



January 15, 2021

To Our SUNY Poly Community:

I am honored to write to you today as SUNY Polytechnic Institute's Acting President. It has been my pleasure to have already met some of you, and I look forward to meeting the other members of our community as we connect from afar and in person during these unique and challenging times. I am appreciative of each member of our faculty and staff who are not only promoting health and safety for our campuses, but also fostering an academic experience that, even in our current environment, will facilitate our students' long-term success.

I also write to encourage you to look for a series of important conversations we plan to host next week. Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Mark Montgomery will share his perspective on Monday as SUNY Poly joins the nation in celebrating the incredible legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., whose heroic efforts pushed America closer to equality. Still, much work remains before we fully achieve his dream.

Interim Provost Dr. Steve Schneider will provide a context for better understanding some of the current political challenges facing our country in a conversation he will host on Tuesday, January 19, the day before Joe Biden will be sworn in as the next president of the United States. Both conversations will be hosted as live Zoom events to which all members of the campus community are invited, and they will be archived on the Blackboard Community Hub.

I also look forward to sharing additional thoughts on Friday, as this upcoming, monumental week in U.S. history concludes ahead of the start of the spring 2021 semester.

Because of the pandemic, continuing social injustice, and political upheaval, it is a difficult time. However, we also know that opportunities often result from uncertainty, and in higher education in particular, we have a responsibility to encourage reflection, respectful dialogue, and constructive application of the lessons emanating from the important events and commemorations of next week. I look forward to working with you as we embark on our shared future at SUNY Poly—a future we can build together with opportunities for all.

Warm Regards, and With Continued Wishes for Good Health,

Dr. Tod Laursen
Acting President
SUNY Polytechnic Institute