

Board Report: June 2017

President Luxton debriefs employees

[Campus News](#) | Posted on June 15, 2017



President Andrea Luxton delivers the board debrief at Sutherland House on Monday. (Photo by Darren Heslop)

By: Becky St. Clair

On Monday, June 12, President Andrea Luxton presented a summary of the actions and discussions of the [Board of Trustees](#) during their meetings June 9–11 on the University campus. The debrief was held at Sutherland House, during a special anniversary celebration of the building, which was once the University president's home. Prior to Luxton's report, Ronald Knott, director of Andrews University Press, presented a program

honoring the history of Sutherland House, and administration served strawberry shortcake and ice cream to employees.

“I began my presentation to the board with a click-through of Andrews in the news,” Luxton says. “This included some ‘best-of’ rankings, some mentions of the University in various media and stories we have told ourselves.”

Luxton highlighted for the board a recent [ranking from College Choice](#), naming Andrews University #4 in the state of Michigan, following only University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, Michigan State University and Kalamazoo College.

Other news highlights included national and international awards to faculty and students, [grants awarded](#), service opportunities and [community involvement](#), ending with the [Seminary trip to Cuba](#) earlier this spring, which resulted in over 200 baptisms.

During their meetings, the board also voted on new faculty and staff. The new appointments are as follows:

New Hires: Staff

- Karen Ferris, enrollment specialist, School of Graduate Studies
- Ashley Neu, assistant director, Student Activities & Involvement
- Jordan Sayavongsa, marketing & recruitment coordinator, School of Business Administration
- Jason Strack, web communications manager, Integrated Marketing & Communication
- Jordan Smart, LUC/NAD enrollment counselor, Enrollment Management
- Steve Suinda, LUC/NAD enrollment counselor, Enrollment Management

Position Changes: Staff

- Justina Clayburn, interim director, Graduate Enrollment
- James Lim, Oracle database administrator, Information Technology Services
- Laura Malcolm, assistant alumni director, Alumni Services
- Eric Paddock, assistant director of athletics for gymnastics, Athletics
- Benjamin Regoso, PC support manager, Information Technology Services

New Hires: Faculty

- Teresa Caldwell, associate professor, Department of Visual Art, Communication & Design
- Barbara Harrison, clinical associate professor, Department of Nursing
- Shawna Henry, clinical associate professor, Department of Nursing
- Edyta Jankiewicz, assistant professor of religious education, Department of Discipleship & Religious Education
- Rodney Palmer, assistant professor, Department of Religion & Biblical Languages
- Adriana Perera-Burgos, associate professor & chair, Department of Music

- Jennica Santomin, teacher, Ruth Murdoch Elementary School

Position Changes: Faculty

- Stephanie Carpenter, professor, Department of History & Political Science
- Grace Chi, professor, Department of Nursing
- Daniel Drazen, Digital Commons manager, James White Library
- Robin Johnson, associate professor, School of Architecture & Interior Design
- Alan Mitchell, assistant professor emeritus, Department of Music
- Jason St. Clair, assistant professor & head of Patron Services, James White Library
- Johnnathan Ward, assistant professor of chaplaincy, Department of Christian Ministry

“There are three areas of high importance for the coming year,” Luxton noted. “Finances, access and our community and culture.”

Though our finances are getting better, they are still in need of improvement, she continued. She then explained that “access” refers to opening our doors to a larger number of people and making sure we get the message out about who we really are to a broader audience.

“We also want to continue to create and deepen ourselves as a university as an environment where everyone can feel comfortable, safe and included,” Luxton said. “We want everyone to feel they have a voice, and ensure that we are listening to each other and each other’s stories.”

Luxton’s progress report focused on service and why it is important to an academic institution. When she broached the concept of the upcoming first-ever Change Day event the board responded very enthusiastically.

The Finance Committee reported that year-end figures show a deficit of just over \$1 million.

“This is not where we wanted to end up,” said Luxton in her report, “but it is significantly better than where we were last year at this time by \$3 million.”

She continued by saying that the University’s expenses are under control, but revenue is not up to speed with where the University wishes to be, which is an area on which to continue to focus.

“We’re coming out of a large dip in finances,” Luxton explained. “We’re on our climb up, but we’re not out of that climb yet, as the figures show. The board continues to express confidence about the future and concern that we are not yet out of our problem area.”

Additionally, the board voted positively on a capital request for a new building for the School of Architecture & Interior Design. A donation from outside the University, combined with University capital funds, will fund this project and allow the school to finally move out of the double trailer they have been occupying for many years.

The board also discussed risk assessment, particularly in the area of ITS, and how prepared the University is to handle issues as they arise.

“The President’s Council report is something I’ve renamed the ‘We love you’ report,” said Luxton with a smile. “They basically said they love what you’re doing, they love Andrews, and requested that all of you keep doing what you’re doing for the University.”

An update on the Wellness Center project revealed that it is now only \$800K short of its goal for groundbreaking of \$17.5 million. Groundbreaking is scheduled tentatively for spring 2018.

The enrollment report indicated that at this point the University seems to be on track with projections. Online education continues to climb.

Additionally, a new subcommittee was created to create a tool for presidential evaluation.

Members of the architecture faculty presented to the board their plans for the Wellness Center, including the philosophy of why they did what they did and how it fits into the campus design.

Action was taken to approve the University’s strategic plan, under discussion for a year.

“This was a plan put together by many people across campus,” said Luxton. “It specifies what development is needed on campus to support the plan, as well, whether that be facilities or services or other changes.”

A brief Q&A session following Luxton’s board report fielded a question about the dairy. Her response was that the finance committee discussed it, and they recommended to the board two to three measures to cut down cost related to the dairy, which was supported by the board.

“National factors are affecting the price of milk everywhere in the country,” she pointed out. “This is not something we can control, but it affects us significantly. We continue to do what we can to push down expenses at the dairy.”

Luxton also told faculty and staff that the board supports them whole-heartedly.

“They are very connected and engaged,” she said. “They, along with all of you, are really trying to do everything they can to make sure Andrews has a wonderful future.”

Related Links

- [About the Board of Trustees](#)
- [About the Wellness Center project](#)

- [News at Andrews](#)

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