



22 June 2007

Hello, I'm Robert Davila, president of Gallaudet University. I'm really happy to be here with you again. Last week I was not able to produce a vlog because I was traveling on university business, but I'm here again and happy to be visiting with you. I'd like to report to you about several things that have happened on campus, and this may be information you already know because you receive email postings.

Nevertheless, you know that the new provost has taken some time to study the needs of his organization and has selected new administrators. Some individuals who have worked for some time in different positions are being replaced. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank those individuals who served Gallaudet so well and for such a long time. We have not yet decided about how we will formally recognize them for their good service, but we plan to have an event during which we will thank them more formally.

I am really pleased with the progress that Provost Weiner is making to organize the Academic Affairs division. I see progress being made and he is overseeing all of the work groups that are working on accreditation. Everyone is really working hard and long every day.

I am pleased to see the progress and I want to thank the soon-to-be Provost Weiner for his hard work.

Also, you know from the recent email posting that the chair of the Board of Trustees, Pamela Holmes, decided to resign from the Board on July 1. The reason for that is explained in the email. She has increasing responsibilities and expanding duties in her employment, and she can no longer attend to all of the requirements of the Board chair, so she has respectfully resigned. Personally, I am disappointed to see her leave because she has been a very good chair and extremely dedicated to Gallaudet University. She has worked very hard every day to attend to various needs of the campus. She communicated with us every day and really was a wonderful Board chairperson, and I want to thank her for all of the work she has done. She really deserves every bit of recognition and praise that we can give her.

She will be replaced by Dr. Ben Soukup who is the director of the Communication Service for the Deaf in South Dakota. Ben has been on the Board for several years and, in becoming chairman, he brings to the duties of the chair wonderful experience from his personal involvement in many different aspects of the deaf community. He was formerly president of the National Association of the Deaf and he is very active in the deaf community. He is also the parent of three deaf children – two graduated from Gallaudet and one from NTID.

I also want to update you on the work we are doing with MSCHE, our progress, and the accreditation work. The different work groups are continuing to work very hard every day on campus with frequent and regular meetings. For example, the curriculum revision team called a Town Hall meeting to discuss their changes and recommendations to the community here, allowing members of the community on campus, both deaf and hearing, to suggest ideas and recommend changes or additions, and to give input and feedback. We look forward to continuing work on that effort because this curriculum has to be implemented by the start of the new academic year in September, so timing is extremely limited.

Last week the executive committee of the Board of Trustees and the mission and vision work group met for several hours to discuss the latest draft of the statement. We are working hard to establish and clarify the mission and supporting vision statements, and we're progressing well on that. The Board had a first hand opportunity to review and discuss this draft, to raise questions, and to suggest ideas to the work group which guides our continuing work on that. I expect that a new updated statement will be distributed soon to give the community here, including our alumni, an opportunity to review it and continue to offer their input to the work group.

Another thing that is happening on the Board side is that the Board continues to interview individuals for possible service on the Board of Trustees. Some interviews have taken place, and I was invited to

participate and provide assistance. The interviews will continue until all the positions are filled. I do not have a time schedule for that because so many people need to be involved and scheduling during the summer is very difficult, but the work continues.

Another thing that the Board of Trustees plans to do is a retreat – to give them the opportunity to come together with new members, if new members are on the Board by the time that retreat is scheduled. Also, this will give the Board the opportunity to continue with its own development – and through this experience and discussion, they can plan and envision the direction for the university’s future. We need to have additional time for this because during the three regular meetings each year, there isn’t enough time for work beyond what is already scheduled. Reports and participation from various people on campus occurs at those meetings, so we need to give the Board additional time so it can consider ideas among themselves and to make plans for the university.

One other thing that I want to comment on this morning is that you have information from the email posting about the CAC and NCAA imposed sanctions on Gallaudet University for violation of some rules. The result is that for the two years that the Gallaudet women’s volleyball team won the championship of the Capital Athletic Conference, the CAC – the championship years were 2005 and 2006 – have been vacated. Also during 2005, the coach of the year was Gallaudet’s volleyball coach, and now that honor has been

withdrawn. These things happened to us because an unqualified player was allowed to play during the time of the championship tournament. That is not permitted, so we have to give up the championship. Nevertheless, the CAC putting Gallaudet on probation may seem harsh; all it really means is a warning to Gallaudet University not to commit any more violations in the future. Our membership and our participation in CAC activities, tournaments and competitions remain unchanged and without restriction. That is positive and good news for us. We are still members of the CAC and we will still be able to participate in all of the different sports. The final good word on the CAC activities is that one of our female scholar athletes, Tamara Foronda, has been named *Athlete of the Year* by the CAC. She is a volleyball player and a wonderful example of an individual who has done outstanding work both in the classroom and on the playing field. It shows that we have students here who are really outstanding, and we are very proud of Tamara and thank her for bringing wonderful recognition and respect to our university.

That concludes my news sharing with you today. I will be back with you again soon and will have additional programs to present to you. I hope the rest of your week is nice. Thank you very much and so long.