



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC

CORNELIUS KERWIN
PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

May 1, 2008

TO: Campus Community
FROM: Neil Kerwin, President
SUBJECT: Campus Update

As we come to the close of another academic year there are a number of important items to report.

Strategic Planning

Professor Bill DeLone, chair of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, has provided the following update.

Campus engagement in the strategic planning process is in full swing. Approximately 150 campus community members participated in two strategic planning town hall meetings on March 28 and April 28, and hundreds more have taken part in other discussions and forums as well as e-mail surveys and exchanges. A successful strategic plan relies heavily on thoughtful input and great ideas from the entire university community, so please engage and contribute to the collective dialogue taking place across our campus and virtually throughout the summer and into the fall.

The [strategic planning Web site](#) is live and contains a wealth of information about both the higher education environment and AU. Key discussion points from the town hall meetings can be found there as well. The Web site is an important channel for contributing ideas and participating in dialogue about the university's future, so please visit the Web site, stay informed, and post your ideas. Additional future opportunities for participation include:

- Attend the May 20 town hall, noon to 1:30 p.m. (location TBA).
- Contact members of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee (also listed on the strategic planning Web site):
 - [Nana An](#), executive director, Budget and Payroll
 - [Angela Davis](#), professor, WCL
 - [William DeLone](#), professor, Information Technology, KSB (committee chair)
 - [Sarah Irvine Belson](#), dean, School of Education, Teaching and Health, CAS

- [Brian Keane](#), president, AU Alumni Board; president, Smart Power
- [Haig Mardirosian](#), dean, Academic Affairs
- [Regina Muehlhauser](#), vice chair, Finance and Investment Committee, Board of Trustees
- [Jenine Rabin](#), director of Development, University Initiatives
- [Gwendolyn Reece](#), associate librarian, University Library
- [Anthony Riley](#), chair, Department of Psychology, CAS
- [Rose Ann Robertson](#), associate dean, Student and Academic Affairs, SOC
- [David Rosenbloom](#), distinguished professor, Public Administration and Policy, SPA
- [Bishop John Schol](#), chair, Academic Affairs Committee, Board of Trustees; bishop, Baltimore-Washington Conference, United Methodist Church
- [Tiffany Speaks](#), director, Office of Multicultural Affairs, OCL
- [Amir Tejani](#), member, Staff Council; assistant director, Office of Special Events and Continuing Legal Education, Washington College of Law
- [Kalfani Ture](#), vice chair, Graduate Leadership Council; graduate student, School of International Service
- [Joseph Vidulich](#), outgoing president, Student Government; senior, School of Public Affairs
- [Gary Weaver](#), professor, SIS; chair, Faculty Senate; member, Board of Trustees

Senior Appointments and Searches

Teresa Flannery will become AU's executive director of communications and marketing; her first day at AU will be May 23. Dr. Flannery brings both broad and deep experience and a record of accomplishment to this position. She will report directly to me and provide leadership in areas of increasing importance to our institutional life. I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank and commend our colleague David Taylor who, for two years, directed several of the areas that will function under Dr. Flannery. His work was excellent.

The provost search process is in its final stages. I have met with the search committee, chaired by Professor Robert Griffith, and received their assessments of the three finalists. These assessments are based, in part, on their communications with the various officials and constituencies who met and interacted with the candidates during their campus visits. I am now in the process of determining which candidate can best meet the demands of this position. A formal announcement regarding the appointment will be made prior to commencement.

The search for vice president of development is now in an intermediate stage. A substantial number of candidates have been reviewed and considered, and a small number will be interviewed by those members of the community most substantially involved in development and alumni relations, including trustees. I am encouraged by the quality of the candidates.

Campaign

The Campaign for *AnewAU* continues to make impressive progress toward completion and currently is at \$161.8 million. The Kogod renovation project and College of Arts and Sciences (which increased its goal from \$5 million to \$15 million) are nearing completion of their goals; steady work in the other schools and colleges and for capital projects continues. After strong performance through December 2007, alumni giving and overall cash proceeds have leveled off to about even with last year, something we consider an accomplishment in light of national trends and the negative effects of the economy that began to appear in January 2008. We are encouraged that the average philanthropic commitment from individual alumni continues its steady growth to near record highs.

Engagement with alumni is increasing. This March, I met with alumni groups in Boston and Hartford. In addition to the tremendous show of support in Washington and in alumni chapters across the country for the NCAA men's basketball tournament appearance, alumni programs hosted a pre-game event in Birmingham on March 21. This spring, our alumni office joined me in congratulating graduating seniors with on-campus events. In May, we will travel to Miami and Pittsburgh to engage alumni on a number of issues, including the strategic planning process. Outreach to parents, friends, and alumni donors will continue in Washington, New York, and other cities throughout the spring and summer.

