

January 31, 2017

Ms. Lucy Leske, Mr. Robert Luke, and Ms. Veena Abraham  
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Dear Ms. Leske, Mr. Luke, and Ms. Abraham:

Thank you for informing me that I have been nominated for the Presidency of Florida Gulf Coast University. Please accept this letter as my application. I have also attached my curriculum vitae.

The FGCU Presidential Leadership Profile states that the leadership opportunities and expectations for the next president are to: 1) execute FGCU's new 2016-21 Strategic Plan; 2) establish and promote FGCU's distinctive identity; 3) increase revenue to support strategic goals; 4) foster a strong sense of community; 5) lead fund-raising efforts; and 6) build and lead a strong organization. I believe my past administrative leadership positions and successes illustrate that I have the experience, capabilities, vision, and values to achieve these objectives, and the professional characteristics and personal qualities expected of FGCU's next President.

**Execute FGCU's New 2016-21 Strategic Plan.** Throughout my academic administrative career, I have had extensive experience in creating and successfully implementing strategic plans, most recently at Kennesaw State. My first administrative experiences with strategic planning date back to my time at Georgia Tech in the 1980s as Director of Tech's School of Social Sciences and the Founding Director of Tech's Sam Nunn School of International Affairs.

During my KSU presidency, we developed and successfully implemented the 2007-12 and 2013-2017 Strategic Plans, both of which helped Kennesaw State move forward with programs and initiatives crucial to the future of the university, the communities it serves, and Georgia. We also developed and carried out a third different type of Strategic Plan in 2015-16 that guided the consolidation of Kennesaw State and Southern Polytechnic State into a single institution.

Several programs and initiatives initiated in the 2007-12 and 2013-17 KSU Strategic Plans are similar to those detailed in the Four Pillars of FGCU's 2016-21 Strategic Plan. For example, FGCU's first strategic pillar, "Academic Excellence," envisions the elevation of the honors program to Honors College status; the expansion of internship and cooperative opportunities; and the addition of new degree programs leading to high-paying high-demand jobs. These were all successfully accomplished key elements of KSU's 2007-12 and 2013-2017 Strategic Plans.

Similarly, the second FGCU pillar, "Entrepreneurship," was a key focus of KSU strategic plans. As a result, we obtained funds to create the Robin and Doug Shore Entrepreneurship Center; established a BBA in Entrepreneurship; and convinced the Georgia legislature to provide funds to found "Ignite HQ," a business incubator and accelerator that helps local entrepreneurs develop their inventions and ideas to build businesses and aid economic development.

Regarding "Health Sciences," there are again similarities between FGCU's 2016-21 Strategic

Plan and KSU's strategic plans. For example, KSU initiated a Masters degree in Bio-Informatics; obtained funding to establish the Michael Leven School of Culinary Sustainability and Hospitality; and began to revamp the Doctorate in Nursing Sciences into a PhD in Nursing.

Similarities also exist between FGCU's and KSU's strategic plans under the "Emerging Preeminence" pillar. For example, both institutions seek to increase their retention, progression and graduation rates; retain excellent faculty and staff; and expand faculty and student research. KSU has had success in these areas, including over a ten-year period obtaining a 14 percentage point increase in its graduation rate and convincing the National Council on Undergraduate Research to hold its 2019 National Conference on Undergraduate Research at KSU.

Strategic planning is absolutely crucial for a university, and it goes without saying that a strategic plan, once developed, must be operationalized and carried out. The four pillars of FGCU's Strategic Plan are well-thought out and comprehensive, and I have had experience and success in executing strategic plans that have considerable similarities. It would be an honor to be given the opportunity to help execute FGCU's 2016-21 Strategic Plan.

**Establish and Promote FGCU's Distinctive Identity.** As the premier institution of higher education in Southwest Florida, FGCU has in twenty years established a distinctive identity in the region. FGCU rightly focuses its identity on the quality and relevance of its academic programs, and it also benefits greatly from public awareness of and appreciation for its arts, athletics, and continuing education programs. As I see it, the challenges are to enhance and promote the visibility of all of its programs in Southwest Florida, and to strengthen and expand its outreach to and connections with communities, businesses, and industries in broader statewide and national communities, without foregoing FGCU's primary focus on Southwest Florida.

From my past experience, it is often helpful to enlist the assistance of a professional marketing and branding firm to sharpen an institution's identity and to achieve these objectives. The president in conjunction with his or her senior staff, university trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends in the local community should play significant roles in crafting the messages that will be communicated. Once the university leadership with the help of the marketing and branding firm decides upon the message(s) to be communicated, subsequent marketing and branding efforts are most effective when they are multi-faceted, taking advantage of all forms of communications ranging from print media to advanced social media.

While the key to a successful campaign is to get buy-in to the campaign message(s) from the entire university community, the president must be the most prominent university spokesperson. I believe that my years as President of KSU have demonstrated that I have that capability.

