

November 5, 2016

Dear Search Committee Members:

It is with great interest and enthusiasm that I am writing to apply for the position of President at Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU). This position captured my attention because FGCU is looking for a visionary leader capable of advancing the mission of the institution towards greater academic success and financial sustainability in the years ahead. FGCU embraces many of the values and characteristics that I appreciate as an academic administrator: commitment to student success, high impact academic programs, outstanding faculty, extended learning opportunities, and strong community partnerships. The opportunity to help shape the success of the University in an era of transformative technology, changing demographics, fiscal challenges and greater accountability is challenging and exciting. After reviewing the position description, the strategic priorities, and the institutional website, I feel that my strengths and vision represent the leadership characteristics that can facilitate the continued progress of this wonderful university.

I have 31 years of experience in higher education, which has afforded experiences in addressing opportunities and challenges from various perspectives. My background includes 18 years of increasing administrative responsibility from a department chair (earth and environmental sciences) and the Associate Dean in the College of Science and Mathematics at California State University, Fresno, to Dean of the College of Natural Sciences at California State University, Chico (Chico State), to Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs at California State University, Sacramento (Sacramento State). Currently I am serving as Special Advisor to the new president at Chico State who is buying out my time from Sacramento State. This background coupled with service on numerous system wide and campus wide committees, has given me a wealth of experience in strategic planning, budget oversight and implementation, fund-raising, hiring of personnel, faculty development, diversity initiatives, and student recruitment, retention and graduation. I also bring a global perspective having had the opportunity to work at several research and teaching institutions throughout the world.

Several national and state public policy issues form the context for the next phase of leadership at FGCU. Major amongst these is a need for a more highly educated citizenry. Creating such intellectual capacity requires delivery of high quality education and insuring that students graduate in a timely fashion. This is especially important in an era of accountability with state funding tied to performance metrics. Furthermore, FGCU is committed to building and sustaining a strong financial base and strong and productive relationships with external constituents so the university can effectively contribute to the economic and social development of the region and beyond. These are areas that I deeply value and I have worked very hard as a provost and in other administrative positions to advance them. I have outlined some of my work below; a more detailed description is provided in my resume.

In California, state support for postsecondary education significantly declined during the last recession. Through the strategic planning process at Sacramento State, I had the privilege to help lead significant transformational change that resulted in a sustainable growth trajectory. The development and implementation of the plan occurred through an inclusive, collaborative process involving the university community and relevant external stakeholders. We developed a planning culture that is reflected in continuous assessment of progress against clearly defined goals and metrics, and periodic reflections and updates of the strategic plan to enable the university to adapt more responsibly to changing external drivers, opportunities and risks.

Student success remains the top priority and like FGCU, our challenge is to work on persistence to graduation. As a first generation college student and non-native speaker from an economically disadvantaged background, I understand the challenges facing many students today. I remember how proud my parents were when I graduated with a BSc (Hons) in Geology, the only female in a discipline dominated by men. This experience shapes my commitment to higher education and the determination to insure that students have opportunities to broaden their perspectives and appreciate the complexities of a global society.

My recent administrative experience includes serving as co-chair (with the Vice President of Student Affairs) of the Graduation Initiative at Sacramento State that focuses on a broad range of student retention and graduation programs, which include such assistance as advising, mentoring, tutoring, leadership development, educational equity programs, student academic success interventions, campus life support, and generalized program support as well as experiential learning opportunities. The development of new educational delivery methods and technologies have promoted creative collaborations among faculty and students. These intervention strategies have led to significantly higher student retention and graduation rates. Student demographics are rapidly changing and shifting the culture away from the traditional student body. Different populations of students require difference programs and services, and anything less than a coordinated approach could be detrimental to the matriculation goals.

Diversity, in its many forms, enriches the educational experience by creating intellectually rich environments and creative and complex environments. I have worked at both HSI and AANAPISI serving institutions and have demonstrated a long-standing commitment to diversity. This includes recruitment and retention of diverse leadership, increased enrollment of multicultural and international students, investments in retention programs and diversity training. The key is to provide opportunities to explore the multi-faceted aspects of identity (race, ethnicity, religion, ability, gender, class, etc.), to challenge students to think about the relevance of community and culture as it pertains to identity, and to raise awareness and respect of the diversity both within the university and the surrounding community.

