

President's Report to the UNC Board of Governors

February 21, 2020

Greetings everyone.

As usual, it is an honor and a privilege to be here, joining you in the important work the UNC System does on behalf of our great state.

If anyone here needs a vivid reminder of the value of what we do, you don't need to look any further than astronaut Christina Koch. The School of Science and Mathematics and NC State alum just returned to Earth on February 6 after spending a record-breaking 328 days in space.

Her success embodies so much of what we work for every day. Very few of our students will venture into space. But the teaching and research opportunities we provide will help our students chart a course toward their own uniquely remarkable achievements.

This is why we are here.

We have important work to do, making sure that more students have access to affordable higher education and the opportunities a postsecondary degree can bring. We have more work to do to help our students succeed in their academic pursuits. We have more work to do to serve North Carolina.

And despite all the challenges and theatrics we've seen recently, we are getting that work done.

Last week, the UNC System hosted three different conferences. Each one of them brought together representatives from across our institutions to work on improving higher education in North Carolina.

Notably, two of these conferences were collaborative, interagency efforts. The Behavioral Health Convening and the North Carolina Adult Promise Symposium brought together representatives from both the UNC System and North Carolina Community Colleges.

In addition, more than 200 stakeholders from all 17 UNC System institutions participated in this year's Student Success Conference.

All told, over the course of the week, community, philanthropic, political, and national thought leaders in education helped sponsor events and engaged with faculty, staff, and administrators from across North Carolina's higher education landscape.

Also last week, Andrew Kelly, Kim van Noort and I participated in the myFutureNC Inaugural Celebration in Greensboro. It was very clear that this important effort has wide and deep support across our state.

All of the activity last week made it very clear that higher education is a statewide investment—and an imperative commitment to building North Carolina's future.

These conferences represent just a fraction of the work the UNC System does throughout the year. This focused effort is why we have met or exceeded 10 of our 12 Strategic Plan benchmark goals for the year.

APPENDIX A

The ongoing State budget morass, however, is jeopardizing these efforts. I say this without being political and without placing blame on any party or any state official. My concern for the UNC System is, pure and simple, non-partisan. There is just too much at stake to quibble over *how* our budget gets enacted—I am passionate about seeing that it *does* get enacted, one way or another.

The consequences of not having a budget in place are reaching every corner of the state, and ultimately the impact will be felt most profoundly by the students and the communities we serve.

- Without \$16.5 million in capital funds, WCU is unable to repair the outdated and failing steam plant that provides heat and hot water for the entire campus. The plant is one harsh winter or mechanical failure away from a complete campus shutdown. This worst-case scenario nearly happened in 2016—four years later, and still with no upgrades, the steam plant is living on borrowed time.
- N.C. A&T is unable to renovate Carver Hall, leaving agriculture students stuck in overcrowded, ADA-non-compliant classrooms with no central AC/heat and an outdated fire alarm system.
- N.C. A&T is also unable to meet \$1.6 million in federal matching fund requirements for its Evans Allen grants, jeopardizing the university's potential for acquiring federal funds in the future. Meanwhile, new and open faculty positions to support doctoral research will be delayed, which may threaten the strict faculty-to-student ratios the university needs to maintain accreditation.
- And, UNC Pembroke will not have the capital funds it needs to proceed with its new health sciences and STEM building, severely limiting the university's capacity for future growth and program development in critical workforce fields. This will ultimately impact health and well-being through the region.
- All three of our NC Promise institutions have seen remarkable enrollment growth since the program was enacted. With the current impasse, the institutions will not see the state appropriations that were supposed to supplement each student's tuition. This puts the sustainability of NC Promise enrollment growth at risk. Western Carolina, UNC Pembroke, and Elizabeth City State are all facing the very real likelihood that they will have to limit or reduce enrollment for fall 2020 and 2021.
- And we have just announced, with regret, that we must postpone the opening of the NC School of Science and Math's Morganton Campus for one year, until 2022, because the budget was not enacted, leaving them without the necessary operating funds they need to staff the facility or hire faculty.

This list only mentions a few of the challenges facing us as a result of the budget standoff. Every one of our institutions is feeling the heat, and transformative projects across the UNC System have been put on hold.

That is why I and my colleagues will be doing a road trip across North Carolina in March, visiting many UNC System institutions and joining chancellors and other leaders to highlight publicly the damage that's being done by the lack of a fully enacted budget.