The alumni executive board will continue its own outreach, with short-term emphasis on the strategic plan. Alumni all over the world are being invited to participate in a series of online chats, and local alumni will be invited to all on-campus town meetings and community discussions regarding the future of the university.

Enrollment

Based on data available at this writing, we are running well ahead of last year on deposits for the freshman class and the Washington Semester but behind last year on transfers and graduate programs (other than the Washington College of Law). Summer enrollment figures are also a mixed bag. Where this will put us overall on our enrollment and revenue targets for next year remains to be determined. From currently available data it does not appear that we will experience dramatic deviations from the goals we set for the next academic year. Nevertheless, the economic conditions are troublesome, and it would be imprudent to assume we can predict their full effects on either undergraduate or graduate enrollment. I will report again at mid-summer on these and other matters, or earlier if our current situation changes significantly.

Academic and Professional Achievements

AU community members continue to distinguish themselves and our university in a variety of ways.

Faculty have been honored in ways too numerous to recount again here. Suffice it to say that once again there have been a significant number of lifetime achievement awards and citations for scholarly impact that bring deserving recognition to them and our university. I extend congratulations to Professor Daniel Dreisbach in the Department of Justice, Law and Society of the School of

Public Affairs for his selection as this year's Scholar-Teacher of the Year.

Our undergraduates continue to succeed in some of the most demanding and prestigious scholarship competitions. Elsewhere, you have seen reports on our extraordinary success in both the Truman and Udall competitions. Others are still in process, and we are confident of strong results.

In particular, I want to congratulate Patrick Sullivan on his selection as the 2008 President's Award recipient—the highest honor that American University bestows on an undergraduate. A biology major in the College of Arts and Sciences, Patrick has earned a 3.96 GPA; conducted independent study research at the NIH National Cancer Institute; and been active on campus in the AU Honors Program, Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Epsilon Delta (AU's pre-med honor society), Sigma Chi, and the AU Chorus. He plans to enter the Peace Corps after graduating in May.

Our graduate students have been similarly successful. Once again, American University is one of the most successful universities in the nation in the Presidential Management Fellowship competition. Our finalists placed us third among all universities in this demanding and prestigious competition. These results underscore the quality and diligence of our students. It also reflects great credit on the effectiveness of our faculty mentors and the extraordinary talent and dedication of our Office of Merit Awards in the Career Center, led by Paula Warrick, who prepares our students so ably for the rigors of these competitions.

Vice president and general counsel Mary Kennard is this year's recipient of the Women's Bar Association Lawyer of the Year award. Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg is a past recipient of this honor and will speak, along with Mary, at this event.

Athletics

This year was our strongest in intercollegiate competition since joining the Patriot League and certainly one of the best in school history. In March, our men's basketball program, led by Coach Jeff Jones, won both the Patriot League regular season and tournament titles, and earned AU's first ever bid to the NCAA Tournament. The back-court duo of Garrison Carr and Derrick Mercer earned All-Patriot League honors. The AU community showed great pride and enthusiasm at the league championship game, on Selection Sunday, and against the University of Tennessee in the first-round game (both live in Birmingham and televised in the Tavern). AU gained national acclaim for our spirited appearance in the Big Dance and for the gritty and classy way we played.

Other AU teams also had great seasons this spring. Our wrestling team earned their third consecutive top-25 finish at the NCAA Championships, thanks to senior Josh Glenn, who earned All-America honors for the third time, and sophomore Mike Cannon, who earned his first All-America honor. The women's basketball team won the regular season title and advanced to their first post-season tournament (WNIT) in 10 years; Melissa McFerrin earned Patriot League Coach of the Year honors and Liz Hayes was honored again as Student-Athlete of the Year. Indoor track collected one relay and three individual Patriot League Championship titles. And the swimming and diving teams earned five All-Patriot League selections during the season.

Our student-athletes continue to excel in the classroom, as the cumulative GPA of our athletes from 16 varsity sports was 3.26, marking the 16th consecutive semester that AU's teams have achieved better than a 3.0 combined GPA. This year, 79 of our student-athletes were named to the Patriot League Academic Honor Roll, and four—Liz Hayes, Krystn Hodge, Travis Lay, and Rubena Sukaj—earned Academic All-District honors.

I also note an important transition, as women's basketball coach Melissa McFerrin has accepted the position as head coach at the University of Memphis. Thanks to Melissa for her fine work at AU and best wishes in her new role.

