

December 15, 2016

Lucy Leske
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2015 Spring Road
Suite 510
Oak Brook, IL 60523

Dear Lucy:

I am writing to you today regarding the announcement that Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) is continuing its search for the leadership position of President. I have spent some time reviewing the background of the current “advanced candidates” to gain insight as to the preferences by the search committee for individuals currently serving at the Provost level. After thoughtful consideration and with the hope that I will be successful in piquing the interest of members of the search committee, I would be pleased to have my confidential expression of interest in the position of President shared with the search committee.

As a graduate from Florida’s Higher Education System, my personal and professional successes are a result of the strong foundation provided by those institutions. My personal biography includes serving as a U.S. Marine and then attending college as a Veteran/adult learner. I have consistently been a trusted leader with sound judgment and decision-making capability, one who can handle pressure and manage difficult, complex challenges with calm professionalism. Perhaps my candidacy might be viewed as a “dark horse candidate” for the position of President. However, I have been fortunate to serve in a variety of leadership positions at universities that span the entirety of the “qualifications” noted in the Presidential Leadership Profile.

Thus as a “T-Shaped” leader (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/andyboynton/2011/10/18/are-you-an-i-or-a-t/#24e2869f351b>), I have demonstrated success as an individual who recognizes and fosters the personal and professional values required of FGCU’s next President. I believe that the unique combination of my leadership experience provides the required foundation to successfully engage with FGCU Board of Trustees, FGCU’s internal and external communities, and to provide the energetic leadership required to have FGCU become the institution of choice for future students, while enhancing external partnerships.

It was with great interest that I read the Opportunities and Expectations for Leadership. Thus I wanted to share my administrative philosophy with the Dr. Ken Smith, Chair of the FGCU Presidential Search Advisory Committee and committee members. Over the years, I have consistently demonstrated a commitment to a transparent management environment, which involves leadership team members and stakeholders in decision-making that capitalizes on the ethos of shared governance and thus provides a foundation for creative and innovative initiatives. My administrative philosophy/leadership style includes actively engaging in transparent decision making, cultivating personal and academic integrity, contributing to the larger community, taking the perspectives of others seriously, and developing competence in moral and ethical reasoning and action. All of which directly relates to the leadership opportunity regarding Foster a Strong Sense of Community. I encourage all members of my leadership team and faculty leaders look both at best practices when developing solutions and to also think creatively while viewing problems from multiple perspectives that will improve efficiency and effectiveness of institutional processes and systems. Throughout my career, I have attempted to nurture an environment that is conducive to the collaborative development of innovative initiatives with constituencies within and outside of the university in response to challenges and opportunities presented to the universities I have served.

I would be remiss if I did not briefly mention to members of the search committee, who might be FGCU faculty, that over the years, I have demonstrated a passion for teaching and do have “chalk-on-the-hands” classroom experience with undergraduate and graduate instruction and have served as Professor with tenure at several universities. I understand the invaluable role that we as faculty members serve. Faculty ideas for new research, creative endeavors, curricular initiatives, new approaches to teaching and learning, and the very determination of our overall goals and strategies as we move ahead are critically important. I have done this in a variety of senior leadership roles that demonstrates a longstanding commitment to provide transparent leadership that is focused on increasing the quality and quantity of opportunities for achievements of our faculty, students, programs, and the institution as a whole that directly relate to student success.

I understand the invaluable role that we as faculty members serve. Faculty ideas for new research, creative endeavors, curricular initiatives, new approaches to teaching and learning, and the very determination of our overall goals and strategies as we move ahead are critically important. My ability to recognize and help actualize innovative ideas from the faculty and administrative colleagues sets me apart from others. I will provide continuity of purpose and the competitive edge that comes with thoroughly understanding both the quality of USF as well as the forces that help shape our academic environment in the state and beyond, all while playing a key collaborative role as part of university leadership.

With regard to Establish and Promote FGCU’s Distinctive Institutional Identity and Institutional Identity, there is an immediate need for FGCU to be strategic about its message and where it will market its unique programs. That message must be that FGCU facilitates student learning and student success that results in a “T” shaped graduate (T-Shaped Professional) and is a model for other institutions of higher learning in the State of Florida regarding the impact on an enriched learning environment on student success. Therefore, FGCU contributes to improving the human condition through personal, organizational, national, and global sustainable development through efforts that are intellectually honest, environmentally friendly, economically sound, politically viable, and socially just. The unique combination of my academic leadership experience does indeed provide the foundation required for ensuring that FGCU’s unique qualities, which include an instructional approach that emphasizes the importance of students as individuals.

