

**Board of Regents Video Teleconference Meeting  
Northern Kentucky University  
March 10, 2021**

Regent André Ward, Chair, called the video teleconference meeting of the Board of Regents to order at 1:00 pm, Wednesday, March 10, 2021.

**Roll Call:** Michael Baranowski, Richard Boehne, Normand Desmarais, Lauren Goodwin, Ashley Himes, Jim Parker, Ken Perry, Dennis Repenning, W. Lee Scheben, Gregory Shumate, André Ward. (All Regents joined the meeting by video teleconference).

Other Attendees: Ashish Vaidya, Wendy Peek, Bonita Brown, Ken Bothof, Joan Gates, Eric Gentry, Mike Hales, Valerie Hardcastle, Darryl Peal, Kim Scranage, Lori Southwood, Eddie Howard, Matt Cecil (all attendees and audience joined the meeting by video teleconference).

Regent Gregory Shumate seconded Regent Michael Baranowski's motion to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021 Board of Regents meetings. **(Motion carried)**

**Presidential Comments:**

Thank you, Chair Ward and members of the Board.

And thank you to everyone who is joining this Board meeting via live stream. We appreciate your participation.

This week we celebrate the founding of our university fifty-three years ago, and I believe that is a great place to begin my remarks.

As part of that celebration today, we launch our Inaugural Day of Giving. This campaign allows alumni, faculty, staff and friends to make an investment in our students and the region.

At our founding, education was the best path to a better life and that principle rings true today. While the world looks very different in 2021 than it did in 1968, we still strive to provide that path, opening the doors of opportunity for those willing to put in the hard work.

NKU's mission of being a steward of place is as relevant today as ever before.

So before I begin sharing news and highlights from the past two months, I want to encourage you all to visit our Day of Giving website at [nku.edu/FoundersDay](http://nku.edu/FoundersDay) to make a gift if you can.

Happy Founders' Day, NKU.

*While we remain vigilant in the continued fight against the COVID-19 pandemic nearly one year after our campus pivoted to remote learning and online operations to keep our community safe, I have some good news to share.*

**Vaccine Update**

First, COVID-19 vaccinations for Kentucky residents in Phase 1C opened this week and that includes NKU faculty and staff who are Kentucky residents.

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Like in a lot of areas around the country, finding an appointment continues to be a challenge because supply still remains a constraint. Besides St. Elizabeth Healthcare and the Kroger Clinic at the Northern Kentucky Convention Center, other sites are opening as we speak and with supply likely to increase in the coming weeks, it will only be a matter of time before vaccines will be available for all who choose to get them.

NKU employees who live in Ohio or Indiana are currently unable to receive their vaccine in Kentucky. We have advocated that that restriction be modified as soon as supply eases. We will keep the community informed when and if that changes.

And of course, as we move through this process, it is important to stay focused on the safety protocols that keep us safe.

### **Commencement Update**

On Monday we announced that we will have an in-person commencement this May. Our proposal for outdoor commencement ceremonies was approved by the Commonwealth. The approval is for up to 25-percent of capacity provided social distancing and masking are still observed.

We still have several items to firm up, but knowing we can honor our graduates in person this May, is exciting.

I want to thank our special events team for their planning not only for this May, but for their great work on our previous two virtual commencement exercises.

*This summer, we will welcome a new member to Cabinet.*

### **New Provost — Dr. Matt Cecil**

I am happy to share that Dr. Matt Cecil will become our new Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs beginning this July 1.

Dr. Cecil currently serves as Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Minnesota State University, Mankato, where he oversees its academic colleges and institutional research, as well as its COVID-19 response. Dr. Cecil has also served as the Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities at Minnesota State.

He brings more than a decade of academic administration experience at Minnesota State, Wichita State University and South Dakota State University. He also taught at Purdue University and the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Cecil is a media historian and a leading scholar of FBI history during the J. Edgar Hoover era.

As NKU's Chief Academic Officer, he will help advance NKU's mission to deliver innovative, student-centered education across its seven colleges.

