

Presidential Update to the Community

March 21, 2019



After capturing the MAC Commonwealth championship (above), men's basketball earned its first-ever trip to the NCAA Tournament, advancing to the second round.

Welcome back from Spring Break!

February and March were bountiful months for Arcadia—from celebrating Black History Month, to making Athletics history, to addressing campus expression, to progressing in discussions with our adjunct faculty, to upgrading our software systems, to announcing a historic gift from a true visionary. We continue to build on the momentum generated by the Arcadia community over the past 11 months and look forward to celebrating as the 2018-19 academic year comes to a close.



We all breathe a sigh of relief when we can report that all of our Preview students arrived home safely from their transformative journeys. #previewtheworld

Ours Is a Collective Humanity

As a member of this global University community, I am deeply affected by the horrific murders at the Christchurch, New Zealand mosques last week. Far too often, we bear witness to senseless acts of violence. Arcadia must do its part to work for peace and fight against injustice. In addition to the work underway to enhance Arcadia's social impact, in the coming months, we will begin the process of building a justice framework for the University. Ours is a collective humanity, and we all play a role in facilitating a peaceful, productive world.

Leadership Search Updates

As a final restructuring of the Office of the President, I will replace the open administrative line with the position **Director of Strategic Initiatives**. A direct report and member of my Cabinet, this position will manage and deliver on a variety of administrative and executive duties, including special project management, strategic planning, and implementation support for key organizational initiatives. A search committee for the position has been formed, and the position will be posted online shortly; we hope to have it filled by the end of this semester. A special thanks to Laura Baldwin for filling this role in the interim and helping to develop the position.

Several leadership searches are underway with the recruitment consulting assistance of Diversified Search, including for a **Vice President and Chief Information Officer**, a **Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs**, and a **Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations**.

The work of the **Vice President and Chief Information Officer** search committee has been broadened. The Committee will be co-chaired by Lorna Stern, Vice President of Arcadia University and Executive Director of The College of Global Studies, and Kim Paris, Operations Manager for Enrollment Management. The current search committee will continue with members Rick Arras, Tom Egan, Brian Eckenrode, Nicole Zucker, Dian Taylor-Alleyne, John Zottola, and will include support in an advisory capacity from Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees Ken Wierman. This position was elevated to Vice President and Chief Information Officer to emphasize the importance of having an innovative and entrepreneurial information and technology thought leader and strategist as part of Cabinet.

The **Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs** search committee has narrowed the pool to 10 candidates for personal interviews. After the next round of interviews, the committee will decide on which finalists to bring to campus for interviews and sessions throughout April. A schedule will be announced shortly.

The **Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations** search committee has interviewed applicants and invited four candidates to campus for March 26, 27, 28, and April 1. Each candidate will meet with campus groups, including members of the Board of Trustees, University Advancement, Alumni Relations, Staff Council, Faculty Senate, President's Cabinet, Provost's Cabinet, Faculty Advisory Group, and the Student Government Organization.

The **Director of Public Safety** position also has been posted. Andrew Goretsky, dean of Students, has agreed to chair the search committee, which will include staff, faculty, and students. The committee will work on a quickly moving timeline and hopes to host candidates on campus for community interviews before the close of the academic year.

Community Engagement

Open Expression

On Feb. 22, Dr. Sigal Ben-Porath, professor of Education, Philosophy, and Political Science at the University of Pennsylvania and author of *Free Speech on Campus*, presented at an Arcadia UKnighted event hosted by the [Open Expression Task Force](#). Dr. Ben-Porath opened a dialogue for the community to discover how the campus could embrace open expression, which concluded with roundtable workshops on draft principles that the Task Force developed through situational analysis based on events that had occurred at Arcadia and other institutions. The Task Force will work on establishing sub-groups to address individual issues of open expression that resulted from the Feb. 22 meeting before finalizing Arcadia's principles of open expression.

Shared Governance Committee

The [Shared Governance Committee](#) is pleased to draft the bylaws of a University governance structure. The committee anticipates sharing the draft for review in the coming weeks, followed by an open comment and review period across the University.

Social Innovation Task Force

The [Social Innovation Task Force](#) has expanded membership and is drafting a framework for the University to coordinate, expand, and reward social innovation efforts. To inform the proposal writing, the group divided into subcommittees to look at models of coordinated impact work at other institutions, to develop an institutional inventory of ongoing community work, and to review data gathered by other committees. The task force welcomes participation from students, faculty, staff, and trustees to work toward key aspects of building a proposal for the strategic plan. For more information, contact co-chairs Dr. Alison Lalond-Wyant (lalondwyanta@arcadia.edu), associate dean for Teaching and Learning, or Carole Loeffler (loefflerc@arcadia.edu), associate professor and chair of Visual and Performing Arts.

