

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO
McMASTER UNIVERSITY'S BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MARCH 5, 2020**

Update on Key Challenges and Priorities for the 2019/20 Year

Establishing the Leadership Team

I noted in my report to the Board in October 2019 that my biggest priority for the current academic year was to navigate the University successfully through the period of Presidential transition. With the Presidential search process complete, we are still in a period of transition, since we now need to undertake searches for a permanent Provost and Vice-President (Academic), and a permanent Vice-President (Research). Given that the establishment of a stable leadership team is absolutely critical to our ability to advance the University and undertake the initiatives we are currently engaged in, we have set an ambitious target and are aiming to fill these positions by July 1, 2020, if at all possible. The Selection Committees have been constituted and will begin meeting shortly, and I would like to express my appreciation to the Board Members who have agreed to serve on these committees and support the University through these important processes. We have recruitment consultants in place to support both searches, which I expect to be provincial, national, and potentially international, in scope.

Setting Course

As I signalled at our December meeting, one of my early priorities is to engage the entire McMaster community in a visioning process, focused on considering our aspirations and ambitions for the University over the next twenty to thirty years. Over the last few months I have had a wide variety of meetings with faculty, staff and student groups, departments and units across our campus, as well as with alumni, donors and supporters of McMaster to learn more about the historic goals for the institution and discuss our individual and collective aspirations for the future. I will continue this process of informal conversation over the coming months and plan to broaden and formalize this by posing a number of key questions to our community via web and social media platforms and inviting responses and feedback. The ultimate goal is to draw out the vision and aspirations for McMaster over the longer-term.

Once that process is complete, I plan to move into a more detailed strategic planning phase, which will see us establishing operational-level plans and goals for the next two to three years. I am developing and working through this process with the assistance of a consultant who is highly experienced in both the Canadian and U.S. higher education sectors, and who is providing insights and guidance on best practices around visioning and strategic planning across universities. I am currently engaged in developing the details and timelines, as well as working with the University's Communications team with regard to the outreach strategy, and expect to have more to report on this in the Spring.

Brighter World Research Initiative (BWRI)/Revenue for Research

Work on the development of the *Brighter World Research Initiative* is gathering pace. We intend this to be the most ambitious campaign in McMaster's history, and to advance the University's goal of attracting and developing partnerships and funding opportunities, and increasing research revenue into the University from a variety of sources. The Acting Vice-President (Research), the

Deans, and University Advancement are working with researchers across the campus to define the areas of focus for BWRI and establish project teams before we formally launch the initiative.

Developing and Building Partnerships

I am committed to continuing the University's work to build relationships locally, nationally and internationally. As part of this, the senior team continues to be focused on developing our international partnerships in a strategic way, as well as building on our positive relations more locally, within the city, the region and with the Six Nations community. We also enjoy excellent relationships with Mohawk College, Hamilton Health Sciences and St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton, and will continue to build on and strengthen those relationships as we find new ways to serve and support our local communities. We are also focused on building relationships and partnerships with industry and business partners, and with all three levels of government. Our recent McMaster Ottawa Day, held on January 27, provided an excellent opportunity to highlight McMaster's research strengths to a variety of Ministers, government officials, civil servants and supporters of McMaster. This year our focus was on promoting the cutting-edge work underway on our campus around antimicrobial resistance, and raising awareness and advocating for support for McMaster's Nuclear Reactor and related nuclear-focused projects.

As Board Members know, the University's international profile and success in the various rankings form an important component of building our global reputation. Building our overall profile is also crucial as we seek to connect McMaster around the world, and develop the relationships and partnerships that will make our institution, and the work we do, relevant on a global scale. It is increasingly clear that it is only by building partnerships and collaborating across borders that we can hope to solve the big challenges facing our world. Over the last year McMaster has been engaged in a dedicated strategic focus on building relationships and partnerships with European universities. As a result we now have a range of joint Ph.D. programs in place in areas as diverse as Anthropology, Chemistry, Kinesiology, Global Health, Geography and Automotive Engineering, and are engaged in building on these connections to develop research partnerships and collaborations across Europe. As these connections extend, so too will our sphere of influence and our ability to contribute effectively to addressing major societal issues, attract faculty and students from an increasingly wide range of different countries, and deepen and advance our research partnerships and collaborations.

Finalizing our Funding Agreement

I reported on the Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA3) process in some detail in my last report to the Board in December. This document, which is essentially the funding contract that the provincial government will enter into with each University and College, outlines agreed areas of program focus and includes a range of metrics by which institutions will be measured. We recently submitted our updated draft following further discussions with the Ministry and expect this to be finalized prior to the Ministry's target date of March 31, 2020.

As noted previously, the most difficult aspect for McMaster has been the requirement to define a limited number of areas of program strength, which the Ministry has been insisting should include no more than approximately 50 per cent of our enrolment. The Provost's Office developed and worked through a range of scenarios with the Deans before determining how best to respond to this in a way that appropriately reflects our campus and aspirations, while minimizing any potential financial risk to the institution. Even though we have been required to

define specific areas for the purposes of the performance metrics, we have made use of the SMA3 narrative to highlight the role played by every Faculty in contributing to McMaster's success and strength.

Streamlining Administrative Processes

Following the recent review of HR services across the campus, work is well underway on the process of addressing the range of issues identified. A highly-experienced consultant has been hired to support the planning and implementation processes, an action plan has been developed and priorities identified, a key team of accountable leaders has been put in place, a communications plan is being finalized, and training for those who will be involved in process mapping and documenting work flows and standard operating procedures is underway. The goal is to demonstrate a number of high-level improvements to the campus community as quickly as possible, and encourage ongoing engagement with and support of the project.

