April 19, 2012

Greetings:

As you prepare to conclude the 2011-12 academic year, we want to share a few of the many high points experienced here at your university over the past year and report on some of the events and activities that will occur when you return in the fall.

Perhaps the best news for graduates and students who are in or about to enter the workforce is the strong placement success of our graduates. Over 200 employers recruited on campus this year, one of the highest totals in the past 9 years. Three historically large employers of Lawrence Tech graduates, Ford, Chrysler and General Motors, along with many Tier 1 and 2 suppliers, are aggressively recruiting our students in technology related areas. These firms and many others are diversifying, creating opportunities that go far beyond automotive. We expect that the Class of 2012 will report even better results than did the Class of 2011, who when surveyed at last year’s Commencement revealed that some 85 percent already had jobs, an outstanding accomplishment when compared to the national average of just 68 percent.

Moreover, not only are Lawrence Tech graduates in strong demand, they’re generally paid better, too. You may recall the latest Bloomberg BusinessWeek survey that revealed that Lawrence Tech undergrads earn a return on their tuition investment that ranks in the highest 30 percent of all U.S. universities and is the highest of any college or university in the metropolitan Detroit area.

This year, for the first time, Lawrence Tech has been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll by the Corporation for National and Community Service. This prestigious annual roster annually highlights the role that colleges and universities play in solving community problems and placing more students on a lifelong path of civic engagement. During the 2011 academic year more than 800 LTU students completed nearly 5,000 community engagement hours in a variety of settings. This is an amazing culture of service on campus, and one that is university wide. Way to go, Blue Devils!

Among other areas of importance:

• Great new facilities: Among enhancements to academic facilities this year was the renovation of many labs in both the engineering and science programs; interior upgrades to several buildings on campus, including energy efficient heat and lighting; an expansion of the popular, new makeLAB in Architecture that allows CAD fabrication of architectural fixtures and models; and new equipment for use in the audio engineering program.

• Prominent campus guests: Campus visitors over the past year included Governor Rick Snyder who chose Lawrence Tech as the place to unveil his wide-ranging infrastructure plan for Michigan.
Numerous other state and local leaders have visited to learn of the creative work being done by students and faculty in alternative energy, sustainability, and in finding new uses for innovative materials. Your university’s role in Michigan’s recovery is cited by many of these leaders at the regional and national level.

• Blue Devil Homecoming: The first homecoming week took place in September, 2011. It included many great events and activities from the Tour De Troit Bike Ride, to a service learning project where students beautified the path to the Point athletic fields, to a faculty vs students Tug of War, a comedy show, and a concert. The week culminated with your inaugural NAIA soccer team playing UM-D. The Blue & White were out in force and Blue Devil Pride was rocking all over the campus.

• Blue Devil Athletics: Lawrence Tech was accepted into the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) this year. Men’s soccer, women’s volleyball, and men’s bowling teams were launched this year. In 2012-13, women’s soccer, men’s and women’s cross country, and men’s and women’s basketball will begin. The soccer field was completed and a new score board is coming in time for the fall season. Coaches are recruiting 130 new student athletes for the fall and we are very excited about the future of Blue Devil Athletics.

• Problem-Base Learning and Active Collaborative Learning pedagogies continue to be implemented across many courses in the Lawrence Tech Curriculum. The goal is to help assure your competitiveness in your chosen profession through continuous enhancement of the university’s strong and rigorous academic experience.

The National Survey of Student Engagement shows that Lawrence Tech freshmen

- Asked more questions in class than the comparison group of more than some 300 universities (76% vs 60%)
- Made more class presentations (59% vs 33%)
- Worked more often with other students on projects during class (66% vs 45%)
- Worked more often with classmates outside of class to prepare assignments (62% vs 45%)
- Participated more often in community service or volunteer work (65% vs 39%)

The National Survey for Student Engagement also shows that Lawrence Tech seniors

- Study harder than students in the comparison group of universities – 72% of LTU seniors spend more than 10 hours/week preparing for class vs 62% in the comparison group
- Know that LTU emphasizes studying and academic work (87% vs 82%)
- Worked more often with other students on projects during class (62% vs 49%)
- Worked more often with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments (71% vs 60%)
- Tutored or taught other students (29% vs 22%)

• Tuition and Fees, Financial Aid, Increase: Lawrence Tech sets tuition rates with the goal of providing students with the best possible learning experiences. We strive to assure that your investment in tuition remains the excellent value it is, as reflected in the Bloomberg BusinessWeek survey. The cost of attending Lawrence Tech is among the lowest of Michigan’s private colleges and universities as well
as among the lowest of America’s great technological universities. The size and number of scholarships for students continues to grow and both the Offices of Financial Aid and Business Services look forward to working with you to help you access all possible forms of aid available.

Lawrence Tech’s Board of Trustees has approved an increase in tuition and fees for summer and fall 2011 of 6 percent. At the same time, funds available for financial aid budget have been increased by 18 percent. More graduate scholarships and grants will provide funds to students who lost their tuition reimbursement and/or the Michigan Tuition Grant.

Year by year, Lawrence Tech continues its progress toward becoming a pre-eminent private technological university producing leaders with an entrepreneurial spirit and global view. With you at the center of all that we do, we work to continue to enhance campus life, academic offerings, and career opportunities.

Best wishes for continued success! I look forward to seeing you again this fall.

Sincerely,

Maria J. Vaz, PhD
Provost