### **WE HAVE ASKED DR. CECIL TO JOIN US AND SAY A FEW WORDS.**

Thank you, Dr. Cecil. And thank you to search co-chairs Bonita Brown and Dale Stephenson, the search committee and all of our students, faculty and staff who participated in interviews and open forums with the candidates.

We are very excited to welcome Dr. Cecil to the NKU community later this year.

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### **Legislative Update**

Earlier today, the Board heard from Trey Grayson and Assistant Vice President for Economic Engagement & Government Relations, Carmen Hickerson, with a legislative affairs update.

We will keep the campus informed about developments in the Kentucky General Assembly Session and how NKU's priorities are faring. We remain hopeful for additional higher-education appropriations, given the state's positive revenue situation.

### **Student Success Innovations**

The campus continues to move forward with Success by Design despite the tumultuous past year, leading to several high-impact student success innovations across the campus.

For example, Steely Library extended its popular Textbook Affordability Program into the spring 2021 semester. The library identified 19 digital textbooks to add to the online catalog with the potential to reach over 1,100 NKU students and save them more than \$74,000. Since the launch of the Program in the fall 2020, over 6,000 NKU students have saved nearly \$350,000!

The library also expanded its Research Help Services for students by joining a national consortium of academic libraries. Students can now get personalized support from a librarian any time, day or night, via online chat. Last fall, there were close to 600 virtual chats. So far this spring there have been more than 200 virtual interactions demonstrating that we are meeting students where they are.

Norse Advising moved to virtual advising appointments, a practice students have enjoyed and embraced with fewer no-shows for crucial interactions. The plan is to include this in the future as a regular option for our students.

These are just a few imaginative innovations accomplished for students this year and we will continue to refine how we serve students across campus going forward.

### **Homecoming 2021**

Homecoming was a bit different this year, but our Alumni team planned a successful 2021 NKU Homecoming and Alumni Weekend "At Home" in February, which allowed our alumni to celebrate safely.

The weeklong celebration featured a blend of virtual gatherings and Norse pride traditions on campus, including a window painting competition and helmet decorating contest.

The community enjoyed several virtual events such as Black History Month Celebration Keynote Speaker Angela Davis, a political activist, philosopher and author. NKU's Black Alumni Council also held virtual events such as the "Black Norse Homecoming Experience," a showcase of black excellence from the campus community.

The week concluded with a virtual pep rally before the men's basketball team took on Wright State Raiders on ESPN+.

Norse Pride was showing all week and it was a great sight to see.

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### **Making Teaching Public 2021**

Our third annual Making Teaching Public event was also held during Homecoming Week last month and it was our most successful yet.

About 170 people attended classes virtually — a increase in attendance over the first two years.

Thirteen classes were available for anyone to attend at no cost and covered subjects such as teaching K-5 students reading skills and creating a village's brand identity in the Czech Republic.

This program always provides a great opportunity for community members to take an inside look at an exciting topic and learn something new.

I want to thank the faculty members who opened up their courses, as well as the University Advancement who helped make this happen. By all accounts, our external guests had a great experience joining our students.

*We do have a lot more great news across campus. Let us begin with an update from the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.*

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Students, faculty and staff have been engaging in online training in diversity, equity and inclusion this month as part of the commitment to building a safe and welcoming campus community for all individuals.

This training is meant to inspire a more equitable and respectful community while offering the opportunity to learn about diversity, equity and inclusion. It will equip participants with the information and skills necessary to create that respectful and welcoming environment.

Throughout the month of February, NKU celebrated Black History Month with a variety of activities, including Angela Davis serving as our Keynote speaker and more than 600 in attendance for that virtual event.

Also, the Office of Inclusive Excellence partnered with Marketing and Communications to share via social media the names and photos of Historic African American leaders who we celebrate for contributions to social justice and civil rights. The highly successful campaign engaged faculty, staff and students.

In fact, the campaign continues this month as we celebrate Women icons in History, this time offering the stories of accomplished and powerful women who have made significant contributions throughout the history of the United States.

*Our Student Affairs division has been active under new Vice President Eddie Howard so far this year, including a very successful Third Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service.*

### **Student Affairs Updates**

- As you heard during the presentation from members of the Mental Health Advisory Group, the Health Counseling and Student Wellness office will begin using Therapy Assistance Online (TAO), which is a suite of online tools for client education and interaction.

