



The University of Vermont

To: UVM Non-Represented Employees

From: Suresh V. Garimella, President

RE: Thank You and Good News

Date: February 2, 2021

I write to thank you again for the extraordinary work and dedication you have shown during one of the most challenging periods in the history of our institution. I also wish to share some good news.

Not only were we able to complete the fall semester as planned, but our students are returning for the spring semester in higher numbers than anticipated. We have also seen increased interest in terms of application numbers and levels of achievement. This is testament to your exceptional efforts to keep our university open and safe.

It also means that while net tuition revenue remains several million dollars less than last year, the gap is less than originally projected. This, combined with other budget cuts and efficiencies we have achieved with your help, puts us in a better financial position than we had projected for this challenging year. Therefore, I have decided that we will restore the salaries of non-represented employees to their fiscal year 2020 levels.

As thanks for your support and commitment, I am authorizing payments to compensate for the wage reductions non-represented employees experienced since July 1, 2020. We are working on logistics, and the Division of Finance and Administration will share details soon. In addition to this, and as I shared during the Teams Live meeting with staff on Friday, January 29, we plan to keep wages and benefits flat with no further reductions next year.

As you know, when we were preparing the fiscal year 2021 budget last spring, UVM, along with universities nationwide, faced enormous financial uncertainties. Even wealthy institutions announced salary reductions, salary freezes, layoffs, and

furloughs for tenured and non-tenured faculty, as well as staff. Enrollment trends across institutions nationwide were projected to be down, and at UVM our projected net tuition reduction was \$23 million. Thus, we had reluctantly announced a wage cut of up to 5%, graduated by income.

To meet our obligation to protect the university and our desire to protect full-time jobs, we also imposed a hiring freeze, shifted work from temporary employees to full-time employees, required expenditures to be reviewed and approved, and cut base budgets of administrative units by \$11.5 million and academic units by \$2.4 million. Our goal was to save jobs and meet the academic needs and expectations of our students.

Despite the workload imposed by the pandemic, you stayed the course. You provided the expertise, training, and support necessary to facilitate uninterrupted instruction across new modalities, you kept our labs open, and you doubled down on recruiting new students and retaining our current students. Your determination is paying dividends.

Staff Council leadership also deserves thanks. They brought us your concerns, as well as your ideas. We were able to consult with them about a variety of issues and collaborate to identify solutions.

There is no doubt we will continue to face challenges, but it's important to keep in mind what we have achieved during this tumultuous time. Together, we have endured much and are in a better place than many universities. And we have found new ways of doing important work. This will serve us well for years to come.

With sincere thanks for jobs well done.