



University of Pittsburgh

Office of the Provost and Senior Vice Chancellor

801 Cathedral of Learning
4200 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-4223
Fax: 412-383-9640
E-mail: beeson@pitt.edu

Patricia E. Beeson
Provost
Senior Vice Chancellor

June 23, 2016

Dear Colleagues:

After 18 years of exceptional service as dean, John Cooper has informed me of his decision to step down from his administrative role and return to the faculty in August of 2017. I accept his wishes with regret and with deep appreciation for his many contributions, his good counsel, and his commitment to the Kenneth P. Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, the College of General Studies, and the University of Pittsburgh.

Under his leadership, the liberal arts core of the University has been strengthened through the recruitment and development of an exceptional faculty committed both to advancing research and scholarship, and to the educational mission of the University. He has overseen the development of a strong and effective staff, and the education of undergraduate and graduate students who have taken their Pitt degrees and gone on to lead successful, rewarding, and impactful lives.

Though numbers cannot fully capture the impact that he has had, they are suggestive of that impact, and of the substantive changes that have occurred in the Dietrich School during his nearly two decades as dean. One telling figure is that over 70 percent of the current faculty of the Dietrich School was recruited to the University by Dean Cooper, and during his tenure as dean underrepresented minority faculty membership increased by 30 percent, and the representation of women on the faculty increased by nearly 50 percent. Annual sponsored research nearly doubled, and a cumulative \$1 billion of funded research has been conducted, along with the hundreds of books and thousands of scholarly articles that have been published by those he has recruited and supported.

His ability to engage and excite people with his vision for the School is reflected in the willingness of so many generous individuals to commit substantial resources to supporting it. During his tenure, nearly 250 endowed funds were established in the School, including seven chairs, 14 fellowships, 98 scholarships and student resource funds, and 29 other new awards, with total giving in excess of \$260 million. This total includes the largest individual gift the University has ever received, a gift from William Dietrich, that was recognized by the naming of the School after his father, Kenneth P. Dietrich.

Perhaps one of the most distinguishing characteristics of John's time as dean is the transformation of the educational programs offered to students in the Dietrich School and the

College of General Studies. The impact of his commitment to the value of a liberal education and to the university's core educational mission is reflected in the elevation of these programs in various rankings and best-value designations, as well as the near doubling of applications and 150-point increase in the average test scores of the entering classes. Perhaps most telling, is the lives of the over 45,000 students who have earned their degrees from the Dietrich School and College of General Studies during his tenure as dean.

It has been my honor and pleasure to work with John, both in his role as dean and in the many leadership roles he has played as a member of the Council of Deans. I am pleased that he will continue his academic career at the University of Pittsburgh in the Dietrich School's Department of Chemistry, and ask that you join me in congratulating him on his success and that of the Dietrich School under his leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. E. Beeson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Patricia E. Beeson