August 31, 2016

Dear Carls,

It seems only yesterday that my family and I trekked from the sunny and humid temperatures of Atlanta, Georgia to the mild and pleasant summer temperatures of Northfield, Minnesota. Carleton College, the place that we have called home for the past fourteen months, is still as warm and inviting now as it was then.

Since my arrival, I’ve had the opportunity to learn from many students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and families who care deeply about Carleton. These conversations have confirmed my initial impressions: Carls are curious, passionate, and intellectually engaged. Faculty and staff are also committed to helping students grow intellectually and personally, at the same time they, too, seek intellectual challenge and participate in Carleton’s collaborative learning environment. Alumni, parents, and friends also actively support this community, helping Carleton remain a vibrant, world-class institution. This is a place of enormous creativity, with a shared goal of offering an exceptional, transformative residential liberal arts experience.

While we eagerly await the beginning of the upcoming academic year, a pause to reflect on the many accomplishments from last year seems appropriate. Below are a few highlights I’ve noted from this past year, along with key initiatives and opportunities I see for 2016-2017.

**Summary of 2015-2016**

Thanks to a generous gift from an anonymous alumnus, the Academic Support Center partnered with ITS—in particular, AzTechs (student workers specializing in assistive technologies)—to coach students in ways to use text-to-speech and speech-to-text software for alternate ways of processing text in the Writing Center.

In partnership with the Parents Advisory Council, the number and quality of externships offered through the Career Center grew significantly again in 2015. Winter break saw 145 students participating in externships—an increase of 44 percent from the previous year. In addition to externships, Carleton sources awarded approximately $387,000 to 113 students to offset travel and living expenses associated with undertaking an internship in summer 2016.

The College celebrated the 133rd birthday of Dacie Moses, the sixty-ninth year of Sunday Brunch at the Dacie Moses House, and Julia Uleberg Swanson’s tenth anniversary as House Coordinator.

Disability Services has strengthened its guidelines for reasonable accommodations and centralized processes for requesting accommodations.

The Gender and Sexuality Center (GSC) moved temporarily to Clader House so Scoville Hall could be renovated for admission and financial aid. In addition, the GSC was able to provide expanded resources for assisting transgender students, including a trans/gender support and discussion group.

A grant from Minnesota Private Colleges made it possible for the Office of Intercultural and International Life (OIIL) to heighten awareness about Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students at Carleton.
Residential assistants and area directors, under the leadership of Residential Life, coordinated many of the logistics of and were responsible for the thoughtful dialogue that emerged from more than 135 community conversations during winter 2016. Held in residential halls, these faculty and staff small-group discussions identified areas of campus tension and emphasized understanding participants’ personal and communal relationships.

The College received a multi-year state grant funded through Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administrative (SAMHSA) to create strategic priorities with the aim of reducing alcohol and marijuana use on campus. Project Coordinator, Patrick Gordon, developed the Carleton Coalition on Alcohol and Marijuana (CCAM)—a group of students, staff, and faculty who are assisting in identifying these strategic priorities.

Student Activities saw an increase in the number of students who took advantage of the Metro Access Fund, a program cooperatively funded with the Carleton Student Association (CSA). The program, designed to defray costs of attending events in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area, covers transportation to and from the Twin Cities.

Student Health and Counseling practitioners provided high-quality, developmentally appropriate health care to 1,096 students during 2,859 appointments. A total of 515 students attended 2,283 counseling and psychiatric appointments.

The Title IX Lead Team piloted Green Dot—a nationally-recognized bystander intervention program targeting sexual violence. More than 100 students, many of them student athletes in Physical Education, Athletics and Recreation (P.E.A.R), participated in four pilot trainings and booster sessions.

Carleton received affirmation from the Department of Education that our excellent work with qualifying low-income, first-generation, and disabled students would continue with a five-year renewal grant for the TRIO/SSS Program. In addition, TRIO/SSS welcomed a new director, assistant director, and a quantitative skills coordinator.

**Strategic Priorities, Initiatives, and Opportunities for 2016-2017**

The Dean of Students Office (DOSO), along with many campus partners, will work diligently to realize the community conversation recommendations that were distributed June 2, 2016 and will also be implementing recommendations described in the August 26, 2016 memo to the community as well. These recommendations may be found at [https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/president/climate/](https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/president/climate/)

**Highlights of a Revised Organizational Structure:**

As I mentioned in a communication to the Carleton community in July, I have had a chance to observe and listen during my first year. I feel privileged to work with a very talented staff. I also have some ideas for how we can restructure to best take advantage of these skills and to continue to improve the services and support we provide to students. To this end, the following changes to organizational structure are being enacted now:

In addition to serving as class dean for first-year students, Joe Baggot, Associate Dean of Students, will serve as class dean for sophomores. Dean Baggot will continue to serve as chair of
the Academic Standing Committee, teach the living learn course mentioned below, and supervise some departments.