**Increase Revenue to Support Strategic Goals.** In the absence of sufficient funds, strategic plans and distinctive identities usually mean little. One of the primary tasks of a president is thus to increase the availability of university revenue. This can be done in a number of ways, by increasing state-provided funding; expanding research; by emphasizing and succeeding in philanthropic giving and related fund-raising activities; and as the least preferred option, increasing tuition and student fees.

At Kennesaw State and while earlier serving as the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academics and Fiscal Affairs of the University System of Georgia, I have had extensive experience and considerable success working with the legislature, executive branch, and System Office to present cases for needed institutional and system funding. Although Georgia, unlike Florida, has not adopted a performance-based funding model, many of the metrics that I have used to persuade legislative, executive, and senior University System decision-makers to support requested programs and initiatives have relied on objective quantifiable metrics. I am extremely comfortable developing and using such metrics to make cases for needed institutional funding.

Increasing research funding is also a good source for increased university funding, especially at FGCU and similar universities since FGCU and similar universities are, among other things, in the business of expanding knowledge and solving problems. Thus, research funding from the federal government, state and local governments, businesses and corporations, and foundations should be at the forefront of university thinking. Developed intelligently and used wisely, funds generated from research can provide breakthroughs that help the human condition; provide support for faculty, staff, and student; cover overhead costs; and assist the entire operation of the university, as well as greatly strengthening university ties with external communities.

Philanthropic giving and related fund-raising undertakings must also be high on the list of presidential priorities. Since this is one of the six primary points listed under opportunities and expectations for the new FGCU president, I will cover this in more detail below.

Finally, as increasing tuition and fees is the least preferred option as it is a double edged sword. On one hand, increasing tuition and fees provides more funds, but such increases also make it more difficult for students to attend college. Thus, any increase in tuition and fees must be carefully weighed. How much will the cost of operating the institution go up next year? What is the inflation rate? Are services for students needed? Should the student-faculty ratio or student-employee ratio be decreased? What other funding sources are available? These are just some of the issues that must be considered when increases in tuition and fees are contemplated. To reiterate, this is the least preferred option, but I have long been involved in such discussions and decision-making, even though it is at times difficult and uncomfortable.

**Foster a Strong Sense of Community.** Throughout my career, I have concentrated on building excellent relationships and fostering senses of community with on-campus, off-campus, national, and global communities. A few examples help illustrate this.

On campus, the highly successful shared governance structures and Presidential Commissions I instituted at KSU serve as evidence of how I, with others, build community. Early in my years at KSU, we reorganized KSU's shared governance structure to create deliberative bodies that included the Faculty Senate; the Staff Senate; the Administrators Council; the Student Government Association; the Council of Academic Deans; the Chairs and Directors Assembly; and the University Council, which consists of representatives from each of the other deliberative bodies. This shared governance system has worked well, providing multiple fora for issues of importance to be discussed and debated.

Similarly, an excellent demonstration of my commitment to build community by supporting a diverse and inclusive culture is my creation of and support for six Presidential Commissions at Kennesaw State

that focus on: 1) Disability Strategies and Resources; 2) Gender and Work Life Issues; 3) GLBTIQ Initiatives; 4) Racial and Ethnic Dialogue; 5) Sustainability; and 6) Veterans Affairs. These commissions assist members of each community on which they focus to have an inclusive and welcoming experience at KSU, and to identify and resolve issues which might confront them.

Off campus, I have had excellent relationships with many members of the Georgia House and Senate, as well as Georgia's representatives and senators in Washington. Similarly, when I became KSU's president, I formed the highly successful President's Community Advisory Board to make sure that the university and local communities stayed well-abreast of and well-informed about each other's issues, concerns, and opportunities.

At the national level, I have served on several committees of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), the American Council of Education (ACE), and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), including serving on the NCAA Governing Board and chairing the NCAA Finance and Audit Committee.

Globally, I played a major role in negotiating and opening KSU's campus in Montepulciano, Tuscany, Italy; in solidifying and defining KSU's relationship with the Confucius Institute; and in expanding KSU's numerous study abroad opportunities for students and faculty alike.

**Lead Fund-Raising Efforts.** Philanthropic giving and related fund-raising undertakings must be high on the list of presidential priorities. This is clearly a high priority for FGCU as it nears successful completion of its \$100 million capital campaign. I am pleased to say that I both enjoy fund-raising and have been successful doing it.

My first foray into fund-raising came at Georgia Tech, when as Director of the School of Social Sciences I worked with the Tech Foundation leadership to develop funds for student study abroad programs and for the Georgia Tech Rugby Club. Most of these funds were donated by Georgia Tech alumni and local businesses. And as the Founding Director of Tech's Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, I played a major role both in convincing Senator Nunn to be willing to attach his name to the school, and in obtaining a multi-million gift from the Bank of America to establish the Sam Nunn Bank of America Policy Forums, which continue today.