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- This will increase access to resources for waitlisted students and reach distance and online learners. Staff and faculty will also be able to access the self-enrolled portions of the system. We're grateful to the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education for its support in providing the year-long state contract for TAO.
- The first round of our student-engagement initiative, Pitch-a-Program has yielded three student-led ideas with in-person components:
  - Paint night
  - Wellness Wednesday certification program on pathogen transmission
  - and Trivia Night
- The next round of program submissions is underway.

*The Academic Affairs division also has some exciting highlights, beginning with a national honor for NKU's MBA program.*

### **Academic Affairs Updates**

- The 2021 U.S. News & World Report ranking of the Best Online MBA Programs ranked NKU's program as No. 123 in the nation, a dramatic climb after being No. 191 in 2020 and being unranked in 2019.
- Our MBA was also named one of the Best Online MBA Programs for Veterans for the first time at No. 72. Only 78 programs nationwide made the list.

Congratulations are in order to Dean Hassabelnaby and his team in the College.

- Also, in the Haile College of Business, the Center for Economic Education is expanding its award-winning Danny Dollar Academy to a virtual platform for elementary educators. The Center collaborated with the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland to adapt the program to a virtual environment. Now educators teaching in third through fifth grades are able to teach economics, personal finance, and entrepreneurship through this program.
- In the College of Health and Human Services, NKU's Center for Simulation Education earned teaching and education accreditation from the Society for Simulation in Healthcare and the Council for Accreditation of Healthcare Simulation Programs.
- NKU is the Commonwealth's only university to receive accreditation, a feat accomplished by only 183 other simulation centers internationally. Along with meeting many certification metrics, including a two-year track record of excellence in simulation standards and teaching, NKU received high marks for its innovative technology and university leadership support.
- Congratulations to all involved for this remarkable accomplishment.
- FUEL NKU recently received a grant for \$70,000 from the Kroger Foundation to support continued operations. In addition, we now have an online ordering system for our students. This *QuickPick* option allows us to offer fresh produce, frozen soups and customized orders while still maintaining social distancing and safety standards.
- FUEL has provided over 5,500 pounds of food and toiletries through the table model so far this spring semester. Based on FUEL NKU's calculations, they have welcomed 1,760 visits for the Spring 2021 semester as of late February. We certainly appreciate this great work on behalf of our students.
- One of our two Ethics Bowl teams from the Philosophy program placed fifth in the recent regional competition. It was the team's highest ranking ever in this competition and only two spots from going to the national competition.

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- NKU's Model UN Team from the Department of Political Science, Criminal Justice and Organizational Leadership earned nine awards at the Midwest Model United Nations conference last month.
- And 36 SOTA students from the Theatre and Dance Program, Music Program, and Music Preparatory Division participated at the Kentucky National Association of Teachers of Singing Student Auditions, and 10 of our students placed as finalists, including three first-place winners.
- The NKU Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of Amy Gillingham, performed virtually at the 2021 Kentucky Music Educator's Association Professional Development Conference. The concert entitled "Of Time and Season," is available to view on YouTube.
- The Kentucky Center for Mathematics, housed in the College of Arts and Sciences, holds an annual conference that normally attracts 400 PK-16 math educators. This year's conference held last week, was offered in a virtual format with 1,000 participants from 33 states and 17 countries. The conference was a tremendous success and exemplifies the importance of the Center in improving math skills and college readiness not only in Kentucky but now across the nation and world.
- Last month, the College of Informatics continued its tradition of playing a major role in the INTERalliance TechOlympics, which is the largest student-run tech conference for high school students in the country. COI faculty, staff, board members and student apprentices ran hands-on cybersecurity workshops as well as mock interview and information sessions. The event was virtual this year and engaged nearly 300 regional high school students.
- The NKU Cyber Defense Team placed second at the three-state 2021 Cyber Defense Competition in late January. They defeated all teams from Kentucky, Ohio and Iowa except one: their archrival University of Louisville. What was especially impressive was that this competition is designed for 8-member teams, but the NKU team only had four students this year. Congratulations to these exceptional students.
- NorseMedia worked with the Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement to create "teach the teacher" videos on Black History and Culture and upload them to a new statewide website for P-12 teachers.
- The website is **[www.historyofrace.com](http://www.historyofrace.com)**. The project is a collaboration with the University Press of Kentucky.
- Each video tells important stories about events and places in Kentucky history and are designed as discussion prompts for the classroom.
- The Scripps Howard Center for Civic Engagement continued its "Story Time" program in February. To commemorate Black History month, volunteers from the Black Faculty and Staff Association and the Black Alumni Association selected a children's book by a black author and/or illustrator. The readings were uploaded to Facebook and YouTube, and together have had more than 3,000 views. Story Time debuted last spring during the early stages of COVID-19 with volunteer readers from the NKU community. This great program will continue through May.
- The Chase Trial Team recently competed in the National Trial Competition Regional Division, along with 32 other teams. Our team advanced to the final round, ending the competition as the first runner up. Later this month, the Chase team will compete in the American Association of Justice Regional Competition. Congratulations to all involved and best of luck at the next competition.