**Cathy Carlson**, Associate Dean of Students, will continue to serve as class dean for juniors and seniors. Dean Carlson will work collaboratively with Off-Campus Studies to assist students with their return to campus, serve as chair of the DOSO’s CARE Team, and continue to supervise several departments.

**Amy Sillanpa**, Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Community Standards, will co-teach the fall 2016 Critical Conversations course (ISDC 103) with Anita Chikkatur, Associate Professor and Chair of Educational Studies, co-chair the Restorative Justice Committee, build a program to assessment departmental services and programs, focus on professional development initiatives within the division, and work with the Peer Leader Program.

A search will begin shortly to recruit and hire a second assistant dean of students, who will work with transfer students, assist students who are taking a leave of absence, and supervise the Office of Intercultural and International Life and the Gender and Sexuality Center. The Assistant Dean of Students will also further develop the Conversations Fellows program and work with the Peer Leader Program, among other responsibilities.

As we continue to seek ways to strengthen our efforts to eliminate sexual assault and sexual violence within our community, a search will begin shortly to recruit and hire a full-time **Title IX Coordinator** for the College. Carleton remains committed to preventing and responding to sexual misconduct on our campus. This position will report directly to the Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students and lead Carleton’s next phase of ongoing Title IX efforts, including enhancing prevention and training efforts, coordinating Title IX efforts on campus, and increasing awareness of Title IX processes and policies. A search advisory committee will be named shortly and will include both faculty, staff, and students. Until a Title IX Coordinator is named, Amy Sillanpa will continue to serve as Acting Title IX Coordinator, and the Title IX Lead Team will continue to play a pivotal role in assisting in these efforts. More information about Title IX at Carleton may be found at [https://apps.carleton.edu/dos/sexual_misconduct/](https://apps.carleton.edu/dos/sexual_misconduct/)

In addition to realizing the efficiency of a revised organizational structure, other initiatives will be implemented this academic year. The College received funding from the Arthur Vining Davis Foundation to link the academic study of diversity to the residential experience of living in and with that diversity, and to engage faculty and staff as both resources and co-learners with students. As part of this living learning community, Joe Baggot, Associate Dean of Students, and Stephanie Cox, Lecturer in French and Francophone Studies and Cross-Cultural Studies, will co-teach a course entitled **“Civil Discourse on a Diverse Campus.”** This course, the first of its kind at Carleton, will enroll up to 20 first-year students who will live together in Myers Hall.

The new Office of Health Promotion (OHP) will begin to reframe conversations on campus around the idea of flourishing and what makes for a healthy Carleton community. Health and wellness are dynamic processes, and we envision an environment in which all members support those relationships, environments, and behaviors that enhance their overall well-being. OHP will be supported by the Student Wellness Advocates (SWAs), who assist in facilitating health-related workshops and encourage students to lead healthy and balanced lives.
Last year, I asked several staff to create a comprehensive plan for how Student Life staff can improve training and awareness around issues of anti-oppression, micro aggressions, and diversity. The working group submitted its final recommendations this summer, and we will begin training all Student Life staff this fall.

Plans are underway for a Posse reunion in October 2017 to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of Carleton’s collaboration with the Posse Foundation. Posse scholars, faculty mentors, and all those who interacted with the program at Carleton will be invited.

Several students JoJo Kuria ’16, Sarah Trachtenberg ’17, Jake Woodward ’18, Michelle Irukera ’16, Erick Sirisoukh ’17, Stu Lourey ’16, and other students approached the DOSO about creating a program called S.E.E.D. (Students Engaging in Essential Dialogue). It aims to create a more open campus culture characterized by ongoing conversations amongst students about inclusion, exclusion, and difference. Specifically, the program will train students to facilitate conversations with established student groups on topics of identities and their intersections, thereby targeting existing micro communities on campus. The DOSO will support a two-year pilot, which will begin in winter 2016. Brisa Zubia, Assistant Director in the Office of Intercultural and International Life, will serve as a staff advisor to the program.

These efforts will assist the Dean of Students Office and the Division of Student Life in remaining a place where advocating, supporting, and challenging students to explore diverse ways of learning and engaging the community are among our top priorities. My door remains open to hear your input and I look forward to working with all of you in the year ahead.

All the best,

Dean Livingston

Carolyn H. Livingston, Ph.D.
Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students