Mitigating Emerging Risks

Planning is underway for the Board to receive a detailed update from the Audit and Risk Committee on the University's enterprise risk management processes, but in view of the potential magnitude of the risk I thought it important to highlight the work and planning that is underway and ongoing with regard to the coronavirus outbreak. The University has a dedicated web-page, accessible from the *Daily News*, which is regularly updated as further information and advice is obtained. We follow the advice issued by the Government of Canada with regard to travel, which is monitored closely by our Environmental & Occupational Health Support Services team, and follow the guidance from public health agencies at the local, provincial and federal level, as they continue to monitor the outbreak, conduct surveillance and appropriate laboratory testing, and provide public health and infection control advice. We have provided responses to Frequently Asked Questions for those with concerns, and members of our Student Wellness Centre are available to provide advice and assistance. The University has also been engaged in business continuity planning and consideration of the potential impacts of a pandemic on our operations and will continue to monitor this over the coming months.

CAMPUS UPDATE

McMaster mourned the loss of two PhD Students and a former Postdoctoral Fellow

The University tragically lost two PhD Students from the Faculty of Engineering, and one former Postdoctoral Fellow, in the crash of Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752 in Tehran on January 8, 2020.

The McMaster Iranian Student Association held a vigil for Iman Aghabali and Mehdi Eshaghian, who were both researchers at the McMaster Automotive Research Centre, and Siavash Maghsoudlou Estarabadi, who had worked in the Faculty of Health Sciences until 2018. Community members came together from across the University to pay tribute, share memories and reflect on this tragic event. The University has been working to support and assist the many friends, peers and colleagues who were affected, and has also been providing assistance to the families.

McMaster wins Health Promotion Canada Award for Tobacco and Smoke-Free Campus Policy

McMaster has won a 2019 Organization Achievement Award from Health Promotion Canada for its smoke-free campus policy, which has been in effect since January 1, 2018. The University was nominated for the award by Hamilton Public Health, a collaborative partner in the policy.

Three McMaster Graduates receive inaugural Order of Hamilton Award

Kenneth Hall, Robin McKee and Anne Pearson were recognized with inaugural Order of Hamilton awards, announced during Mayor Fred Eisenberger's annual New Year's levee on January 5. The award recognizes Hamiltonians who have made an exceptional impact on the city through volunteerism.

New York Times Columnist to be inaugural Faculty of Science Journalist in Residence

Gretchen Reynolds, New York Times health columnist and bestselling author, will help the Faculty of Science strengthen media literacy and science communication skills among students and faculty. She will spend the first two weeks of her residency learning about the Faculty, and the second two weeks sharing her expertise by hosting workshops and moderating community events with Faculty of Science researchers.

McMaster joins International Digital Credentials Consortium

McMaster has become a founding member of an international digital academic credentials group whose members include top institutions from around the world, including MIT, Harvard and the University of Toronto. The group aims to create a trusted, distributed and shared infrastructure that becomes the standard for issuing, storing, displaying and verifying digital academic credentials.

Psychotherapy Program to begin at McMaster

McMaster's Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neuroscience will be offering a new Master of Science in Psychotherapy program starting in September 2020. The full-time program will be 20 consecutive months. The goal of the program is to prepare professionals for registration with the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario and for a career as an independent practitioner.

Midwifery Program first to be accredited in Canada

McMaster's Midwifery Education Program has another first to add to its accomplishments. It has recently become the inaugural program to receive accreditation from the Canadian Association for Midwifery Education.

Bachelor of Technology Engineering Programs receive Business School Accreditation

Three BTech programs at the W. Booth School of Engineering Practice and Technology are the first engineering programs in Ontario to be accredited by the Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs. This makes the School the only one in North America with ACBSP-accredited baccalaureate programs.

Research

A new Virtual Reality app explores McMaster's Nuclear Reactor

McMasterVR: Nuclear Facilities is available on the Apple App Store and Google Play, and allows users with a Google Cardboard headset to explore the nuclear reactor in 3D. Users can also watch interviews with reactor staff and learn about the reactor and how it's used.

Antibiotics discovered that kill bacteria in a new way

Researchers in the David Braley Centre for Antibiotic Discovery have discovered a new group of antibiotics with a unique approach to attacking bacteria, making it a promising clinical candidate against antimicrobial resistance.

McMaster Chemists find a new way to break down old tires

A team of Chemists at McMaster has discovered an innovative way to break down and dissolve the rubber used in automobile tires, a process which could lead to new recycling methods and improve a process that has so far proven to be expensive, difficult and inefficient.

Student Success

Engineering Student wins prestigious Global Innovation Award

Third-year Biomedical and Mechanical Engineering student, Lianna Genovese, has won the U21 RISE Award for Innovation for her invention Guided Hands, a device that enables people with limited hand function to write, paint, draw and use a tablet. The device uses a 3D-printed ergonomic handpiece to help people with motor disorders – including dystonia, ALS, Huntington's disease, arthritis, stroke and spinal cord injuries – to complete everyday tasks.

DeGroot Students win top Business School Competitions

Competing against more than 1,000 other students from schools across the country, McMaster undergraduate and graduate business students won a record number of trophies – 17 – at national business school competitions in January, including the MBA Games, the John Molson MBA International Case Competition, the JDC Central Business Competition and the Battle on Bay.

McMaster Student first Canadian to be awarded prestigious Aerospace Fellowship

Now in the final year of her electrical engineering degree, Hira Nadeem is Canada's first Brooke Owens Fellow. The award recognizes 40 exceptional women and members of gender minority groups in aerospace each year for their talent, competency, commitment to service and creativity.