APPENDIX A

All that said, the UNC System is moving forward when and where we all can.

The second System-wide Employee Engagement Survey is underway. This confidential survey will give us unique and actionable insight on important workplace issues and the progress we have made since the last survey, which was conducted two years ago.

Chancellor searches are underway at UNC Charlotte, UNC School of the Arts, East Carolina, and Fayetteville State.

- The UNC Charlotte chancellor search is continuing with candidate interviews, and Chair Mike Wilson is working on a timeline that would permit a nomination to the full Board in April.
- The UNC School of the Arts search committee is currently receiving applications and will begin interviews in March. Chair Ralph Womble expects to recommend candidates in April.
- The East Carolina chancellor search committee has hosted a series of listening sessions. The feedback that was gathered has been incorporated into a leadership profile that will help determine the criteria for evaluating qualified applicants. The committee's goal is the naming of a new chancellor for the fall term.
- The Fayetteville State search committee was announced and will hold a kickoff meeting on February 25. The committee is scheduling constituent listening sessions, with the hope of bringing forward a nomination in time to have the new chancellor in place for the fall term.

I am optimistic that, with a new era of leadership in place, these institutions will continue their progress toward our 2022 Strategic Plan goals and beyond.

But it is imperative that our budget needs are met soon. With no budget in place, our institutions will be hamstrung and the steady momentum we've worked hard to generate will be lost.

We need a budget in place so we can teach our future astronauts and North Carolina's next generation of K-12 teachers. We need it in place so we can prepare the talented young doctors and nurses who will keep our state healthy, the entrepreneurs and engineers who will keep our economy humming, and the artists who will keep our culture stimulating.

My sincere hope is that North Carolina's policy makers comprehend the monumental opportunity cost we will incur if they don't get the budget done.

Higher education is our investment in the future. Let's not put that investment at risk. Please don't make the university system collateral damage in this political fight.

Finally, I would like to express condolences following the loss of Representative Linda Johnson. We are grateful for her 20 years of service in the Legislature. Through her work as Senior Appropriations Chair, she was a passionate advocate for North Carolina's public education systems. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her family.



UNC System Office

Chancellor searches are underway at UNC Charlotte, UNC School of the Arts, East Carolina, and Fayetteville State.

- The UNC Charlotte chancellor search is continuing with candidate interviews, and Chair Mike Wilson anticipates a nomination to the full Board in April.
- The UNC School of the Arts search committee is currently receiving applications and will begin interviews in March. Chair Ralph Womble expects to recommend candidates in April.
- The East Carolina chancellor search committee has held a series of constituent listening sessions over the past two months. Feedback was incorporated into a leadership profile. Once all qualified applicants are evaluated, the goal is to name a new chancellor for the fall term.
- The Fayetteville State search committee was announced and will hold a kickoff meeting on February 25. The committee is scheduling constituent listening sessions. A nomination should be brought forward in time to have the new chancellor in place for the fall term.

The second System-wide Employee Engagement Survey is underway; the first was administered two years ago. The confidential survey provides an opportunity for all employees to be heard on important workplace issues and for leadership to understand the progress made since the last survey.

Appalachian State University

AT&T has selected Appalachian State as one of five universities nationally to conduct research designed to help communities in the Southeast build resilience to climate change. Joining Appalachian in the Climate Resiliency Community Challenge will be the Georgia Institute of Technology, the University of Georgia, the University of Miami, and the University of South Florida.

The Common Reading Program at Appalachian State announces its 2020–21 book selection: “Rising: Dispatches from the New American Shore” by Elizabeth Rush — a 2019 Pulitzer Prize finalist.

Safe Campus: The National Campus Safety Summit has named the Appalachian State University Police Department as one of the top 25 university departments in the country. The ranked universities were cited for “increasing the safety and security of their campus community” and “making a difference in student safety.” The APD was ranked No. 18.

East Carolina University

Doctors at East Carolina’s Brody School of Medicine and Vidant Medical Center were the first in North Carolina to perform a new radiation therapy procedure that is giving hope to patients with recurrent brain tumors. Brain tumors are typically treated with surgical removal often tumors regrow during the weeks the surgical wounds are healing before radiation therapy can commence. GammaTile Therapy is a surgically targeted radiation therapy in which a 3D-collagen tile, embedded with radioactive Cesium-131 rods, is placed in the tumor cavity at the time of surgery. The tile immediately begins delivering targeted radiation treatment to the tumor cells – at a higher dose than traditional external beam radiation.