Board of Trustees May Meeting

The Board of Trustees meets on campus on May 15–16. The board will hear an update on our strategic planning work from Professor Bill DeLone, chair of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, as well as reports from its various committees, the interim provost, vice presidents, and community representatives. We anticipate the board will take formal action on the appointment of the provost very soon. After these sessions, Chairman Gary Abramson will post his report to the community on the [board's Web site](#).

Commencement

AU celebrates its [122nd commencement](#) on Sunday, May 11, and Sunday, May 18, as we confer degrees for our graduating students and honor four prominent persons. More than 1,900 students will participate in the three ceremonies on May 11 and another 450 students in the law school event on May 18. Honorary degree recipients and commencement speakers on May 11 include:

- Vernon E. Jordan Jr., business leader and lawyer, who will receive an honorary doctor of public service degree at the 9:00 a.m. ceremony for the School of Public Affairs and Kogod School of Business
- Sylvia Earle, National Geographic explorer-in-residence, who will receive an honorary doctor of science degree at the 1:00 p.m. ceremony for the College of Arts and Sciences
- Kenneth Paulson, USA Today and USA Today.com editor, who will receive an honorary doctor of humane letters degree at the 4:30 p.m. ceremony for the School of Communication and School of International Service

And on May 18:

- Stephen G. Breyer, Supreme Court associate justice, who will receive an honorary doctor of laws degree at the 1:00 p.m. ceremony for the Washington College of Law

Army Corps

The Army Corps of Engineers has resumed work on the two Glenbrook Road (4825 and 4835) properties owned by AU. At 4825 Glenbrook, this includes working inside the metal containment structure (which has been extended) and investigating buried items in work that will run at least to the end of May. The work requires the AU campus community to continue to observe the safety

protocols put into effect last autumn, which restricts campus activity on the turf field during daylight hours and requires that occupants in Kreeger, Watkins, Hamilton, and Financial Aid know that the intrusive activity has begun again and that if the siren sounds, shelter-in-place procedures are in effect. The work hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with no work on weekends or federal holidays.

The "test-pitting" phase of the Army Corps' work at 4835 Glenbrook is drawing to a close; we will soon receive the Corps' recommendations for completing the job and removing any contaminated soil based on their findings. The crews that have been working at 4835 Glenbrook will be deployed to the area around the Public Safety building to continue unfinished work from the prior Army Corps' Lot 18 operation. The university is continuing to work through the details of the Corps' plan to begin "low probability" work near the Public Safety building. The Corps plans to assess two areas in the front of Public Safety and one in front of Rockwood for buried debris and will remove and replace contaminated soil behind the building. We are working with the Army Corps to minimize disruption to the important university operations in that area. AU and the Army Corps have not reached agreement on the methods and extent of the removal of debris at the rear of Public Safety. The portion of the work that we have authorized will begin in mid-May, after commencement. We will post updates and additional information on our [AU Army Corps project Web site](#).

Web Project

The work on the Web project continues to impress, as the project hits mid-point with a number of important check-offs. The current focus is on making final changes to the visual design for the main pages; completing the final negotiations with a content management system vendor; further developing the special features that will make the site distinctive; assessing strategies for content migration and new content creation; working on the staffing needs; and looking at education opportunities and training needs for campus communications, marketing, and Web personnel to ensure that we make the most of our investment. We have come a long way since launching this project some two years ago, with the important work of the task force led by Dean Larry Kirkman. Dozens of staff, students, and faculty have been involved in this project through committees, work teams, focus groups, and expertise provided along the way. This truly has been a campus-wide collaborative and spirited effort.

Facilities and Summer Projects

The Kogod School of Business expansion continues with the connection and renovation of the former Butler Instructional Center. The reworked steel structure and foundations are now complete; the building exterior should be complete by the start of the fall semester; and the entire project finished in early spring 2009. Meanwhile, excavation for the new School of International Service building is underway and will extend into September 2008; the new "green" home for SIS is scheduled to be finished in spring 2010.

Improvements to the University Center will continue this summer, as the bridge at the north end of Mary Graydon will be rebuilt to create an expanded walkway and better connect to the quad; a canopy will be installed (during winter break) to

provide bad weather protection for pedestrians. The Mary Graydon main entrance will be rebuilt to make entry easier for everyone—especially those with disabilities.

Our annual (summer) residence renovation program will focus on Centennial Hall, with the infrastructure, furnishings, and finishes all scheduled for updating.

I wish you the best in your remaining work for the semester, and have a safe and enjoyable summer.

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