

September 4, 2014

Dear Students, Faculty and Staff:

Welcome! This time last year, I was excited to begin my first year as Provost, learn my way around campus, and meet the faculty, staff, and students. I learned a lot about UD over the past year, and all of it confirmed my sense that ours is a university on a steep trajectory. That's why I'm even more energized at the start of this year. I hope that you share my optimism and look forward to an exciting year ahead.

At the core of our current success is a commitment to diversity that defines all that we do. This is not just an abstract value. An accepting and inclusive campus environment is a necessary condition for the excellent work we do in our teaching and research, as well as all the activities that support those central missions. We want our work to be meaningful, to transform individual lives and impact the world. For that to happen, we need to make sure that all voices are heard, all approaches are considered, and all aspirations are supported.

Our own history shows how big an impact a commitment to diversity has had. This fall marks the 100-year anniversary of women entering UD. Can anyone imagine our University achieving what it has over the past century had that important change not occurred? This year also marks the admission of one of our largest, most diverse, and best-qualified first-year classes ever. Our campus grew and changed in fundamental ways a century ago, and I'm confident that we are seeing a similar inflection point in our history.

Our commitment to excellence will continue as we access our greatest resource—each one of you, with your extraordinary talents, ideas and experiences—to further our success. Part of the work ahead this year will be a comprehensive review of our diversity and inclusion initiatives at every level of the University. This comes at the same time that we're engaged in developing our new strategic plan, "Delaware Will Shine." This planning process will have a long-term impact on our University, so in the spirit of inclusion, we invite your input because your contributions are crucial to UD's future.

Each of us has a shared responsibility to this great University—and to each other. Let's embrace the future together and make sure the University of Delaware remains a dynamic place where we think big and dare to make big things happen.

With a daring spirit, Delaware Will Shine!



Domenico Grasso
Provost