Mid-year Financial Update to the Community

The mid-fiscal year 2019 financial operating results include an approximate \$4.2 million surplus for Glenside and a \$2.7 million surplus for TCGS. Non-operations for the same time period resulted in a loss of approximately \$435,000, due mainly to the lower value of the endowment in the first half of the fiscal year. Since then, we have seen a recovery in endowment value and in the non-operational gain resulting from the sale of our Biocoat stock, which should place non-operations well on the side of positive by fiscal year-end. While the spring semester traditionally brings in less operating revenue, due to fewer students than in the fall and also increased spending due to initiatives such as Preview and Commencement, we estimate our overall operating results for Fiscal Year 2019 to be marginally positive.

Also, the University is working on the 5-year Budget Model to present to the Board of Trustees in May. We are planning on adopting the generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) budget model. The

model, which will benefit institutional planning and reporting in the long-term, has been tested successfully at other institutions and will give Arcadia the capability to forecast the impact of strategic initiatives by using regression analysis of our last seven years of enrollments, institutional aid, budgets, and actual financial data. Updates will be given in May on our financial progress.

Fundraising results through University Advancement continue to be positive, with overall gifts and bequests received as of Feb. 28 totaling \$1,650,411, a 10.8 percent increase over this time last year:

	As of 2/28/2018	As of 2/28/2019
Capital Funds	\$25,177	\$101,250
Endowment Funds	\$542,221	\$497,034
Restricted Annual	\$585,212	\$699,894
Unrestricted Annual	<u>\$336,940</u>	<u>\$352,233</u>
TOTAL	\$1,489,550	\$1,650,411

Standard & Poor’s Rating Renewal

On Feb. 20, I participated in a call along with Eric Nelson, vice president of Finance and treasurer, and with Standard & Poor’s regarding our bond rating renewal. We were notified that our rating will be maintained at the investment grade BBB stable. The rating agency stated that our profile was characterized by a diverse program mix, supported by The College of Global Studies, stable retention, and improved graduation rates.

The Middle States Peer Review

As noted in my Middle States community message sent Feb. 27, Arcadia’s reaccreditation team, led by Drs. Jonathan Shandell, Nancy Rosoff, Sandi Crenshaw, and John Noakes, welcomed our Middle States Commission on Higher Education peer evaluator team on Feb. 24-27. Thank you to the community members who participated in the working committees and attended the open sessions with our peer review team.

We received the peer review team’s final evaluation on March 11. Arcadia has 10 business days to fact check the document and respond with any edits or changes.

We are grateful to our peer evaluation team for its work during this evaluation process. Their report highlighted that Arcadia University is a vibrant independent university with a strong commitment to its mission and its students. That mission is supported by a dedicated faculty, administration, and staff who are to be commended for the transparency and passion with which they are responding to the needs of its community and to the challenges that it has faced with turbulent leadership and in difficult economic times. University leadership is forming a stable administrative team and fostering a learning environment focused on strengthening the institution and its programs.

The preliminary report suggests that the University met six of the seven standards. To meet Standard VI: Planning, Resources, and Institutional Improvement, Arcadia has a plan in place to improve and coordinate assessment practices and processes. Dr. Rebecca Kohn has convened an **Institutional Effectiveness Committee** to coordinate this important work on assessment as well as ongoing work related to maintaining the seven standards for accreditation. Dr. Sandi Crenshaw will lead the committee as it works with all academic and non-academic units to develop and implement a comprehensive and consistent regimen for the institution that is clearly documented, involves a continuous improvement process, encourages constituent participation, and guides institutional resource allocation.

We anticipate receiving Middle States' final report in June, which we are confident will affirm our current trajectory while acknowledging the strategic work that lies ahead.

Union Negotiations

From hosting a meaningful conversation in my office to a chance meeting on the grand staircase in the Castle, I continue to engage in promising discussions with our adjunct faculty members as we progress toward success in the final stage of our contract negotiation.

Last Wednesday, I attended the scheduled union meeting of the University bargaining team and adjunct representatives. I wanted to personally acknowledge and reflect on this process and offer my sincerity toward reaching an agreement. We delivered an improved offer to our adjunct faculty. It is a financial allocation that we see as an investment in our greatest asset—our employees. We look forward to finalizing an initial contract in the very near future.

University Compensation Strategy

We are pleased to share with **faculty and staff that salaries will be increased by 2 percent across the board, effective July 1, 2019**. The College of Global Studies will share a comparable compensation strategy based on its global workforce realities in collaboration with the University's HR office. In announcing the launch of a University Compensation Advisory Committee (UCAC), I've asked Faculty Senate and Staff Council to work alongside the Office of the President in developing a University-wide process for employee input and feedback regarding our long-term strategy for employee benefits and compensation. This strategy includes developing a reclassification system, evaluation process, professional and leadership programs, and non-compensation benefits for faculty and staff. Engaging our community in this process will be vital to Arcadia's success.

