



**FAIRLEIGH
DICKINSON
UNIVERSITY**

A Message from the President

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff,

Welcome to the new academic year! The summer always seems to fly by, but I know our community was busy and productive preparing for the arrival of our students. We are very excited to embark on a new academic year and welcome to campus both our new and returning students. We wish you all a successful and enjoyable year!

This year marks the start of my first full academic year as president and I cannot wait to collaborate and partner with faculty and staff to do all that is possible to transform the lives of our students. As many of you know, we spent a great deal of time last spring engaged in a strategic planning process and the resulting plan, [FDU Will Soar](#), provides an important roadmap for our future activities and progress. I invite everyone to closely review the plan, to work together to help achieve the goals and to provide continued input on new initiatives.

As we plan for the future, we are also enjoying many strong accomplishments right now. As the new term begins, I would like to take this opportunity to update everyone on several recent and important highlights.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

This fall marks the debut of **FDU Health**, a new division that features programs from various colleges and schools that serve health care-related needs and demands. FDU has enjoyed a long legacy of providing outstanding programs in health fields and newly created programs and recent milestones reinforce this longstanding strength. For example, the University's Henry P. Becton School of Nursing and Allied Health, part of FDU Health, recently received a **\$2.6-million, four-year federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Advanced Nursing Education Workforce (ANEW) grant**, of which approximately \$500,000 per year will be distributed as graduate nursing student scholarships. FDU Health will help foster a collaborative and interdisciplinary approach that encourages innovation,

research and the latest training and instruction needed to help professionals succeed in this complex landscape.

One of the exciting new programs under the auspices of FDU Health is the School of Psychology and Counseling's new **Transforming College Campuses (TCC)** program in partnership with the Office of Student Affairs. Made possible through a generous gift, TCC supports a wide array of student needs on campus, especially mental health needs.

This fall we also are celebrating the launch of several new or renewed academic programs and partnerships including:

- The history major with a concentration in social studies at the Metropolitan Campus;
- The communication major at the Metropolitan Campus with concentrations in advertising and social media (the latter also launched at Florham);
- The doctoral program in occupational therapy (Florham only); and
- The master's degree program in healthcare administration (New Jersey).

A number of new initiatives also are being launched to better serve our students academically. In order to strengthen our work on retention, we've established a **Student Academic Success Team** consisting of key academic leaders to focus on undergraduate retention and degree completion. The team will collaborate closely with the Office of Student Affairs and other units on campus to enhance support for our students.

Our **Middle States Self-Study** project continues to unfold, with a steering committee retreat scheduled for mid-September. We have launched a pilot program to assess student learning outcomes in our new general education program and have begun our work with EAB on the **Moon Shot for Equity**, a national initiative to close the achievement gap between majority students and students from historically excluded groups.

ADMISSIONS

On the admissions front, we have seen an increase in the interest in FDU as evidenced by the applications, admits and deposits received this year. As a result, we expect an increase in the total number of incoming undergraduate students this year. This is **the second straight fall semester that new undergraduate enrollment has increased** year-over-year since the

pandemic. Many more enrollment activities will occur over the next several weeks, particularly at the graduate level and with international students, that will impact that final total. Specifics and complete analysis will be available later in the Fall 2023 term.

One key number to cite now, though, is the fact that we have enjoyed a **significant increase in new students assigned to campus housing**: 361 at the Metropolitan Campus (compared to 200 a year ago) and 398 at the Florham Campus (compared to 327 a year ago). This increase has been made possible by, among other things, stronger alignment between the work of our enrollment and student affairs teams.

ADVANCEMENT AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

In June we held our annual **Charter Day to support student scholarships and we raised more than \$700,000**. During the event we also announced our new fund-raising campaign, “**Students First**,” which will be dedicated entirely to supporting students throughout their academic journey. The campaign is off to a great start, and you can learn more about it by visiting the [Students First website](#).

We have wonderful momentum in fund-raising as a number of major gifts have been received recently including:

- A \$1.5 million gift to support mental health initiatives for students;
- A \$1 million gift for scholarships and research in engineering and psychology; and
- A \$200,000 gift from the Hearst Foundations to fund a new research and development lab at Becton Hall on the Metropolitan Campus.

