

January 8, 2018

Dear Students, Colleagues, and Friends,

I hope you had a peaceful and relaxing winter break. We are excited to welcome you back to campus for the start of a new year and a new era at Iowa State University.

We enter 2018 on the heels of a year filled with change, transition, and many proud achievements.

- We graduated our largest fall class ever with nearly 2400 students, including some graduates with [inspiring stories](#) of perseverance and success.
- Faculty earned well-deserved recognitions, including [Max Rothschild](#), named a Fellow of the National Academy of Inventors; [Iver Anderson](#), inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame; and Theresa Windus and W. Allen Miller, both named American Association for the Advancement of Science ([AAAS](#)) [Fellows](#).
- Four students were named [Goldwater Scholars](#), the nation's premier undergraduate scholarship in mathematics, natural sciences, and engineering.
- Agriculture and Biosystems Engineering undergraduate and graduate programs ranked [No. 1 in the country](#).
- The U.S. Department of Energy's Ames Laboratory marked [70 years](#) of science and discovery on the Iowa State campus.
- The Iowa State University Cyclone Football "Varsity" Marching Band was presented with the [Sudler Trophy](#) (the equivalent of a Heisman trophy for college marching bands).
- Cyclone Football raised the standard with its first bowl game in five years and brought home a [big victory!](#)
- We received two of the largest private gifts in university history – [\\$145 million endowment](#) to support the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and a [\\$50 million gift](#) to name the Ivy College of Business.

This is just a small sampling of the [impressive accomplishments and milestones](#) over the past year as we build on academic and research excellence and the high quality student experience.

Today is an especially exciting day for me because it marks the beginning of my first full semester as your president. Each day as I climb the steps to my new office in Beardshear Hall, I am reminded of the immense honor and responsibility of this role. While I may be the lead administrator of Iowa State, our university is much more than one person. All of you have ideas, challenges, successes, and opportunities to share that can make us a better Iowa State. And that's precisely why I am going to begin my presidency by listening to you. During the coming year, I plan to hold listening sessions with as many students, faculty, and staff as possible as well as supporters and stakeholders across the state and country.

One of our persisting challenges is securing adequate state funding. You've likely heard recent media reports of the possibility of a midyear state budget reversion. We expect to learn more tomorrow when Governor Reynolds announces her budget proposal. While the Governor's proposal will mark just the first step in an extensive budget process, we are stepping up efforts to inform this process by sharing Iowa State's value to students and stakeholders, our significant impact on the state economy, and our [critical need for state support](#).

We're also awaiting the Board of Regents decision on tuition rates for fall 2018. The first reading will take place at the Board's February meeting. The tuition decision notwithstanding, the Board's legislative request for Iowa State includes a \$5 million appropriation for student financial aid. Additionally, we will continue a strong push for scholarships as part of the historic [Forever True, For Iowa State](#) fundraising campaign.

I feel strongly that creativity and innovation will help us address some challenges and position Iowa State for a more successful, sustainable future. Part of this process includes looking at everything we do and asking the questions: Is this necessary? Is there a better way? If we can eliminate the processes and procedures that waste time and impede progress, then this will allow our faculty and staff to concentrate on the activities that truly advance our mission of education, research, extension and outreach.

The implementation of [Workday](#), our new enterprise software system, will help us achieve many of these objectives. I am committed to the success of this important project because we know it will fundamentally improve human resources, finance, and student business processes and services. It's a major, complex endeavor and it will impact every single person on campus. Ultimately, Workday will equip us to serve our students and stakeholders better.

Though I have been with Iowa State for 38 years, there is still much to learn. But one thing I know for sure – **our number one strength is our people**. Your dedication, creativity, hard work, and caring make a huge difference. I look forward to working with all of you to make Iowa State the best land-grant university in the nation.

With warm regards,

Wendy Wintersteen
President