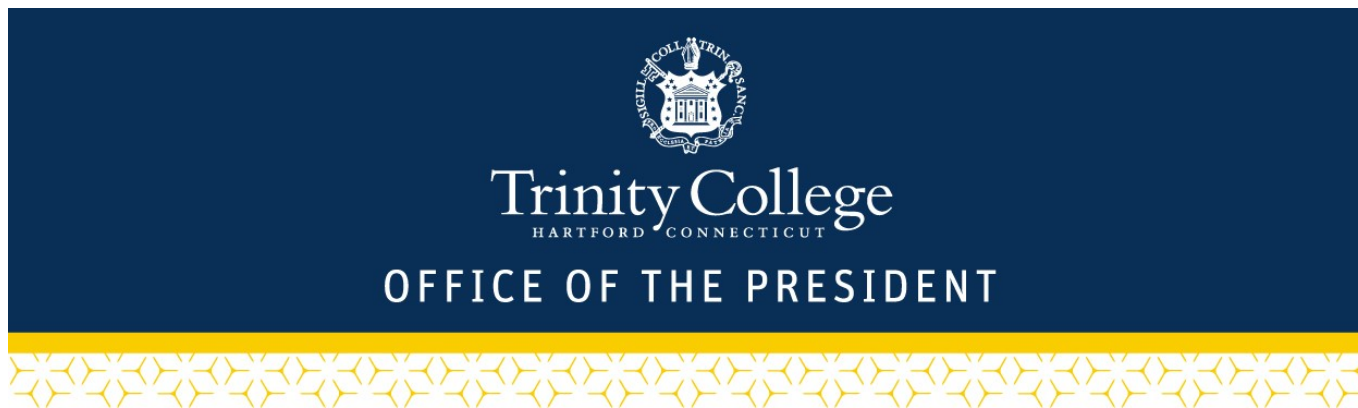


Updates following the Board of Trustees Meeting—April 2022

President Joanne Berger-Sweeney <President@trincoll.edu>

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To: President Joanne Berger-Sweeney <President@trincoll.edu>



April 13, 2022

Dear Members of the Trinity College Community,

Per my customary practice, I write to share updates from our April Board of Trustees meeting. Each year, the April meeting signals the end of another academic year, and the meeting is always full of important business, notably faculty tenure votes and a discussion of the operating and capital budgets for the coming fiscal year. Since the trustees were back on campus, they took the opportunity to reengage and connect with our community members over coffee at Peter B's on Friday morning before segueing into the official meeting.

While the board meeting itself went off without a hitch, it was anything but normal. An air of sadness still surrounds us as we continue to mourn the loss of Jillian Hegarty '24, our fellow Bantam. For the first time in my presidency, I was not present for most of the Friday session and relied on senior administrators to carry the discussions forward. Vice President Joe DiChristina and I traveled to St. Johnsbury, Vermont, to attend the funeral service for Jillian. While I was processing my own emotions, I was reminded that there is a deep sense of caring at Trinity, and I saw dozens of students and staff from Trinity attend her memorial service on Friday. Jillian will be missed.

Inspired by our college community, a clear theme—resiliency—emerged from the very start of the board meeting. The resiliency of our students, faculty, and staff was acknowledged by our trustees, who offered their heartfelt condolences to everyone impacted by the tragic loss of Jillian. In a unanimous vote, the board passed a [resolution](#) to honor Jillian's memory and to recognize the exceptional service and care that our staff, faculty, and students provided to one another during this challenging period.

As for the rest of the board meeting, I share some highlights below.

