

Vice President for Research

July 14, 2015

Colleagues and Students;

I wrote to you in late May that we were starting a search for our next Vice President for Research. As you know, Dr. Lisa Cassis had been serving as our Interim Vice President since June 2014. The search proceeded in light of extensive conversations I conducted across campus – with over 50 faculty and staff individually and in small groups – to gather input on the current condition and future direction of our research enterprise. I tasked a search committee, led by Provost Tim Tracy, to review applicants and make a recommendation to me.

I am pleased to let you know that Dr. Cassis has accepted my offer to become Vice President, effective immediately. This is the result of her impressive record of research and leadership excellence during her career at our University; and her outstanding recent work as Interim Vice President.

There is much work to do at a particularly important moment in the life of our institution in general and our research enterprise in particular. We are grateful for the support of policy-makers, who believe so strongly in our research mission that earlier this year they dedicated \$132 million for our next research facility. This comes as the U.S. Congress discusses the future of federal research funding. We are hopeful that these discussions will result in substantial increases for the research universities like ours do to fight disease, facilitate economic growth, and make better the lives of citizens. And we as a campus are developing our next Strategic Plan which will carry with it specific metrics to determine our success across all of our responsibilities, including research.

As such, I have directed Vice President Cassis to, among other things:

- ensure the various components of the University's research enterprise function are in alignment with the University's mission, vision, and values;
- develop the strategies, mechanisms, and resource allocations necessary to accomplish institutional goals as enunciated in the University's Strategic Plan;
- recruit, retain, and facilitate the success of a diverse and deep cadre of researchers;
- full participation of the entire department (like all departments across our campus) in University-wide inclusion and diversity initiatives (e.g. unconscious bias training, develop and implement a plan to respond to the results of the work-life survey, and intensifying efforts in recruiting and retaining a workforce reflective of the breadth of identities and perspectives within our student body and across our society);
- develop innovative strategies for seeking and securing alternative revenues to fund research while supporting the growth of existing funding opportunities;
- facilitate collaborative approaches across units, centers, and colleges to expand the institution's research portfolio;
- facilitate a culture of compliance across the research enterprise and ensure that all federal and state statutes and regulations and institutional policies and processes are adhered to;
- promote the development and implementation of research-based contributions to the technological, economic and social benefit of the Commonwealth and nation; and

- evaluate research support needs across the institution and allocate infrastructure and resource support necessary to the success of the University's research enterprise and the success of individual researchers and research teams and centers.

Given the importance of the moment, Vice President Cassis has made significant progress on the award of earned F&A funds to empower colleges to make investments in their respective research enterprises. She will continue to develop support initiatives that advance inter-disciplinary research aligned with our strategic goals.

I know you join me in congratulating Vice President Cassis.

Eli Capilouto
President