



October 8, 2019

Mr. John Burness, Chair  
Board of Trustees  
Durham Technical Community College

Dear Chairman Burness:

In August of 2007 during my interview with the Board of Trustees, I articulated my vision for the future of Durham Tech. I indicated we would need to develop new education and training programs to prepare our region's residents for new jobs and careers in an emerging and evolving economy. Recognizing that our Main Campus was landlocked and our physical plant was aging, I noted that new facilities were needed to carry out our mission of service to the community. I pointed out that to be the kind of institution the residents of Durham and Orange counties needed and deserved, we could no longer rely entirely on the State for our financial support. And finally, students and their success must be the singular focus of our attention every day. Since assuming the presidency in January 2008, I have attempted to lead the institution in carrying out this vision.

As I reflect on the past 12 years as president, I am gratified by what we've accomplished. We have established new programs in such diverse areas as Anesthesia Technology and Welding. Our WayMakers collaboration with the Durham Public Schools is training students for careers in a wide range of skilled construction trades. With our new Electrical Line Technician program, we are preparing workers to maintain and upgrade the power grid. Offerings in Esthetics, Cosmetology, and Massage Therapy enable more residents in Durham and Orange counties to develop essential skills for success in a range of human services areas. Finally, our Hospitality and Culinary Arts programs support travel and tourism, industries that are vitally important to our region.

We have also established and extended opportunities for our students who seek additional education after leaving Durham Tech. We are among the first two-year colleges in the region to partner with North Carolina State University for its C3 Program, which provides an efficient path into STEM fields for low-income, first-generation, and non-traditional students. We have strengthened our relationship with the University of North Carolina through the C-STEP program and have signed or renewed articulation agreements with North Carolina Central University, Guilford College, the University of Mount Olive, and Greensboro College, among others.

Moreover, we have spent the last two years engaged in an ambitious effort to align our programs more effectively by developing guided pathways within seven meta-majors. We are convinced that this re-alignment will lead to more students completing more credentials in less time and achieving greater future career and academic success.



We have made significant improvements to our campus with new signage and wayfinding, enhanced lighting, and expanded parking. We completed a major update of our facilities Master Plan that provides a vision for the campus in 2030, a plan we started to realize last week when we broke ground on the new Applied Technologies building — the first addition to our Main Campus in 15 years. Meanwhile, we have expanded our footprint with the Duke Street North facility and with two new locations in downtown Durham: our Hospitality and Culinary Arts location at the American Tobacco Campus and our Corporate Services and Small Business Center in the Chesterfield Building. Further, we have initiated preliminary discussions with the Orange County Board of Commissioners regarding future expansion of our Orange County Campus.

We also have been successful in developing new revenue streams for the College. I'm proud of the fact that the Boards of Commissioners for both Durham and Orange counties recognize and value the contributions we make to improving the lives of local residents by providing funds for student recruitment and support activities that are not typically supported with local dollars. Durham County's support for the College has increased by nearly 55 percent since 2008, which does not include the sales and use tax revenues we have received since 2012 for the Durham Tech Promise Scholarship program. This year alone, those funds total nearly \$1.5 million from Durham County and nearly \$200,000 from Orange County. No other community college in the state can boast such a generous scholarship for local high school graduates. In addition, the \$20 million bond referendum that passed with more than 80 percent approval in 2016 was Durham County's largest single capital investment in the College. I am also so pleased to see the extraordinary support we have received through the Forge Great Futures campaign — the first major gifts fundraising effort in nearly 25 years, with gifts and pledges totaling nearly \$4.5 million to date. Increasingly, our communities recognize Durham Tech as a first choice for postsecondary education and training.

I am also pleased with the many ways we have expanded programs and supports for our richly diverse student body. Our Center for the Global Learner provides a critical set of services for our growing international student population. We have built and strengthened partnerships with our three public school systems and now welcome more than 800 high school juniors and seniors to campus, enabling them to get a head start on post-secondary education. Recognizing the economic challenges an increasing number of our students face, we established the Campus Harvest Food Pantry and made free public transportation available to any student who requests it. These efforts intended to provide critical support to sustain the first and overarching goal in the Strategic Plan adopted in 2014: All Students Will Succeed.

My preferred pronoun in describing all of these points is “we” because these accomplishments are the result of extraordinary effort from an extraordinary group of dedicated professionals —the faculty and staff at Durham Tech. As I am fond of pointing out, I have the best job at Durham Tech because, when I am in the community, I get to hear feedback and praise for their great work. It has been a pleasure and an honor to call them my colleagues.



And as the result of their extraordinary efforts, I am pleased and proud to know that since 2008, over 7,000 individuals have completed a college degree or diploma awarded by Durham Tech, and another 2,000 have attained a high school diploma or equivalent. In the process these Durham Tech alumni have better prepared themselves for their careers, their communities and their families.

And I do believe it is time for a change. So, with this letter, I am notifying the Durham Tech Board of Trustees of my intent to retire June 30, 2020, at the conclusion of my current contract. I thank the board for your confidence and leadership during my tenure and wish you well in your efforts to select and hire the fifth president of Durham Tech. I also pledge my support in those efforts and, in that spirit, offer to remain in office for up to an additional two months should the Board of Trustees believe such an extension to be useful.

While we have accomplished much, we still have much more to accomplish. To that end, I will devote these next several months to furthering the work that began in 2008: continuing the guided pathways realignment; developing the master campus plan through construction of the Applied Technologies Building; and bringing the Forge Great Futures campaign to a successful conclusion. I again thank the Board of Trustees for their support and leadership and for providing me with the opportunity to serve as president of this great institution.

Sincerely,

William G. Ingram