East Carolina University students have partnered with campus departments to present the fifth annual S.H.O.E.S. project on February 6. S.H.O.E.S., which stands for Students Honoring Others' Everyday Struggles/Stories, is a program intended to help ECU students who may be dealing with challenging times. College students may experience depression, anxiety, stress, addictions or thoughts of self-harm, but may feel isolated and unable to manage their response.

East Carolina University will be working in conjunction with the University of Pittsburgh on a research study called PACT: Prehospital Airway Control Trial. PACT is an \$8.8 million, four-year, Department of Defense-funded clinical trial aimed at improving survival among people who have difficulty breathing after a trauma.

Elizabeth City State University

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of NC has awarded ECSU a \$250,000 grant to assist with student retention. According to Provost Ward, the grant funds will assist in the creation of the Successful Retention Collaborative Task Force. The Task Force will consist of representatives from Financial Aid, University Studies, Institutional Research and Effectiveness, Student Affairs, and Institutional Advancement.

On February 13, Elizabeth City State University will participate in a statewide program to honor North Carolina's African American veterans. During the event, the NCDMVA will posthumously recognize two veterans and the United States Colored Troops for their impact to the armed forces and state. During the daylong event, a documentary will be recorded to capture the spirit of the veterans being honored.

ECSU's Department of Education has formed a taskforce to determine how to better prepare the next generation of teachers. The taskforce will focus on the needs of school districts and what they are looking for in future teachers. Dr. Cheryl Luton says the most critical issue the taskforce will address is how to better prepare ECSU education students to be effective in the classroom.

Fayetteville State University

Washat Roxanne Ware, a sophomore chemistry major and Partnerships for Research and Education in Materials scholar, received first place in undergraduate poster presentation (nanoscience category) at Emerging Researchers National Conference in Science, Technology, Engineering and mathematics. The conference was hosted by American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and the National Science Foundation (NSF) in Washington DC. There were 1500 participants with approximately 750 research presentations by undergraduate and graduate students.

Dr. Danielle Nesbitt, an assistant professor in the Department of Health, Physical, and Secondary Education, has been selected as a member of the 2020 class of Research Fellows of the Society of Health and Physical Educators America.

Dr. Nicole Anthony, assistant professor of special education, under the direction of Dr. Pamela Jackson, Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, formed an Autism Advisory Council to address the complex needs of children and families affected by autism in the Cumberland County region. The council is believed to be the only one of its kind in the country at an historically black college and university (HBCU) addressing the needs of children and families impacted by autism.



N.C. A&T State University

N.C. A&T received \$50,000 from Downtown Greensboro, Inc. that will go toward prototyping and deploying two self-driving shuttles. The funds will be allocated to the newly established North Carolina Transportation Center of Excellence in Connected and Autonomous Vehicle Technology in A&T's College of Engineering.

Shengmin Sang, Ph.D., and his colleagues at Columbia University are planning to study ginger's effect on asthma as the recipients of a four-year, \$1.8 million R01 grant from the National Institutes of Health. Highly competitive, R01 grants fund health-related research.

Students Tyler Huggins, Joseph Smith, and Kiana Williams have been named to the prestigious Dwight David Eisenhower Transportation Fellowship Program. The fellowships – \$6,500 for Huggins, \$8,000 for Smith, and \$10,000 for Williams – were procured under the recommendation of N.C. A&T Transportation Institute Director Maranda McBride, Ph.D., and program manager Teresa McRae.

North Carolina Central University

NCCU will compete in the National Qualifying Tournament of the 31st annual Honda Campus All-Star Challenge, America's premier academic competition for HBCU students. The National Qualification Tournament will be held on February 8, on the campus of Morgan State University. NCCU is one of 65 teams competing for institutional grants and a spot in the HCASC National Championship Tournament taking place on the America Honda campus in Torrance, California, March 28 - April 1, 2020.

Returning to Durham was not only nostalgic but also an honor for famed actress and former NCCU student April Parker Jones. During a special lecture, Parker Jones provided students the essentials to surviving the entertainment industry and divulged her journey to success in Tinseltown.

The Division of Enrollment Management will introduce an interactive campus map in late January to support student retention, engagement, and awareness of university programs. The virtual tour by StudentBridge will allow future Eagles to have an in-depth look into campus life.