<https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/continuing-and-online-education-forum/studies/2014/t-shaped-professionals>

My current position at Michigan State University is responsible for serving as a nexus point to assure smooth delivery of the curriculum to serve student demand. Academic Services and Enrollment Management is an organization dedicated to the University’s curriculum, provision of enrollment strategies that include recruitment and retention, academic program review, accreditation, and academic data resource stewardship for all students and colleges in ways that uphold the integrity of the academic enterprise in an increasingly competitive and global environment. In addition, I have participated in accreditation activities at the institutional level and as external reviewer/evaluator. My administrative portfolio includes responsibility for the identification and infusion of academic perspectives, context, and culture into the efficient and effective delivery of academic integrated management initiatives across Michigan State University.

I wanted to express to the student members of the search committee, a commitment to ensuring an outstanding and engaged experience for all students and I will effectively lead innovative efforts aimed at enhancing student retention and degree completion. I have successfully championed with a variety of senior leaders for new resources and investments to support student success and faculty development. Thus, I believe that my professional and personal philosophies are well suited to facilitate strategies, best practices, and analytic approaches for outcomes assessment and

effectiveness. The combination of my portfolios provides the necessary foundation for effectively collaborating with faculty and staff on a range of priority initiatives that “raise the bar” for our expectations regarding student success and the creation of an enriched learning environment. Furthermore, all members of the FGCU community must have an awareness and understanding that the continuous building and refining of programs and services is essential to an enhanced student experience and transforming lives.

I offer proven experience directly related to Increase Revenue to Support Strategic Goals and Lead Fundraising Efforts. As a university leader, I have successfully demonstrated a continuing commitment to assuring a variety of financial resources are available for supporting enriched learning and research opportunities through both fundraising and entrepreneurial revenue opportunities. Members of the search committee will note from my CV that I have experience engaging in the cultivation of major donors and have been successful in University fundraising efforts. I wanted to take just a moment to briefly mention an entrepreneurial initiative I was responsible for at the University of Toledo. As the University struggled with the most recent economic downturn, the President asked me to envision and create a new organization that became known Learning Ventures organization. Learning Ventures represented a unique concept that provided an enhanced revenue stream and a framework for design of innovative courses in the liberal arts to support of general education and continuing education. It is important to note that Learning Ventures leveraged new technologies to create new learning communities. Learning Ventures delivered a 5 to 1 return on investment (ROI) and generated net revenue in excess of \$25 million annually to support Academic Affairs operations and initiatives.

My personal and professional commitment the sense of community and diversity and inclusion has been founded upon contributing to a campus climate that welcomes, celebrates, and promotes respect for the entire variety of human experiences. An important guiding principle is that a commitment to diversity is founded upon welcoming people from all backgrounds that allows us to include knowledge and values from many cultures in the curriculum and the campus community’s extra-curricular life. As university leaders, our commitment to work toward an environment that values diversity requires that we create, promote, and maintain activities and programs which further our understanding of individual and group diversity.

I have extensive experience in executing strategic plans at the organization level, university level, and beyond the institutional level that includes initiatives for organizations such as the Human Sciences Great Plains Interactive Distance Education Alliance, New Jersey Intercampus Network (NJIN), New Jersey’s Virtual Academic Library Environment (VALE), Southeastern Universities Research Association Network (SURANET), and Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR). All of which demonstrates a proven ability with regard to Execute New Strategic Plan for 2016-2021 that includes successful collaboration with local, state, regional, and national organizations to meet the needs of the evolving regional economy and demography. I have been responsible for leading initiatives that strengthen economic and public-private partnerships that include the formation of a higher education consortium, providing student technology consultants for the pharmaceutical industry, collaborative partnerships with ProMedica, and commercial information providers. It is my hope that members of the search committee will concur that I have the proven ability to seek out new relationships and foster current collaborative partnerships with the community that will provide hands on experience for students.

The combination of my portfolios and experience as a leader in a variety roles internally and externally provides the necessary foundation for a deep understanding of engaged university leadership that is required to Foster a Strong Sense of Community. It is my personal and professional belief that institutional leadership must model the characteristics we educate students toward and set an example for the entire community in personal and professional domains, all of

which is required to Build and Lead a Strong Organization. The successes I have achieved during my professional career have required an in-depth knowledge of key and emerging trends regarding the next generation university and what is required for undergraduate and graduate students to be successful in their chosen endeavors. If chosen to serve as FGCU's President, I will provide continuity of purpose and the competitive edge that comes with thoroughly understanding both the quality of FGCU as well as the forces that help shape our higher education environment in the state and beyond.

In closing, it is my hope that I will have piqued interest in my candidacy by members of the search committee. I truly look forward to an opportunity to discuss my experience and how together, we can successfully engage all members of FGCU's internal and external communities in building upon current accomplishments and charting new initiatives that contribute to student success and improving the human condition. The attached materials provide information about my educational background, relevant leadership experiences, and professional activities that support my candidacy.

Sincerely,

John D. Gaboury

John D. Gaboury, Ed. D., M.L.S.