



FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY

Board of Trustees

September 20, 2024

Dear President Volnick:

Consistent with Section 4.4 of the Board of Trustees operating procedures and your February 2024 Interim President Employment Agreement, I am responsible for causing the Board to conduct an annual evaluation of the University President. This letter documents my evaluation of your performance as Interim President of Florida Atlantic University for the year 2024, your second year serving in the role. I will present this assessment to the Board of Trustees for their consideration as they conduct the annual performance evaluation.

I am attaching and incorporating your self-evaluation into this letter, which outlines your impressive accomplishments in leading Florida Atlantic University as it has continued its historic rise as a national brand. As part of this evaluation, I considered input from many members of the Florida Atlantic Community and leaders from around the state university system, who expressed genuine appreciation for the job you have done during a time of significant transition for the University.

Based on my review, I evaluate your work as **Exceptional**, the highest level of performance.

As reflected in your self-evaluation, your leadership has resulted in extraordinary momentum and recognition for the University, and includes:

- Service on numerous community boards including the Broward Workforce Development Board, Florida Atlantic Research and Development Authority, FAU Foundation, American Athletic Conference, FAU/Broward Health Academic Practice Plan, Economic Counsel of Palm Beach, and the Business Development Board, among others.
- Overseeing university-wide personnel initiatives, which led to the recruitment of 46 new faculty members, \$2.69 million in faculty bonuses, and \$4.7 million in new faculty startup funds.
- Award of the 2024 American Council on Education (ACE)/Fidelity Investments Award for Institutional Transformation, which recognizes institutions that responded to higher education challenges in innovative and creative ways and achieved dramatic changes in a relatively brief period.

- Increased brand exposure through the success of Florida Atlantic University Athletics, which will continue into the future because of your decision to sign the Athletic Director to a new contract, solidifying the stability of the Athletics Department for years to come.
- Maintenance of a strong culture of compliance across the University in all areas of operations. In athletics, you have demonstrated a commitment to Title IX by promoting the interests and abilities of our student body and supporting the University's efforts to provide a first-class athletics experience for all our male and female student-athletes.
- Management of the tremendous growth in applicant interest, which is reflected in the largest number of applications and the largest total enrollment in the University's history, along with an increase in the freshman to sophomore retention rate to 84.5%.
- As our national rankings have continued to improve in publications like *U.S. News* and the *Washington Monthly*, you also oversaw the largest single year increase in total points under the Board of Governor's performance funding metrics, including achievement of a 50% four-year graduation rate for the first time in Florida Atlantic's history, and a \$16 million increase in total research expenditures for a record \$78 million total.
- Exceeding \$500 million in funds raised with the second largest fundraising year in the university's history. Your cultivation of relationships with community members, donors, and supporters of the institution has been invaluable to those efforts, which will continue to strengthen the long-term financial position of the institution.

In my short time as Chair of the Board of Trustees, I have been extremely impressed by your enthusiasm, energy, and knowledge of the mission, values, and history of this institution, and there is no question in my mind that Florida Atlantic is in a position of strength due to the singular focus you have brought to serving in this role. The Board of Trustees and the Florida Atlantic family are eternally grateful for your exceptional service. GO OWLS!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Piero Bussani". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and "B".

Piero Bussani
Chair, Board of Trustees