NC State University

NC State isn't cutting corners in the drive for innovation. Thanks to a partnership with the N.C. Department of Transportation, the university is testing an autonomous vehicle on Centennial Campus that can ferry 12 passengers.

Research from NC State shows that platelet microparticles are an effective way to deliver therapeutic drugs directly to the heart following a heart attack. This method increases drug concentration at the site and could help heart attack patients reduce side effects from drugs used in recovery.



NC State engineers have demonstrated a flexible device that harvests the heat energy from the human body to monitor health. The device surpasses all other flexible harvesters that use body heat as the sole energy source.

UNC Asheville

Assistant Professor of Physics and Astronomy Britt Lundgren has been named a 2020 Cottrell Scholar, an honor that comes with a \$100,000 prize from the Research Corporation for Science Advancement in support of her research on how galaxies evolve over cosmic timescales. Lundgren combines spectra from the ground-based Sloan Digital Sky Survey and imaging from the Hubble Space Telescope to match the properties of the detected gas to other measurable properties of galaxies hosting the gas, and test theoretical simulations that predict how stellar and gaseous properties of galaxies should co-evolve.

UNC-Chapel Hill

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill tied for 14th among research universities with the most students granted Fulbright awards for 2019-2020. UNC-Chapel Hill had 16 student recipients for the year. Universities ranked ahead of Carolina include Georgetown, Brown and Princeton. Carolina is one of 16 research universities that has been on the top-producing list every year for the past 10 years.

The Makeathon was hosted by the Entrepreneurship Center at the Kenan-Flagler Business School in conjunction with nine campus partners. During the two-week-long series of events, workshops, and mentor sessions, 143 students-turned-entrepreneurial-makers set out to transform socially innovative concepts into physical and digital prototypes with real business potential.

Frank Leibfarth, assistant professor of chemistry in UNC's College of Arts & Sciences, has won two prestigious awards for early-career scientists. In only one week, he has been awarded an Alfred P. Sloan Research Fellowship and a Cottrell Scholar Award for 2020.

UNC Charlotte

The Belk College of Business was recently recognized for its commitment to helping minority students succeed by *Diverse: Issues in Higher Education*, which ranks the Belk College's finance and marketing programs among the top 10 in the nation for African Americans.

UNC Charlotte earned a 2020-21 Military Friendly Schools Bronze Award for its commitment to military service members, veterans, and their dependents. Institutions earning the prestigious Military Friendly Schools designation were evaluated using both public data sources and responses from a proprietary survey completed by the school. More than 1,000 schools participated in the 2020-2021 survey.

Richard Tankersley, UNC Charlotte's vice chancellor for Research and Economic Development, has been named by Gov. Roy Cooper to the North Carolina Board of Science, Technology and Innovation. The appointment extends until 2024. The role of the board, administered through the North Carolina Department of Commerce, is to encourage, promote and support scientific, engineering and industrial research applications in North Carolina.



UNC Greensboro

John Weil of UNC Greensboro's N.C. Network for Safe Communities and his colleague Dr. Stacy Sechrist have spent the last 10 years partnering with the three U.S. Attorneys' Offices across North Carolina, using data-driven strategies to crack down on gun, drug, gang, and domestic violence. Now, they are focused on a newer trend: gangs entering into human trafficking.

Recent UNC Greensboro graduate Akecicia "Keci" Steward '19 has been recognized for outstanding leadership and service by North Carolina Campus Compact, a statewide network of colleges and universities that are committed to community engagement. Steward is a recipient of the network's Community Impact Student Award, which honors one student leader at each member school.

UNCG's African American and African Diaspora Studies program unites many disciplines from across campus, and that cross-disciplinary work helps students, faculty, and the greater community understand Blackness, within both national and international contexts. This year, the annual conference works toward that end through a robust program of panels, presentations, and performances with the theme "Connections and Collaborations Across Disciplines and Communities."

UNC Pembroke

Underrepresented minorities hold only 10 percent of faculty positions in colleges and universities across the U.S., according to recent reports. But a new program at UNC Pembroke seeks to increase that number. UNCP has been awarded a \$950,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to establish the REACH (Research Engagement Action Community Humanities) program supporting students from underrepresented backgrounds as they work toward a career in academia.