One of my values as a leader in building successful teams is diversity of thought. I strategically assemble teams that possess different perspectives, talents, and ideas. By

drawing on the wealth of experiences, I believe that we are able to critically analyze both opportunities and challenges from many perspectives, resulting in a more thorough plan of action. My role as the leader is to assimilate and facilitate the team's collective wisdom, make a purposeful decision, and accept responsibility for what transpires as an outcome. The results of my leadership have resulted in: recruiting and retaining talented faculty, staff and administrators; instilling a climate of trust and transparency; and promoting an organization that values innovation, entrepreneurship, and civility.

I have experience with advocacy at the California Legislature in Sacramento, and in Washington D.C. Examples include leading Sacramento State's efforts for reinvestment in higher education, lobbying with students to keep colleges affordable and safe, and joining CSU system presidents at the capitol to speak with lawmakers about reaffirming California's commitment to higher education. At the national level, I have worked directly with congressional delegates to organize broad-base support for critical initiatives pertaining to higher education (e.g. the Higher Education Reauthorization Act and issues related to student financial aid), and also advocated for innovation and economic development (a proposed increase in federal investments in research and applied research and an expanded and permanent R&D Tax Credit).

My experience in marketing includes working with the Office of Public Affairs and Advocacy to establish value propositions for each of the individual colleges at Sacramento State, and the overall value proposition for the institution. It is crucial that the messaging and value proposition are aligned with the mission and goals of the university. They must be consistent, concise and with a unique DNA. The process of establishing the message and the value proposition must be inclusive and vetted throughout the campus community, including the Board of Trustees, in order to inspire ownership. Done well, the marketing of the institution will help people decide to make an investment in the university.

The challenge to keep the cost of attending FGCU affordable while also remaining financially stable, requires ensuring that the long-range financial plan incorporates best business practices. I have had fiscal oversight of multi-million dollar budgets that included state appropriations, tuition revenues, auxiliary operations, grants and contracts, and fee-generated revenues. My accomplishments include increasing and diversifying our revenue portfolio while also being more efficient and effective in the delivery of programs and services.

Fundraising is critical to support the innovation and excellence of higher education. I enjoy developing relationships with alumni, prospective donors, civic leaders, corporate partners and others allowing me to communicate my passion for the value of the institution. I have attended numerous alumni events in California and beyond and have had personal contact with over 600 alumni. I have been active in three major capital campaigns. A highlight in the fund raising arena was my ability to secure a six-figure gift from an alumnus who had previously never given to the university. A different example is that I started the Power of 1,000 hornets crowd-funding campaign to raise more than \$1

million from 1,000 individuals to help fund the Sacramento State Event Center that will serve as a hub for athletic, entertainment and academic activities.

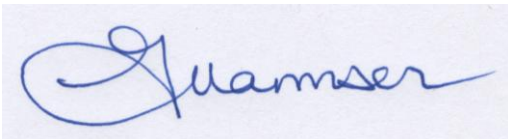
It is important for FGCU to continue to build external partnerships. I have experience in significant external outreach in building university-community partnerships, leveraging assets and fostering service learning and engagement. Examples include serving on NEXTED (Education for the Next Economy) board to develop partnerships among business, labor, education, community and government to advance regional economic objectives and enhance the academic performance and career readiness of students; partnering with the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency and other local organizations in the Promise Zone program to improve educational opportunities and increase economic activity, and working with corporations such as Apple, Hewlett-Packard and Aerojet Rocketdyne to support faculty and student research, and increase student internship opportunities. I oversaw and helped the Sacramento State Community Engagement Center with new community partnerships. Currently thousands of students participate in Service Learning with an economic impact to the region of over \$20 million.

In conclusion, I realize that the Committee is interested in my views on administration, and I offer a brief outline of my philosophy in this area. I am a person who listens well, can effectively motivate and inspire, and provide thoughtful vision and strategic direction. I have a strong belief in people and teamwork and in fostering an environment in which people are not only valued, but also encouraged to develop their full potential. In short, shared collegial governance is central to my administrative philosophy. I believe it is important to create an environment that offers and encourages feedback and understands the importance of constructive dialogue and discussion with constituents, stakeholders and the community.

I believe it is important to demonstrate visible support of student pursuits, departmental efforts and program events campus-wide, including the fine arts and athletics. Finally, I am committed to academic excellence and have a passion for academic life. In short, the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, and outreach drives my administrative philosophy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Fraksen", is written on a light blue background.

Frederika (Fraka) Harmsen