

To CRCNA Region 3 Classes,

Before I begin my report on the October 2019 Calvin University Board of Trustees meeting, I want to thank you all for putting me forward as your representative on Calvin University's Board. I am honoured to hold this position and look forward to getting to know your classes and congregations more over my term.

As a 2015 graduate of Calvin University, I was thrilled to be back on campus and to serve the university again. I am the only Board member who was a student during the current administration, and it is neat to be able to work with Michael LeRoy and his Cabinet in this capacity now because I have always had immense respect for him, ever since being his Bible study as a student in his first semester, Fall of 2012.

### ***October 2019 Board Update***

On Thursday, trustees met with our individual committees before a dinner with the faculty advisors to those committees. Afterwards, the full Board was convened, and Michael Le Roy welcomed trustees to the first meeting of the Board of Trustees of Calvin University. The Board then heard from several committees.

- The Audit Committee reported on risk assessment and an internal audit and noted that any previous observations had been addressed by staff. Representatives from Plante Moran provided a high-level overview of Calvin's audited financial statements. They noted that the university has managed to keep operating expenses aligned with revenues, reduce debt, grow endowment, and increase net assets.
- The Academic Affairs Committee reported that Calvin is re-examining its core curriculum and is planning a new university structure. They reported that Calvin heard from the Higher Learning Commission that the university meets all requirements for accreditation.
- The Student Life Committee affirmed the community need for the university's top fundraising priority, a new Commons Union. Additionally, Title IX has been moved into the Student Life Division, and the policy and process are under review to ensure alignment with best practices.
- The Advancement Committee reported that fundraising this year is ahead of last year at about \$5.68 million. Fundraising focus will be on the Commons Union, as \$70 million will be needed for the project. Fundraising for scholarships has risen significantly, with \$3.9 million awarded to students annually.

Michael Le Roy's report focused on demographics and market share in higher education and noted that only 25% of students in higher education are traditional undergraduates. He also displayed data from WICHE (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education) that shows an anticipated 33% decline in traditional students in Michigan between 2011-2030. Calvin's pathway to growth is through diversification into new student populations, serving new markets, and generating new revenue through a new organization entity focused on graduate and non-traditional populations. Through this all, Calvin University is committed to maintaining key attributes: offering an education that is missional, affordable, accessible, and attainable.

An important new opportunity for increased enrollment at Calvin will be through implementing a digital strategy. Michael shared that the new academic entity will offer an interdisciplinary online education—

degrees, certificates, masters programs, etc.—with six starts per year. He also noted that Calvin will need an online program manager (OPM) in order to bring this goal to fruition in a timely manner.

Representatives from the selected OPM, Wiley Education Services, shared their history and the types of services they deliver, such as market assessment, marketing and brand management, recruitment, 24/7 Helpdesk, and more. They noted that the Wiley partnership with Calvin will result in them investing capital in Calvin.

On Friday afternoon, we received additional committee reports:

- The Enrollment Strategy committee noted the decline in enrollment and reported that consultation with HCRC (Human Capital Research Corporation) will help Calvin see positive sticking points needed to help convert a prospective student to an enrolled student.
- The Administration and Finance Committee brought four items for approval: the 2019-2020 operating budget, the Design Hub proposal, tuition and room and board for 2021-2021, and seed funding for the new academic entity focused on graduate and non-traditional populations. All motions were approved.
- The Investment Committee reported that first quarter endowment performance was just over 4%.
- The Trusteeship Committee noted the great group of incoming trustees as well as a commitment to Board development.
- The Executive Committee brought five items for approval: trustee appointments to committees, membership of the executive committee, standing committee membership, future meeting dates, and the “Freedom of Expression at Calvin University” philosophy. All motions were approved.

The motion to approve the consent agenda was supported as well.

I would also like to include some items to pray for from my observations from this meeting:

- Prayers for the administration and staff as they being to operationalize the new strategic plan that was finalized last year.
- Prayers for the faculty as they adjust to changes in the higher education environment.
- Most importantly, prayers for the students. Mental health was brought up in several discussions at Calvin and is a topic discussed across campuses globally. Please pray that students who need help seek it and that their friends on campus can support them. We can be also thankful that Calvin has incredible health, including mental health, services.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me for further details.

Sincerely,

Alicia Sinclair

[aliciagsinclair@gmail.com](mailto:aliciagsinclair@gmail.com) | 647-723-6630