Professor Jose D'Arruda has been named an American Association of Physics Teachers for making exceptional contributions to enhancing the understanding and appreciation of physics through teaching. D'Arruda has been a member of AAPT since 1975. Among the longest-serving professors at UNCP, he has taught in the Chemistry and Physics Department for 45 years.

A group of staff and student volunteers with UNCP's Community and Civic Engagement recently participated in a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training in collaboration with Robeson County administration. The NC CERT program educates volunteers about disaster preparedness and trains them in basic disaster response. Volunteers learned skills related to fire safety, search and rescue, team organization, volunteer mobilization, and disaster medical operations.

UNC Wilmington

Chancellor Jose V. Sartarelli has been recognized as one of North Carolina's most influential leaders by Business North Carolina. The publication's 2020 Power 100 list features CEOs, entrepreneurs, thought leaders and institutional leaders from across the state.

The North Carolina Biotechnology Center announced a new biotech venture challenge in partnership with UNCW. The NC Bioneer Venture Challenge is a life-sciences-related, innovation-focused venture challenge for southeastern North Carolina. The UNCW Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship will act as lead partner among other supporting partners.



UNCW's Bachelor of Science in marine biology is ranked 1st on a list of Top 20 Values in undergraduate marine science degree programs for 2020, as selected by College Values Online.

UNC School of the Arts

The costume design program at UNCSA is among the top 10 of its kind in the world, according to The Hollywood Reporter's list published in January. The program in the School of Design & Production has been in the top 10 since the list began in 2018.

UNCSA Winter Dance will span classical and contemporary ballet to cutting-edge contemporary dance. Students will perform "The Sleeping Beauty, Act III" and Robert Battle's contemporary classic "Battlefield," along with new works by choreographers Stephanie Martinez and Anouk Van Dijk.

"Pain & Triumph," a live art museum by students at UNCSA, will explore how fear motivates people and communities. The free, multidisciplinary event sponsored by the student organization Artists of Color and the School of Design and Production, takes place, February 8.

Western Carolina University

Ron Rash, the John Parris Distinguished Professor of Appalachian Cultural Studies in the Department of English, will soon add to his lengthy list of awards. Rash, a poet, short story writer and novelist, will be awarded the 2020 Sidney Lanier Prize for Southern Literature by Mercer University's Spencer B. King Jr. Center for Southern Studies. The prize will be presented April 18.

WCU's Secondary English Education Program has met requirements for "National Recognition" status by the National Council for Teachers of English and the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation — the only such program to do so in North Carolina. WCU's degree program in secondary education (high school level) prepares graduates for careers as teachers, with a bachelor of science degree in education leading to a North Carolina teaching license in English.

First-year students entering Western Carolina University this fall will get a jumpstart on the 2020-21 campus learning theme – water – with the selection of next year's One Book, "The Big Thirst," by Charles Fishman. This year's One Book, which is distributed to all first-year students during New Student Orientation, was selected by a university-wide committee to be complimentary with the campus theme.

Winston-Salem State University

WSSU's elementary education program has been recognized as one of the best in the nation—earning an "A" grade from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ). The score specifically evaluates the scientifically based methods for teaching reading taught to elementary teacher candidates. A team of literacy experts examine every course in early reading and assesses readings, assignments, practice opportunities, and tests. The experts look for clear evidence of dedicated course time, as well as measures where aspiring teachers must demonstrate their knowledge of the five key components of the science of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.



WSSU won four awards from the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) in this year's regional competition recognizing the best communications and engagement from educational institutions. The recognition includes Gold awards for Best Practices in Communications and Marketing and Online Innovation; a Silver award for Best Fundraising Video; and a Bronze award for Media Relations Program.

Winston-Salem State University Chancellor Elwood L. Robinson has been named one of the ten most dominant leaders of 2020 by HBCU Campaign Fund (HCF).

North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics

Seven NCSSM seniors in the school's residential program and one NCSSM Online senior from Enloe High School are among 300 students nationwide and beyond who have been named by the Society for Science & the Public as Regeneration Science Talent Search Scholars. Payton Downey, Madison Houck, Ariba Huda, Jason Li, Ishaan Maitra, Sahil Pontula (Enloe High School), Andy Wang, and Cindy Zhu were recognized for research conducted while students at NCSSM, garnering prizes of \$2,000 each. NCSSM has also been awarded \$2,000 per scholar to inspire more young people to engage in science.