*We have a lot more good news to report from each of our divisions as well. So, let us move on to the latest good news from Administration and Finance.*

### **Administration and Finance Update**

- NKU IT has continued its digital transformation journey with the implementation of an innovative new **Chatbot software application**, which was a Success by Design proposal made possible by SIIF funding.
- The chatbot uses artificial intelligence (AI) to provide 24-7 access to information to better serve students and directly impact student success through personalized and efficient answers to their questions. Chatbots continue NKU's customer support after hours and improve resolution times. The software will continuously improve its effectiveness as it learns our environment and student query analytics. This is incredibly exciting for our students. Next we have the Student Account Services and Financial Assistance areas will go live with chatbots!
- Another digital transformation project has been completed with the implementation of **Team Dynamix**. NKU IT has implemented this cloud-based solution to provide better IT service with a digital portal that can be accessed by students, faculty, and staff to retrieve information, submit requests for services, utilize the integrated knowledge base, and track projects and workflows.
- For example, when customers submit a service request, Team Dynamix routes the tickets to the correct team without the need for human intervention, greatly improving productivity. Students will be able to access solutions to resolve many of their problems without the need to submit a service request.
- Additional stages of Team Dynamix development will include adding Project Management as a means to provide transparency to campus regarding NKU's use of IT's resources on critical projects.
- Finally, we received great news from Moody's Investors Service recently regarding our **bond rating**. They assigned an A1-stable rating to NKU's proposed \$278 million pension bond issue and affirmed the A1-stable rating on the university's \$130 million debt that is currently outstanding.

*Next we have some exciting updates from Intercollegiate Athletics.*

### **Athletics**

- The NKU men's basketball team won its Horizon League Tournament opener last week against Detroit Mercy with a dramatic buzzer-beating shot, but our Norse fell in the semifinals two nights ago against Oakland to end their season. It was a great year for the Norse and I am sure they're ready to get back to work for next season.
- Our women's basketball team won its Horizon League Tournament opener against RMU at the end of February but was eliminated last week in the quarterfinals to end their season.
- Men's basketball player Trevon Faulkner was named to the All-Horizon League Second Team. The league also recognized Marques Warrick as the Freshman of the Year and placed him on both the all-freshman and all-league third teams.
- Women's basketball player Lindsey Duvall was named to the All-Horizon League Second Team. Ivy Turner earned a spot on the third team and Grayson Rose was placed on the all-defensive team.
- Our men's and women's track & field teams recently completed the Horizon League Indoor Championships. Lynsey Shipley won the 200-meter and 400-meter races while also leading the 4-by-400 relay to a gold medal. She helped the Norse women to a 4th-place finish. Kyle Mastin narrowly missed out on winning the men's 3,000-meter race, ultimately earning silver in the closing strides.

