December 11, 2019

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Daniel Toscano, Chairman

RE: Standing Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees establish a Standing Committee for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

BACKGROUND:

Pursuant to Article V (C) of the By-Laws of the University of Connecticut, the Board may establish standing committees with such mandates as the Board shall determine.

The UConn Diversity Task Force, in the Fall 2015 report, indicated their vision is for, "UConn to cultivate a positive, welcoming, inclusive, and accepting campus climate for individuals from all backgrounds. This UConn culture must celebrate and recognize diverse people and ideas and embrace the voices and experiences of all members of our community. Beyond representational diversity and multiculturalism, we must also promote inclusion and understanding through the values of respect, empathy, and collaborative progress. UConn culture should be proactive in laying a strong foundation for individual and collective growth, equity, justice and civility."

The Board of Trustees establishment of a committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion reflects the importance it places on this strong foundation for campus climate, culture, and norms. Serving as stewards of the institution, the Board is an important component of the campus community and endorses the vision stated in the Diversity Task Force report.

The Board seeks to ensure civil discourse on matters of diversity, inclusion, and campus climate. The nature of these important matters requires a breadth of understanding of campus culture and an awareness of faculty, staff, and student needs. By working together with the University community, this Board committee can monitor to strive to ensure that our campus is a truly inclusive environment.
The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of the Board of Trustees will endeavor to accomplish the following objectives to include, but not be limited to:

- Work with senior leadership, including the President, Provost and Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion, to provide input to shape and enhance the diversity and inclusion vision, strategies, and goals of the University.

- Be a resource for feedback to the President and Vice President for Diversity and Inclusion in their goal to develop school-based and unit-based diversity and inclusion priorities and plans that can be incorporated into a University-wide strategic plan.

- Review the diversity and inclusion education strategy, including a focus on bias mitigation, and methods to hold the University community accountable.

- Support management, faculty, staff and students in promoting experiences and resources that train leaders to practice inclusiveness.

- Help management strengthen the University’s external inclusion brand, and advise management on any associated risk and areas for improvement.

- Evaluate the types of metrics used to track the progress and outcomes of inclusion efforts.

- Regularly schedule committee meetings to discuss and monitor diversity and inclusion progress and goals.