Date: March 7, 2017
From: Eric J. Barron
To: James A. Strauss
Re: Endowed Scholarships

Thank you for sharing the recommendations of the Senate Committee on Admissions, Records, Scheduling and Student Aid approved by the Senate on January 24. I am pleased to report that the current campaign — A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence — is closely aligned with all of the Senate recommendations, which I have copied into this response for reference purposes.

Recommendations:
- ARSSA recommends the University continue with the fundraising strategies for student scholarship support comparable to the success of the last two campaigns.
- ARSSA recommends the University continue to increase the percentage of students receiving endowed scholarships without diluting the overall size of the award.
- The past two campaigns raised scholarship funds representing 24 percent and 25 percent, respectively, of the total endowment for each campaign. ARSSA recommends the University set as a goal for the next campaign, the portion of scholarship fundraising to be at least 25 percent.

A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence has three broad fundraising imperatives that align with the strategic plan of the University. We have titled these imperatives “Open Doors,” “Create Transformative Experiences,” and “Impact the World.” The Open Doors imperative, which focuses almost exclusively on undergraduate scholarships and graduate assistantships and fellowships, has a goal of $500 million in five years, representing roughly one-third of the entire $1.6 billion campaign goal (31.25 percent). I believe that this increase in private scholarship support will have the impact the Senate has recommended with respect to increasing the percentage of students who receive endowed scholarships, which is an underlying objective of the Open Doors imperative.

To ensure that we are as successful as possible in this endeavor, we have identified multiple institutional matching opportunities. Included in these Open Doors matches are a pool to encourage principal gifts ($5 million and up); a new matching scholarship program similar to the Trustee Matching Scholarship Program; and special incentives for young alumni to create scholarships and secure matching funds. In total, more than $150 million in institutional matching resources will assist us in achieving the $500 million Open Doors imperative goal.
I should note that these matching funds are in addition to the $500 million we intend to raise for scholarships and graduate fellowships, which means the cumulative increase in student support will exceed $650 million by 2021 when we are successful with this campaign.

All indications are that we are off to a good start in this regard. At the end of January 2017, with 11.7 percent of the campaign timeline elapsed, we have raised $78.9 million against our $500 million goal, or roughly 15.8 percent of the goal. In other words, we are ahead of pace in achieving the goal of the Open Doors strategic imperative.

Addressing access to – and the affordability of – a Penn State education continues to be my top priority, and we have designed this campaign with that focus in mind. I look forward to working with all our campus partners to achieve our $500 million objective with the Open Doors strategic imperative as part of A Greater Penn State for 21st Century Excellence.

cc: O. Richard Bundy, III  
    Nicholas P. Jones