



August 29, 2016

To the Stevens Community,

Welcome back to a new academic year and to a campus that is bursting with energy, progress and numerous positive developments!

Last week, I had the opportunity to welcome the cohort of 24 exceptional new faculty who have joined us from universities such as Columbia University, Stanford, and Carnegie Mellon. Conversations with such talented new members of our community give me both pride and confidence that the future of this university has never looked brighter. I look forward to all they will contribute and accomplish as members of the faculty at Stevens and ask that you join me in making them feel welcome and productive here.

Another highlight of last week—one that I anticipate with great enthusiasm every summer—was the arrival of the new class of freshmen students. The Class of 2020, selected from a record number of applications last year, comes to us with the most impressive academic credentials in Stevens' history. You may be interested to learn some striking statistics about the Class of 2020. Compared with last year's entering class:

- the number of female students increased 13%
- the number of freshmen in the School of Business increased 41%
- the number of freshmen in the College of Arts and Letters increased 57%

In addition, the middle 50% SAT score of the Class of 2020 reached an all time high of 1250-1440!

I have also enjoyed meeting with many members of the new cohort of graduate students to join us this fall. Total applications increased 36%; selectivity improved over last fall; and, we expect a record-setting year in graduate enrollment as well.

Several key academic transitions have recently taken place, and I am delighted that Dr. Christophe Pierre officially started his appointment as Stevens' Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs as of Aug. 22, 2016, and Dr. Kelland Thomas is now fully immersed in his duties as Dean of the College of Arts and Letters. Both bring vision, creativity, experience, and vitality to the academic enterprise and will have a significant impact on this university for many years to come. Please join me in doing everything possible to assist them as we take Stevens to the next tier of academic excellence.

The search for the next Dean of the Schaefer School of Engineering and Science has commenced, with the goal of naming a new Dean by the spring semester. Likewise, we have re-started the search for the Vice President for Human Resources, hired a search firm to conduct a national search, and plan to have the next VPHR in place by the beginning of 2017.

You may have noticed a great deal of construction and renovation activity throughout the campus. Over the summer months, the following projects have been completed or are nearing completion:

- Relocation of the Office of the Provost, the Office of the Vice Provost for Academics, and the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness to the 13th floor of the Howe Center. This relocation of academic leadership to the Howe Center opens space on lower campus for faculty offices as well as additional academic and meeting spaces. In the near-term and through his orientation period, Provost Pierre will also maintain an office on the fourth floor of the Edwin A. Stevens building.
- Relocation of the Division of Finance from the 11th floor of the Howe Center to 5 Marine View Plaza in Hoboken. This and related moves create additional space for student services and student-focused administrative functions in the Howe Center. Over the next year, the 11th floor of Howe will be renovated to accommodate the Office of the Provost and various academic administration functions.
- Renovation of the 8th floor of the Howe Center for the Office of Development and Alumni Engagement, consolidating staff that was formerly dispersed on three different floors in Howe.
- Renovation of five classrooms in the EAS Building and the Visual Art & Technology studio in Morton 203.
- Completion of the new Hanlon Laboratory for Financial Analytics and Data Visualization on the first floor of the Babbio Center.
- Construction of a new Bio-Manufacturing Lab in McLean 308 and a new Microscopy Lab in McLean 109, to be completed in early Fall.
- Creation of a 32-station student workspace on the second floor of the S.C. Williams Library.
- Improvement of two student dining facilities, including new furniture, graphics, lighting, and additional seating in America's Cup, and the addition of a café area outside of the Pierce Dining Hall, to be completed in September.
- Renovation of the Schaefer Center lobby with new flooring, modernized lighting, a new multifunctional lounge and event space, and updated Stevens Athletics graphics and branding.
- Addition of a concrete paver walkway between Alexander House and Humphreys Hall.
- Reconstruction and restoration of the Gatehouse, with Campus Police functions resuming in Gatehouse.

Completion of the new American Bureau of Shipping (ABS) Engineering Center on Hudson Street is close, with a ribbon-cutting scheduled for Nov. 17, 2016. We will begin construction of Phase I of the Babbio Garage expansion later this fall, with expected completion and the addition of 266 parking spaces in August, 2017. Likewise, we are nearing the final stages of the regulatory process for the North Building, an enabling project that will serve as “swing space” for the programs currently operating in the Lieb Building until the Gateway building opens in 2019. Pending regulatory approvals, this building will be available in late Spring 2017. In addition, work has begun on a campus rezoning process with the City of Hoboken, with the goal of accommodating

strategic initiatives such as new dormitories and a University Center, both high priorities for Stevens.