Updates at a Glance

We opened the meeting with a discussion on how we continue to bring to life the work outlined in our strategic plan, [Summit](#). We focused on student and employee experiences, technology, information and data analytics, facilities and deferred maintenance, and strategic marketing. We refer to these as our "strategies," designed to support our goal of continuing to spiral up. Our

cross-cutting themes include our impact beyond our borders, articulating our distinction and value, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We also provided an update on the staff compensation study, including how Trinity's compensation compares with that in the marketplace. The next steps of the study are to complete an internal review of the proposed salary structure and to develop final recommendations. Later in the spring, we will share the findings from the study with the broader campus community. Trustees also received an update on the first-destination survey, which reports the disposition of our students after graduation (i.e., whether they were employed, accepted to graduate school, participating in a service/volunteer program, or serving in the military within six months of completing their Trinity degree). Encouragingly, 97 percent of the Class of 2021 were in one of the aforementioned categories!

Among the additional news and notes was the hiring of 14 new tenure-track faculty. We also shared the appointment of [Matthew S. Hyde](#) as the dean of admissions and financial aid, and we thank Terry Cowdrey, who served us ably this year as the interim dean. Proudly, we conveyed that the academic profile of the incoming Class of 2026 is extremely strong and competitive—[we received a five-year high in number of applications](#), and our Early Decision students were high performing and highly engaged students, as will be those admitted during Regular Decision. Thank you, in advance, for your help in yielding the Class of 2026.

We also heard annual reports from the faculty secretary and leadership of the Trinity College Alumni Association (TCAA) and the Student Government Association (SGA), all of whom offered important updates and reminders on the work we have done this year and the work that remains in front of us.

Tenure and Promotion

Trustees also voted to award tenure and to promote eight faculty members to the rank of associate professor. These professors are esteemed scholars in their field and are making a difference in the lives of the students they teach and mentor. Please join me in congratulating:

- Hasan Cömert, Economics
- Michael A. Grubb, Psychology
- Christina Heatherton, American Studies and Human Rights
- Rosario Hubert, Language and Culture Studies
- Luis A. Martinez, Neuroscience
- Amber L. Pitt, Environmental Science and Biology
- Alyson K. Spurgas, Sociology
- Ewa Syta, Computer Science

I also am pleased to recognize Janet Bauer, who has been promoted to the rank of full professor of international studies. Her contributions to the college and beyond have indeed been substantial.

Wall of Honor

Located in the heart of the Long Walk at the Fuller Arch at Northam Towers, the Wall of Honor celebrates lifetimes of philanthropy. Friday evening, we took time to honor and celebrate those individuals who have made lasting financial contributions to the college. The 2020 and 2021 Wall of Honor inductees can be found [here](#).

And in a dinner celebration, we said farewell to retiring trustees Bill Cunningham '87, P'19, '21, Eric Fossum '79, H'14, and Funston Trustee Adrian Lo '12. They have given generously of their time, talent, and treasure during their collective 20 years of service.

ESG Commitments

On Saturday morning, trustees joined faculty and staff members to begin a discussion on Trinity's environmental, social, and governance (ESG) commitments for the future. Tim Yates '94, president and CEO of Commonfund Asset Management, and Jay Williams, president of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, began the exercise by sharing ESG principles in investments and community organizations, respectively. Small-group discussions focused on how Trinity can continue to be a socially conscious, fiscally sound, innovative, and student-centered institution. As we approach our bicentennial, we aim to articulate our value-based ESG commitments for future generations of Bantams.

Approving a Budget

It's never an easy exercise to balance a budget while also balancing our collective aspirations and needs. The board passed the proposed FY23 operating budget at \$137.9 million, which is still shy of the \$140 million operating budget we had at our disposal in FY20. Among the items in the FY23 operating budget are funding for improved mental health services for students, enhancements to cybersecurity, and restoration of some of the COVID-related cuts to our academic program budget.

The final board meeting of the academic year ended with the hope for a bright future. I am reminded that even in our darkest hour, those in the Trinity community always find a way to rally in support of one another and the work that must be done to ensure the best learning experiences for our students. I can only hope that we continue down the path of a more typical college experience in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,

Joanne Berger-Sweeney
President and Trinity College Professor of Neuroscience