At KSU, the university under my leadership in 2007 initiated its first comprehensive campaign, a \$75 million effort focused on high priority capital projects, student aid, and faculty support. The five-year campaign obtained funds to build new facilities for the WellStar College of Health and Human Services, the Bagwell College of Education, the Dr. Bobbie Bailey Performing Arts Center, the Bernard Zuckerman Museum of Art, and an 88-acre Sports and Recreation Park. It also raised several million dollars for endowed student scholarships and for endowments for distinguished faculty, graduate fellows, and faculty and staff development. The campaign was successfully completed in 2012

Since the conclusion of the campaign, I have continued to be a successful fund-raiser, garnering several gifts which have been mentioned previously, for example funds to name the Michael Leven School of Culinary Sustainability and Hospitality, the Joel Katz Music and Entertainment

Business Program, and the Robin and Doug Shore Entrepreneurship Center. To reiterate, I both enjoy fund-raising and have been successful doing it.

**Build and Lead a Strong Organization.** The best evidence of my organizational leadership ability is the successful consolidation of Kennesaw State University and Southern Polytechnic State University (SPSU), which occurred between 2013 and 2015. During this consolidation, we created 88 operational work groups (OWG), each of which concentrated on one aspect of consolidating the two universities. Each OWG consisted of similar numbers of appropriate faculty, staff, and administrators from each university. The consolidation went forward exceedingly well. Today, virtually everyone at KSU and in the community considers the consolidation to be an immense success.

Other evidence of my ability to build and lead a strong organization is centered on KSU's growth in prominence over the past ten years, during which I guided KSU through a journey that: 1) expanded and improved its undergraduate and masters programs; 2) added doctoral programs; 3) instituted programs that increased the six-year graduation rate over a ten year period from 28 percent to 42 percent; 4) enhanced KSU's study abroad, experiential learning, and on-line programs; 5) gained recognition for KSU by the Carnegie Corporation as a research institution; and 6) created and funded innovative new programs such as the Joel Katz Music and Entertainment Business program and the Michael Leven School of Culinary Sustainability and Hospitality.

My entire administrative career has been marked by a commitment to working with others to build innovative organizations and structures dedicated to connecting the academic community to the broader world, without abandoning the values of the academic world. Two final examples help illustrate this.

In the 1990s, as Founding Director of Georgia Tech's Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, I led development of an international affairs program appropriate for one of the country's leading technological research institutions. Together with the faculty, we built a School focused on international security policy, international economic development, and comparative politics and cultures that became one of the leading international affairs programs in the southeast. Earlier, as Director of Tech's School of Social Sciences in the 1970s and 1980s, I led the creation of the Masters Degree in Technology and Science Policy, the first Tech degree that combined social science expertise with technical know-how.

These all were innovative undertakings that required building strong and forward thinking organizations that benefitted the students who participated in them; enhanced the institutions at which they were created; and helped the broadly defined communities in which they were implemented.

**Professional Characteristics and Personal Qualities.** Hopefully, the above discussion also illustrates that I have the professional characteristics and personal qualities desired in the next FGCU president. At the same time, please let me provide a few additional comments about ways in which I have those characteristics and qualities.

For example, my leadership style is open, transparent, and collaborative, and I have a reputation as being a fair decision-maker who seeks input, is supportive of shared governance, appreciates open dialogue, and defends academic freedom. I communicate well with diverse communities and stakeholders including political, business, and civic leaders, and am familiar with existing and evolving trends in higher education.

I have strong track records in strategic planning, institutional change, and fund-raising, and have successfully managed major financial systems and operating budgets. My commitment to and appreciation of environmental sustainability is illustrated both by my creation of the KSU Presidential Commission on Sustainability and by the fact that almost all the buildings built during my KSU presidency are LEED certified.

In addition, throughout my career, I have been an innovative leader who has engaged the university and broader communities in developing and attaining shared strategic visions. I have played a major leadership role in economic and social development in the communities in which I live; have developed strategic partnerships with government, business and civic entities; and initiated programs that graduate students who are both employable and able to successfully continue on with further education.

And both my wife Sue and I enjoy attending campus and community academic, cultural, and athletics events.

Additional details about my professional characteristics and personal qualities are perhaps best provided by my references. But in conclusion, I stress that I have been and am deeply committed to creating, maintaining, and nurturing a university environment where teaching and student success remain the top priority. Hopefully I may have the opportunity to do that at Florida Gulf Coast University.

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Again, thank you for letting me know about my nomination to be the next Florida Gulf Coast University President, and thank you also for the opportunity to provide a statement on my qualifications to be President of FGCU. I look forward to hearing from you.

Daniel S. Papp  
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