

VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY

November 9, 2020

Dear Valparaiso University Alumni,

Greetings on this fine November day! With just a few weeks left in the fall semester, the holiday season is coming up. While holidays may look different this year due to physical distancing, I hope you find time to relax, spend time with loved ones, and reflect upon the many ways in which God richly blesses our lives.

During the Oct. 30, 2020, Board of Directors (the “Board”) meeting, the Board received a number of updates and actively discussed the progress regarding many strategic matters, many of which I will share with you in this message.

This month, Mark Heckler will become President Emeritus, continuing his efforts leading *Forever Valpo: The Campaign for Our Future*, which has raised over \$257 million as of this date, as well as several strategic initiatives. The Board is grateful for his continued service and dedication to Valparaiso University.

Looking forward, selecting the next President is a key responsibility of the Board. The Presidential Search Committee is highly confident the current outstanding candidates include the next President of Valpo.

We are pleased Colette Irwin-Knott '81 is serving as the Interim President during this period of transition. She frequently meets with students, faculty, and staff to learn more about daily life for the Valpo community and the University's strengths and opportunities for growth. Both Mark Heckler and Colette Irwin-Knott are led by their faith and commitment to serve as guides for the Valpo community. The Board is grateful for their service.

Active recruiting efforts for students who will graduate in May 2025 are taking place. I ask each of you to consider those in your circle of friends and family members to encourage students to seriously consider Valpo in their education plans. The University is making significant investments in marketing activities to increase the enrollment of Valpo. Many virtual as well as in-person campus visit opportunities are available at valpo.edu/visit. There are also virtual campus visit opportunities for custom visit experiences. As employees, alumni, and friends of the University, we know a Valpo education pays dividends throughout our lives of leadership and service. The nation and the world need more Valpo people!

To ensure the legacy of preparing good people to do great things for the sake of the world continues, we launched Valpo's first-ever endowment campaign, *Forever Valpo: The Campaign for Our Future*, in 2016. We have surpassed the initial \$250 million goal more than 18 months in advance; the *Campaign* has received over \$257 million of commitments. The success of the *Campaign* to date its continuation for two additional years will further strengthen the University's endowment in the future. Thank you for your [continued support](#) of the *Campaign*, whether through the Valpo Fund, an endowed scholarship or fund, your

personal financial planning, or other financial structures. Your generosity is making a Valpo education possible for future students.

The University's endowment of almost \$270 million compares with \$143 million ten years ago, after funding more than \$120 million in scholarships, professorships, programs, and the operating activities of the University. The increase of more than 88% in total endowment assets was fueled by top quartile endowment investment returns (per the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) study of endowments) and gifts of more than \$71 million from generous supporters of the University. We are grateful for this generosity and the support of the thousands of donors who contribute annually to the University.

The Valpo community is dedicated to the University's mission and vision. The Strategic Plan calls on each of us to "seek truth, serve generously, and cultivate hope" in all we do, especially during challenging times.

During the pandemic, the health, safety, and well-being of all in the campus community is at the forefront. There are many challenges ahead for institutions of higher education including COVID-19, which poses challenges in the current time frame and the years ahead, the declining number of traditional-aged college students, the rapidly increasing delivery of education services electronically, and other significant circumstances. Valpo's Lutheran heritage calls upon each of us to seek truth, serve and care for others, and cultivate hope among all.

Answering this call does not occur by words alone; it requires positive action to work together to build an equitable, just community. The Office for Inclusion and Retention, along with members of the Presidential Commission for an Inclusive Valparaiso Community (CIVC), lead the Valpo community in its commitment to creating a more inclusive and equitable campus. Our country has experienced a growing resurgence in civil activism, and we acknowledge the need to examine that impact on the Valpo community, to celebrate God-given human diversity, and to lead positive change. As these efforts progress, updates are shared with the campus community and others. The Valpo community is devoted to an enduring commitment to justice and to the inclusion and representation of all in its community. Our Lutheran heritage reminds us that all humanity is created in the image of God and possesses inherent dignity.

As members of the Valpo community, our faith guides us to care for the educational or professional success of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni and the impact they have throughout their activities.

Let us continue to draw on this faith in the days and weeks to come. While there are challenges that lie ahead, I have no doubt the Valpo community will rise to the occasion. I am grateful for your continued dedication to the University's mission and for your hard work to ensure all Valpo students are prepared to lead and serve in the world. Throughout my time serving as Chair of the Board, I have witnessed faith, growth, and passion permeate this community. Together, we will answer the call to seek truth, serve generously, and cultivate hope.

I'm confident Valpo's best days are coming.

My prayer for you and your family is to be safe and well during these times of concern.

Blessings,

Frederick G. Kraegel

Frederick G. Kraegel '70
Chair, Board of Directors
Valparaiso University
LUA.Board@valpo.edu

FREDERICK G. KRAEGEL '70, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

1700 CHAPEL DRIVE
VALPARAISO, IN 46383

valpo.edu

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