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- Norse Athletics is working with Dr. Dorea Glance within NKU's College of Health & Human Services to facilitate additional conversations with the coaches and staff regarding social justice and racial equality. In May, Dr. Glance is going to facilitate three workshop sessions focused on building awareness, knowledge and skills.
- Student-athlete Name, Image and Likeness (NIL) is also a topic at the forefront of intercollegiate athletics as well as both state and national policymakers. The future of NIL will be impacted by rulings forthcoming from the United States Supreme Court, pending legislature in multiple states, and proposed legislation within the NCAA. The athletics department has formed a working group to appropriately address NIL at NKU following those decisions.

### **Campus Conversation — March 19**

As you heard from members of the Mental Health Advisory Group this morning, another key component to serving our students is our resolve to maintain a focus on mental health at NKU. I encourage all of you to join the Campus Conversation on Mental Health next Friday, March 19 at 1 pm via Zoom. We all can and must play a role in promoting and supporting the mental health of our students, faculty and staff.

In two weeks, I will have the honor to serve on a panel at the American Council for Education (ACE) annual meeting along with President Ronald Crutcher of the University of Richmond and Dr. Nancy Thomas who directs the Institute for Democracy & Higher Education at Tufts University. The topic for the panel is Civic Learning, Racial Justice, and Democracy's Future: The Role of Institutions and Campus Leaders. It should make for an interesting conversation to say the least.

### **NKU's American Idol contestant: Alyssa Wray**

Finally, I would like to offer congratulations to NKU freshman Musical Theatre BFA student, Alyssa Wray.

Alyssa is from Perrysville, KY, and was featured this past Sunday on American Idol and is moving on in the competition. She auditioned before the judges singing, "I Am Changing," by Jennifer Hudson and she received three votes to send her on to Hollywood.

All of Norse Nation is excited to watch her journey.

Chair Ward and members of the Board that concludes my remarks for today's meeting.

## **B. Presidential Reports:**

**1. Facilities Management Report** (Interim Vice President of Administration & Finance/CFO Mike Hales).

- a. New Residence Hall
- b. Fine Arts Elevator Replacement
- c. Nunn Hall Elevator Replacement
- d. Nunn Hall Return Fans
- e. Callahan Hall Renovations
- f. Math Education Psychology Center/Administrative Center Bridge Parapet Repair
- g. Herrmann Science Center Plaza Replacement
- h. Albright Health Center Condensate Tank Replacement



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- i. Landrum Generator Replacement
- j. Norse Hall Renovations Phase II
- k. University Police Renovation
- l. Administrative Center Electrical Switchgear Replacement – Design
- m. Electrical Switchgear Replacement in Three Buildings
- n. US 27 Development

**2. Research, Grants, and Contracts Report (December 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021)**  
(Interim Provost and Executive Vice President André Durojaiye).

During the December 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021 time period, 4 grants were awarded. The total amount of money awarded was \$12,221,245. For the fiscal year 2020-21, the cumulative total number of grants awarded is 33 totaling \$16,247,543.

**3. Fundraising Report (July 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021)** (Vice President of University Advancement Eric Gentry).

The Fundraising Report summarized fundraising resources committed from July 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021 totaling \$6,723,585.

**4. Quarterly Financial Report (July 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020)** (Interim Vice President of Administration & Finance/CFO Mike Hales).

The Report was reviewed by the Board of Regents Audit Committee in accordance with Article III (D) (2) of the Board of Regents Bylaws.

**5. Policies Report** (Interim Provost and Executive Vice President André Durojaiye and Vice President for Legal Affairs/General Counsel Joan Gates).

The Policies Report summarized all policies that were approved at the executive-level after proceeding through the campus vetting process. The President and other university administrators determined that approval of these policies by the Board of Regents was not needed per the criteria established in Presidential Recommendation C-7 of the January 2015 regular meeting.

**Following policies were approved on this report.**

- Listservs-Campuswide
- Military Service Absence-Students
- Withdrawal from the University-Involuntary

**C. Presidential Recommendations:**

**Consent Agenda Items:** A motion was made by Regent Michael Baranowski and seconded by Regent Dennis Reppenning to approve the Presidential Recommendations as listed; C-1 through C-7. **(Motion carried)**

**1. Academic Affairs Personnel Actions:**

**a. Administrative Appointments:**

**Dr. Matt Cecil**, Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and professor in the Department of Communications, College of Informatics, effective July 1, 2021.

