

May 9, 2017

Dear Iowa State University Community:

I am truly honored to return to Iowa State University in the role of interim president. I look forward to reconnecting with familiar faces, meeting others for the first time, and engaging the university community as we navigate this period of transition.

For those of you who don't know me: I worked for Iowa State for nearly 30 years, including roles as professor, department chair, dean of the College of Business, and vice president for academic affairs and provost. In 2006, I left Iowa State to serve as president of the University of Northern Iowa for seven years. For the past four years, my wife, Pat, and I have been enjoying retirement in St. Louis, Missouri. I am grateful to have this opportunity now to serve as interim president of this great university.

President Steven Leath has left Iowa State in a strong position, and it is evident this campus is committed to success. Your efforts have resulted in unprecedented enrollment, fundraising, research funding, and economic development contributions as well as an enhanced focus on inclusion, record student success metrics and faculty achievements, declining student debt, and new and refurbished facilities. You have much to be proud of!

I believe it is my primary responsibility as interim president to maintain this positive momentum generated by the entire Iowa State community and work to ensure the next president is positioned for success. To that end, my priorities are:

- Continue progress toward the goals and objectives outlined in the university's FY2017-2022 strategic plan.
- Carefully manage state funding issues/budget reductions.
- Initiate planning for the FY19 budget and communicate the university's state funding needs to the Board of Regents, governor, and state legislators.
- Oversee ongoing infrastructure, administrative, and technology projects.
- Continue progress toward the *Forever True, For Iowa State* campaign goal of \$1.1 billion.
- Facilitate a successful transition once a new president is selected.

I have already begun working with students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, donors, the Board of Regents, state legislators, and other stakeholders on these key issues to preserve and protect the university's core academic mission and more importantly the people who rely on that mission—our students and employees.

I welcome your thoughts, concerns, and ideas. Iowa State is a special place, and I am excited to return to the Cyclone Family to help keep this great university moving forward.

Sincerely,  
*Benjamin J. Allen*

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Interim President