On the governmental front, FDU is raising its profile at the community, state and federal level to better engage elected and appointed officials and local organizations to support our objectives. Internally this effort includes the establishment of a **Community Engagement Council**. Among other highlights:

- The University received \$13 million in capital funding from the New Jersey Office of the Secretary of Higher Education to support technology infrastructure and library improvements;

- FDU recently received \$200,000 in special appropriation to support the Moon Shot for Equity initiative; and
- The School of Public and Global Affairs was awarded \$250,000 by the state to support civic programs in Newark.

INTERNATIONAL CAMPUS NEWS

The **Vancouver Campus** continues to experience very strong interest in its program and **expects to again set a new record for enrollment** this fall. In particular, the Master of Administrative Science program will exceed 600 students and the Master of Science in Applied Computer Science, which accepted its first students only a year ago, will exceed 350 students.

Embracing the **Students First** theme as strongly as our New Jersey campuses, Vancouver has expanded its student support and academic support as well as its strategic enrollment management program. With new investments in such areas as work integrated learning, the campus is poised to provide even greater transformational opportunities.

We continue to be excited about the prospect of a strategic expansion for our Vancouver Campus, looking toward the future opportunities for growth that will allow us to further capitalize on FDU's unique position in Canada.

At **Wroxton College**, there are a number of outstanding developments. The formal affiliations with other U.S. universities are helping to bring new students to the college and the affiliation with the Royal Shakespeare Company provides another incredible opportunity for an immersive and transformative experience. We also have added an astronomy course and will soon add a hospitality course on British and European wines. And an incredible donation of more than 9,000 books to the college library was made by a former member of Parliament, Austin Mitchell.

FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY

Concerning our living and learning environment, various maintenance and infrastructure projects were completed recently and we are excited to enter the new year with **Aramark as our partner in facilities operations services**. Aramark also is our partner providing food and hospitality services and this enhanced connection will result in significant savings, improved services and a more transparent work request system. Of course, the

University does retain key facilities responsibilities including capital projects, space planning and environmental and regulatory oversight.

In addition, I am pleased to announce we have completed the sale of the president's house in Morris Township. We used the proceeds for various University projects, including student scholarships. This move is just another example of our focus on prioritizing resources for the benefit of our Students First.

A number of exciting advances also have been made on the technology front. **The newly launched myFDU Connect provides a personal dashboard** for students, faculty and staff to connect to any of your FDU interests, such as University offices, FDU sports teams and specific clubs and organizations. It also provides easy access to tools, such as local weather, important deadlines, links to other University systems and hundreds of other choices to fit your wants and needs. To access your dashboard, navigate to myfduconnect.fdu.edu or download the app in the Apple or Android stores.

A reminder also that **Streeme IPTV is now available to resident students**. All FDU residential students have access to Streeme IPTV, the most powerful way to watch and record TV on campus. With Streeme IPTV residential students can watch live 60 channels of TV on any device, pause and rewind live TV, and record up to 20 hours of programming. All residential students are automatically given access to the Streeme IPTV when they are given a housing assignment.

Finally, over the last 18 months we have been installing **fiber optics and WiFi to several of our athletic fields**. The soccer field at the Metropolitan Campus is now connected to the FDU network, both wired and wirelessly; and both the football and baseball fields at the Florham Campus will be connected this fall. These new capabilities, as well as what is planned for our other athletic fields, will allow for better high-speed streaming of games and access to FDU's WiFi service.

KICKING OFF THE NEW YEAR

The new academic year brings many events we are looking forward to, including **Homecoming** at Florham (September 16) and **Family Weekend** at Metro (September 30) and of course the annual **Academic Convocation** (September 27 at Florham), which will honor outstanding

faculty and staff, welcome new faculty and this year include the presidential inauguration. I invite you all to come share in this community celebration of the new year.

I also invite everyone to stay informed about new University highlights by regularly checking our website and social media channels. You can also stay connected with me on social media! **Follow me at @FDUPresident on [Instagram](#) and Michael Avaltroni on [LinkedIn](#).**

Thank you to our faculty and staff for preparing so well for the academic year and for the support I know you will give to our students. And thank you to our students for choosing Fairleigh Dickinson University. As a former FDU student, I know you will find the same opportunities for a transformational experience that I enjoyed not too long ago!

I look forward to seeing you all during the year!

Michael J. Avaltroni, Ph.D.
President