**b. Faculty Transitions:**

**Dr. Augustine Yaw Frimpong-Mansoh** from professor to professor and acting chair in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Philosophy, effective January 1, 2021.

**c. Phased Retirements:**

**Jennifer Jolly-Ryan**, associate professor in the Department of Law School Instruction, Chase College of Law, beginning fall of 2021 and terminating in spring of 2023.

**d. Departures:**

**Dr. Meredith Shockley-Smith**, lecturer in the Department of History and Geography, College of Arts and Sciences, effective January 1, 2021; **Dr. Justin White**, Lecturer in the School of Nursing, College of Health and Human Services, effective December 31, 2020.

**e. Temporary Faculty Appointments:**

Dr. Joan Adkins, Department of Management, effective Spring 2021.

**2. Academic Affairs Reappointment, Promotion and Tenure:**

The Board of Regents approved recommendations on reappointment, promotion and tenure.

**3. Non-Academic Personnel Actions:**

The following categories of non-academic personnel actions which occurred between December 5, 2020 and February 5, 2021 received approval by the Board of Regents: Activations/Rehires; Reassignments, Reclassifications, Title/Status Changes, Promotions; Transfers; Contract/Temporary/Student to Regular & Regular to Contract; Departures; Retirements; Administrative/Executive.

**4. Major Gifts Acceptance:**

The Board of Regents accepted contributions totaling \$532,672.10 received by the NKU Foundation Inc. for the benefit of Northern Kentucky University during the period December 1, 2020 through January 31, 2021.

**5. Naming Recommendations:**

The Board of Regents approved the following naming actions:

1. The naming of an endowed scholarship that will support a scholarship for students demonstrating high academic promise who are enrolled in the evening program at Salmon P. Chase College of Law. “Kenneth E. and Sara L. Peller Endowed Scholarship”
2. The naming of an endowed LIFT scholarship that will support undergraduate students pursuing a degree in elementary education in the College of Education who demonstrate financial need as determined by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and/or are fulltime first-generation students. “Martha Pelfrey Elementary Education LIFT Scholarship”
3. The naming of an endowed scholarship that will support students pursuing graduate studies in a health-related major within the College of Health and Human Services who graduated from a high school in Boone, Kenton, or Campbell counties. “Warren Richardson Endowed Scholarship”
4. The naming of a fund to support nursing anesthesia education through awarding scholarships to students enrolled in a nursing anesthesia program in the College of Health and Human Services. “Seven Hills Anesthesia – Good Samaritan Division Scholarship Fund”
5. The naming of a fund to support nursing anesthesia education through awarding scholarships to students enrolled in a nursing anesthesia program in the College of Health and Human Services. “Seven Hills Anesthesia – Bethesda Division Scholarship Fund”

**6. Faculty Emeritus Status:**

Emeritus status for the following individuals received Board of Regents approval:

**Mr. Perry Bratcher**, professor in the W. Frank Steely Library, effective June 30, 2021.

**Mr. Allen Ellis**, professor in the W. Frank Steely Library, effective June 30, 2021

**7. New Master of Science Degree in Health Administration:**

The Board of Regents approved that a Master of Science Degree in Health Administration (MSHA), be approved for immediate implementation.

**D. Executive Session:**

Regent Gregory Shumate seconded Regent André Ward’s motion to enter into executive session pursuant to KRS 61.810(1) (c). (**Motion carried**)

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At 2:12 p.m., Regent James Parker seconded Regent Michael Baranowski's motion to adjourn.  
**(Motion carried)**

*Signature On File*  
**Wendy J. Peek**  
**Assistant to the Vice President/  
Chief Strategy Officer**

*Signature On File*  
**Bonita J. Brown**  
**Vice President and Chief Strategy Officer  
Secretary to the Board of Regents**

I, Gregory Shumate, Secretary of the Board of Regents of Northern Kentucky University, certify that the foregoing is a true copy of the minutes of the meeting held on March 10, 2021 and that such matters are still in force and effect.

*Signature On File*  
**Gregory Shumate**  
**Secretary of the Board of Regents**