



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

September 30, 2020

Dear UNE Community,

I wanted to take this opportunity to reach out now that we have passed the initial phase of resuming fall operations and have begun to settle into what will hopefully be a relatively steady stage of the fall semester. It is a testament to the entire University community's adaptability and hard work that we have so successfully established our groove in this "new normal," and I thank you for the remarkable level of cooperation, flexibility, and understanding that you have displayed in getting us to where we are now.

I'm under no illusion, however, that this has been an easy transition. Rather, it was the result of diligence and hard work on the part of literally every segment of the UNE family. Faculty members have changed the entire way they teach and connect with students, and professional staff have gone to heroic efforts to implement the necessary adaptations to our campus facilities and the myriad modifications to University processes and procedures that have been necessitated by COVID-19. As I wander around our campuses observing day-to-day operations, I am astounded by the scale of change that has been embraced by our community, and I am deeply appreciative of everyone's commitment to keeping our doors open. This has truly been a team effort, and I am grateful to you all.

This past weekend, UNE held its fall board of trustees meeting, where I and others spent a great deal of time speaking to our board members about all of the adjustments that the University has made to keep our community safe during the pandemic. Knowing that a picture paints a thousand words, I showed the board [this video](#), which captures the highlights of the good work that has been done thus far. Our trustees were very impressed with our work, and I want to pass along to you their praise for everything you have done and continue to do to make this semester a positive one.

The trustees were particularly impressed by the fact that managing COVID-19 has not consumed our efforts to the detriment of all the other important work of the University, both with respect to day-to-day operations and strategic initiatives. While keeping our community safe is, of course, our number one priority, we have made impressive progress in many other areas over the spring and summer. In fact, each of the six high-level priorities of our strategic plan are currently represented by active committees that are hard at work and that are, in turn, drawing on the contributions of many others. Together, we have already accomplished great things, and we have laid the groundwork for more positive changes to come.

I am very happy to report that UNE has had no new positive cases of COVID-19 in the past two weeks. And as of today, we have no students in isolation or quarantine. While it appears that our policies and procedures are working, we must remain mindful that the situation in which we find ourselves is tenuous. We must not take for granted that our good fortune will continue. We must not let down our guard or become complacent. Rather, we will remain committed to maintaining the high level of vigilance that we have already achieved in the hope of lasting success.

The policies that have served us well thus far will, no doubt, continue to evolve, based on input from the community, emerging science regarding COVID-19, and federal and state guidance. We have already made modifications to our Onward plan, as circumstances dictated, and will continue to do so in the coming months as appropriate.

As always, I will keep you informed of any significant changes, and I encourage you to frequently check [UNE's COVID response page](#) for the most up-to-date information.

Thank you again for everything you do in support of our mission. The road we are on is a long one, but because of our collective dedication to the students we serve, we are off to a good start.

Sincerely,

James D. Herbert
President