



ECKERD COLLEGE

June 15, 2022

Dear Members of the Eckerd Community,

I am very grateful to Chairman Ian Johnson and the members of the Board of Trustees for their confidence in appointing me Interim President of Eckerd College. There is no greater honor for me than having the opportunity to serve in this role in an academic community that I deeply love and have been a part of for over three decades.

By all measures, Eckerd College is a strong institution experiencing dynamic momentum thanks to the leadership of President Damián Fernández and President Emeritus Donald Eastman. I look forward to collaborating with the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and ASPEC members in building on the progress, success, and momentum that have been achieved.

Together, we will continue to move our community forward, guided by both the vision of our founders and our new Strategic Plan and activated by our common commitment to providing for our students the highest quality liberal arts education possible.

As we look to the future during this interim period, I am reminded of the weighty vocation to which we are called as members of a college community and the principles that should guide our response. Particularly helpful in guiding our way are those principles identified by Dr. Ernest Boyer—professor, university chancellor, United States Commissioner of Education, and President of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching—in a now-famous Foundation study titled *Campus Life: In Search of Community* (1990):

*First, a college or university is an educationally **purposeful** community, a place where faculty and students share academic goals and work together to strengthen teaching and learning on the campus.*

*Second, a college or university is an **open** community, a place where freedom of expression is uncompromisingly protected and where civility is powerfully affirmed.*

*Third, a college or university is a **just** community, a place where the sacredness of the person is honored and where diversity is aggressively pursued.*

*Fourth, a college or university is a **disciplined** community, a place where individuals accept their obligations to the group and where well-defined governance procedures guide behavior for the common good.*

*Fifth, a college or university is a **caring** community, a place where the well-being of each member is sensitively supported and where service to others is encouraged.*

*Sixth, a college or university is a **celebrative** community, one in which the heritage of the institution is remembered and where rituals affirming both tradition and change are widely shared.*

I am excited by the prospect of working together with you as we advance our College, in a spirit of open dialogue and with an unwavering commitment to building a representative, just, and inclusive campus. As August approaches, I will be back in touch to begin planning with you the next chapter of our shared history.

Best regards,

Jim