevents us from discussing during our regular board meetings on campus. These topics included the Long Range Strategic Plan (LRSP), the Presidential Search Advisory Committee (PSAC), enrollment (recruitment, retention, and graduation rates), a report on branding and marketing, and the upcoming transition of University's presidency. Additionally, we reviewed Board of Trustees operations and committee structures.

The following action items were approved:

- The regular board meeting in October will be postponed to December. Instead, the major focus of the October meeting on campus will be dedicated almost exclusively to the presidential search and selection.
- A gala will be held to honor Dr. Robert Davila to commemorate his service as president of the University. More information about this event will be forthcoming.
- Goals and strategic plans specific to the Laurent Clerc National Deaf Education Center will be reviewed and approved separately from the University's general LRSP.

A great deal of time, attention, and focus by the board was given to the LRSP and how best to implement this vitally important roadmap for Gallaudet's future. President Davila, Dr. Richard Lytle, executive director of strategic planning and special assistant to the president, and the Gallaudet administrative team are working this summer on implementing the parts of the plan related to enrollment, as well as initiatives to save money. Once the fall semester is underway, we will host a series of community forums to provide more information about why universities, including Gallaudet, must adapt to the changing landscape of higher education today and to further explain what our process will entail for implementing the LRSP.

Once again, the Board of Trustees thanks Dr. Davila for his exemplary leadership, and extends its appreciation as well to everyone who has been involved in the development and implementation of the LRSP. In addition, the board commends the entire Gallaudet community, including our alumni, for its valuable support throughout the planning process. As constituent groups and stakeholders, we all recognize and can appreciate the fact that Gallaudet University MUST change if it is to meet the challenges of a changing world. Team Gallaudet can be proud to say that it has successfully addressed many difficult challenges over the past few years.

We remain confident that the Gallaudet community will continue to work together to strive for excellence and provide the very best academic programs for all deaf and hard of hearing students seeking a high quality learning experience. Thank you, Team Gallaudet! I also want to thank my colleagues on the Board of Trustees who continue to take enormous amounts of time from their jobs and from their friends and families to provide this vitally important service to Gallaudet.

I join the entire board in recognizing all the hard work that is taking place this summer to make the opening of the 2009–2010 academic year better than ever. Please accept our thanks and best wishes for an enjoyable and productive summer. We look forward to seeing you in October.

Sincerely,

Ben Soukup
Chair