We will soon be installing a campus-wide CCTV campus security system, initiating a campus signage and way finding program, and relocating the SU+RE House to its permanent home at Liberty Science Center which welcomes 650,000 visitors annually, all of which will be completed during the 2016-17 academic year.

A number of IT and networking upgrades have also been completed in recent months, and a number of important initiatives have been launched or are in progress, placing Stevens on the cutting edge of technology and highlighting our commitment to an important strategic priority: *Technology at Our Core*:

- Upgrade and launch of the Virtual Learning Environment, piloted in AY 15-16, which uses private cloud services to host and run specialized science and engineering software virtually for students, faculty, and researchers. The VLE is fully operational for all entering and returning undergraduate and graduate students in Fall 2016.
- The Stevens Data Center on the lower level of the S.C. Williams Library was completed in Spring 2016 and provides high resiliency power and cooling systems that enable business continuity of Stevens' core operations including research systems in the event of power loss, major storm events, and other disasters.
- A state-of-the-art technology support center will open in September within a newly constructed space on the mall of the S.C. Williams Library; it will provide enhanced information technology support for the campus community.
- An external wireless network will be completed in September, making wireless connectivity available from any laptop or mobile device across the entire Stevens campus, indoors and out.
- Migration of the existing Nortel PBX telephone system to Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) systems will be completed by November and will integrate telephones and mobile devices with the Exchange email network to provide a unified communications environment for teleconferencing, instant messaging, email, voicemail and more.
- As one of nine partner institutions, work is well underway on development of the next generation student information system, Workday Student, which will be launched in AY 17-18. This system will replace the current antiquated SIS system and streamline business processes across core academic functions, student financial aid, student financials, and other student services.

We finished FY16 with \$20.6 million in gifts, and overall, are tracking ahead of our goal for the \$150 million capital campaign with \$92.7 raised to date. Unaudited year-end financial results project positive operating results for FY16 and continued improvements in the University's cash position, even after numerous strategic investments and significant capital expenditures.

The research portfolio continues to strengthen, with FY16 awards estimated at \$34.9 million, down from an unusual and record-setting year last year (FY15), but exceeding the awards in FY14, FY13, FY12 and FY11.

Other momentous events that occurred in the last several months which will have a transformative and long-lasting impact on Stevens include:

- The opening of the new Stevens Venture Center in the Pearson Building on the Hoboken waterfront, an incubator for the entrepreneurial pursuits of our faculty and students.
- An award of \$19.25 million in grants and subsidized bonds to Stevens to support construction of the Academic Gateway Complex through a competitive process by the State of New Jersey.

Stevens continues to rise in various rankings of career outcomes, programs, and services. A few recently-published rankings confirm this: *PayScale* ranks Stevens 5th in the nation for Engineering Schools by Salary potential, 10th in the nation for mid-career salary of graduates, and 12th in the nation for 20-year net return on investment. *The Princeton Review* ranks Stevens 6th in the nation for Best Career Placement and names Stevens among the 50 “Colleges That Create Futures.” *Best Degree Programs* ranks Stevens the top small college for a STEM degree, while *Money* names Stevens one of the 25 “Colleges That Can Land You a 6-Figure Career Without Grad School.” *USA Today* ranks Stevens 7th in the nation in their list of the top 10 engineering colleges and 9th in the nation for an undergraduate computer science degree. Finally, *Forbes* ranks Stevens 6th among Colleges with Highest Salaries After Graduation.

By all accounts, Stevens has made phenomenal progress over the last five years, thanks to the incredible efforts and tremendous dedication of the entire campus community. A comparison of key metrics from Fall 2011 to Fall 2016 demonstrates this remarkable progress:

- Freshman applications increased 106%
- Size of freshman cohort increased 33%
- Total undergraduate enrollment increased 25%
- SAT scores of incoming freshman increased 60 points at the 25th percentile and 50 points at the 75th percentile
- The freshman retention rate increased from 92% to 95%
- The six-year graduation rate increased from 79% to 83%
- Graduate applications increased 127%
- 60 new faculty were added, an increase of 25%
- Research awards increased 15%
- Gifts and pledges increased 338%

I wish you a stimulating, productive, and very enjoyable fall semester, and I look forward to seeing you on campus in the next few weeks. Please make sure you put Oct. 5, 2016 on your calendar for the eighth installment of the President’s Distinguished Lecture Series featuring Dr. Curtis Carlson, former president and CEO, SRI International, who will deliver the keynote lecture, “Innovation and

Education,” which will explore the role of education in building a cycle of continuous innovation in the U.S.

Per aspera ad astra,



Nariman Farvardin
President

