

Board of Trustees approves renewal of contract for President Mark Zupan

9/06/19



Mark Zupan

The Board of Trustees at Alfred University has unanimously approved the renewal of Mark Zupan's contract for another three-year term as Alfred University president. Zupan began serving as the 14th president of Alfred University in July 2016.

During Zupan's first term as president, Alfred University developed and has begun implementing a five-year Strategic Plan for 2017-2022, which emphasizes transforming student lives, forging strength through inclusivity, and amplifying the University's impact.

In 2018, two key initiatives which support the strategic plan were introduced: APEX and Common Ground. APEX, the University's applied experiential learning program, provides grant funding to juniors and seniors to assist them in co-op, internship, study abroad, service learning, and research opportunities. APEX was piloted through a generous lead gift by trustee Michele Cohen and her husband, Marty, and has received added philanthropic support from numerous other alumni and friends. It is designed to amplify Alfred University's Maker Culture through which students are afforded opportunities to put principles covered in the classroom into practice.

Common Ground, begun as a pilot program last fall, is now a one-credit course for first-year and transfer undergraduate students. Through small-group discussions facilitated by a faculty or staff member, Common Ground aims to strengthen Alfred University's commitment to inclusivity and break down barriers of differences in culture,

gender, race, religion and interests, allowing students to gain a better understanding of the different backgrounds, perspectives and aspirations that they bring to the Alfred University community. Through Common Ground, all new undergraduate students also have the opportunity to commit to the values that they intend to live by as citizens of Alfred University. Common Ground has been underwritten through the generous support of Alfred University's Board of Trustees. It has also received some additional philanthropic investments by other alumni and friends toward building an endowment for the endeavor, thereby ensuring its sustainability and incorporation into Alfred University's DNA.

New student enrollment has increased, as have levels of philanthropy.

Since the 2017-18 academic year, first-year enrollment at Alfred University has grown by 12.4 percent. Enrollment of international students has gone up significantly as well, from seven in 2017 to 49 this year. During that same time, Presidential Scholarships awarded have increased by 82.4 percent, from 57 in 2017-18 to 104 this year.

In addition, the University last year formalized partnerships with law schools at the University at Buffalo and Syracuse University. The agreements allow students to complete their Alfred University Bachelor of Arts degree requirements and law degree requirements in six years, saving one full year of time and tuition. Agreements with Syracuse University also give Alfred University students the opportunity to enroll full-time in one of the master's degree programs offered through Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs or S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

New cash and commitments for fiscal year 2019 totaled just more than \$36 million, double the \$18 million in new commitments for fiscal year 2018. The Alfred Fund totaled \$1.92 million last fiscal year, an all-time high which topped the previous year's record of \$1.7 million. In addition, membership in Saxon Circle – Alfred University's five-year leadership giving society – increased by 75 members, from 452 in fiscal year 2018 to 527 last year.

Greg Connors '92, chair of the Board of Trustees, praised President Zupan for the University's accomplishments under his leadership.

"In renewing Mark's contract for another term as president of Alfred University, the Alfred University Board of Trustees has reaffirmed its confidence in Mark's leadership and in the direction he has set in his first term, Connors remarked. "President Zupan has clearly demonstrated the vision and leadership skills needed to meet the challenges facing higher education in general and Alfred University in particular in the years ahead, and to execute the strategic plan he and his team have developed. As chairman, I am particularly grateful that he will remain at the helm for another three years."

Zupan expressed appreciation for the Board's confidence in him and said "Alfred University is an extraordinary place and it remains a great privilege and honor to continue serving as its president."