Staff Evaluation Process

Our philosophical approach to the evaluation of our staff must be tied to our core values, vision, mission, and our future strategic plan. Based on feedback from the community, HR has proposed a University performance management process that is based on adaptive performance management and feedback, a management style that can be rapidly responsive to changes in markets and organizational shifts. This style includes frequent feedback, cooperation, and a focus on coaching. This can allow for better management of short-term goals that are stand-alone or components of long-term goals. Our goal is to fully implement this staff evaluation process by August 2019.

Recruitment Update

The undergraduate recruitment cycle for fall 2019 is in its most critical, final, and intense phase. Although the May 1 National Candidate's Reply Date is not quite as firm as it had been 10 years ago, it still marks the goal line, at least for first-year students. March and April are when most families make their commitments. Enrollment Management staff members are conducting a wide variety of outreach and conversion efforts to bring admitted students to the deposited stage. The transfer admissions cycle tends to continue through early August.

First-year inquiries, applicants, completed apps, offers of admission, and deposits are all running ahead of last year. The transfer funnel is running even with last year, which is typical for this time of year.

Graduate enrollments are solid. Despite fewer applications and greater competition, most of the programs are at least at expected levels at this time in their cycles. Upcoming graduate open houses include April

10 for the College of Arts and Sciences and MBA, April 17 for Education, and May 23 for Health Sciences.

Strategic Planning, Thinking, and Actions

In the next two weeks, I will share a comprehensive review of the community's work toward strategic planning, thinking, and actions. We are continuing the collaborative work to perform unit reviews for Enrollment Management and Academic Affairs with Credo, a nationally recognized higher education firm that specializes in working with small private universities. This intensive work is designed to optimize enrollment, recruitment, financial aid, and retention, as well as ensure academic focus and efficiencies. We will analyze data and information around traditional undergraduate enrollment, adult/graduate enrollment, and financial aid, as well as develop a full student success assessment. This will help to inform our priorities around student success, with a goal to implement creative strategies that bolster enrollment while developing long-term strategies for student success. Together, we will identify variables that shape academic priorities—such as current enrollment patterns, prospective student demographics, and anticipated market demand—to develop optimal enrollment targets and seek answers to how we can provide students with a distinctive educational experience that is financially sustainable. By the summer, leadership will review all recommendations and findings and begin to refine our strategic planning.

Historic \$8.6 Million Gift from a Visionary

On Feb. 22, the University community learned about an \$8.6 million gift that resulted in the December 2018 acquisition of Biocoat, a company founded at Arcadia by Dr. Ellington Beavers '93H in 1991. Since the announcement, we have received several messages of positive feedback from Arcadia community members and alumni. This gift shows how, by investing in Beaver College nearly four decades ago, Dr. Beavers will make a monumental impact on the future of Arcadia University. We look forward to this historic gift funding strategic initiatives—as opposed to operations—as we move forward with our upcoming strategic plan.

A UKnighted Vision Celebration on April 2 4:30-5 p.m.

It is important we take time as a community to celebrate each other. Join a **UKnighted Vision celebration on Tuesday, April 2 from 4 to 5:30 p.m.** in the Commons Great Room. Learn about the **fearless** dedication of our alumni, students, faculty, and staff who embody our institutional values while sampling food from top Knight Card restaurants that offer our community discounts. RSVP to stephensl@arcadia.edu.

This truly is an exciting time to be at Arcadia University. Momentum continues to build, community members continue to provide time, energy, and encouragement, and students continue to make deep impressions on us daily. I thank each of you for your commitment and support.

Warm Regards,

Ajay Nair, Ph.D.
President

January-March Sample External Presidential Engagement

(Internal presidential engagement will be included in the president's annual report)

Dr. Keith Taylor, President, Gannon University

Susan Berk '69

Trustee Emerita Marilyn Cranin '54, '96H

California reception and Florida alumni reunions

Trustee Allison Rossett, Ed.D. '68

Jim Moran, CEO, Biocoat

Wyman Fong, Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education

ACUHO-I State of the Profession Symposium

Thomas A. Parham, Ph.D., President, California State University, Dominguez Hills

Dr. Valerie Arkoosh, Chair of the Montgomery County Board of Commissioners

Steve Harrison, Vice President for Auxiliary Enterprises, Coastal Carolina University

Tslis Shtulsaft, Director of Hillels In Philadelphia

Bill Slotnik, Executive Director, Community Training and Assistance Center (CTAC)

Pennsylvania State Representative Steve McCarter

Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education