



**BALL STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

Office of the President

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
COMMENTS BY GEOFFREY S. MEARNES  
FEBRUARY 8, 2019**

When we met in December, I provided an update about our preliminary enrollment figures for Fall 2019, and I am pleased to report more encouraging numbers today.

More than 25,000 high school students have applied for admission to our University, which is an all-time record. Our total applicants have increased more than 13 percent over last year, with 30 percent of our applicants applying as test-optional. Acceptances and confirmations are also well ahead of last year's pace.

I also want to provide a brief update on facilities projects underway on campus.

Construction of our Health Professions Building remains on schedule, with the building set to open in time for the Fall semester. Last month, our College of Health was in the spotlight as part of our ongoing Centennial celebration, and one

of its featured events was a hard hat tour of the building for administrators and special guests.

Progress continues on our new North Residential Neighborhood.

Foundations have been poured and walls are going up for our new residence hall and dining facility, both of which will open in 2020. We expect to break ground on a second new residence hall in the area later this year. These two new residence halls will allow us to demolish the remaining LaFollette complex in 2021.

This Spring, we will also begin work on developing our East Mall, which will help alleviate congestion on McKinley Avenue and provide a new bicycle and pedestrian corridor through the center of campus. Around this same time, we anticipate breaking ground for our new Foundational Sciences Building, which will be built immediately to the south of our new Health Professions Building.

In the coming months, we will begin construction on our New York Avenue parking garage, and we anticipate a ground-breaking later this year for our new Multicultural Center, which will be located in the heart of campus.

I also have good news to share from my colleagues at the Foundation. Philanthropic commitments have increased more than \$7 million for fiscal year 2019 compared to last year. The current total—\$22 million dollars—represents a 51-percent increase from the \$14.6 million dollars received in philanthropic

commitments at this time last year. I am grateful to our alumni and friends for their sustained generosity.

Finally, I encourage you to join me for one of our upcoming Centennial events—an event that will honor the women of the family that made this University possible.

“Beneficence of the Ball Women” takes place at 3 p.m. on March 19 in the Student Center, Cardinal Hall, with a reception to follow.

The event will feature a panel of members of the extended Ball family sharing their life stories as they discuss their personal and professional accomplishments. I look forward to hearing about the extraordinary contributions these women have made to better the lives of people here in Muncie and across the nation.

Thank you.