



A Message From the President

Dr. Carolyn R. Lepre

Dear Salisbury University Community,

I write to you with the bittersweet news that Dr. Karen Olmstead has shared with me her decision to retire from Salisbury University at the end of next year after many years of serving our institution with distinction.

Dr. Olmstead will remain in her position as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs until the conclusion of the spring 2023 semester, at which time she will take on a special role in the President's Office, officially retiring in December 2023.

While I am sorry to see Dr. Olmstead prepare to leave our great University – as I know many others are, as well – I consider myself truly lucky to have had the opportunity to work alongside her and look forward to what we will accomplish together over the next year.

Dr. Olmstead became a part of our campus community in 2008, when she joined SU as the Dean of the Richard A. Henson School of Science and Technology, after having served as the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies at the University of South Dakota. Since then, she has not only demonstrated a commitment to advancing the academic mission of the University, but great dedication to the thousands of students who have benefited from her passion and commitment.

Since her appointment as Provost in 2018, Dr. Olmstead has been responsible for the oversight of academic programs, curriculum, student advising, assessment, accreditation, and much more. She was instrumental in the creation of SU's College of Health and Human Services and its Schools of Nursing, Social Work, and Health Sciences. She also played a key role in the transition of the Honors Program to what is now the Glenda Chatham and Robert G. Clarke Honors College.

Notably, Dr. Olmstead was influential in SU earning the Carnegie Foundation's Community Engagement Classification in 2020, the development of the Rommel Entrepreneurship Center, and winning more than \$3 million for SU in State funding for workforce development. She championed the creation and approval of a new General Education curriculum that will go into effect in the fall 2024 semester, which includes required diversity and inclusion, environmental sustainability, and civic engagement components.

Dr. Olmstead long has been an advocate of providing educational opportunities for all students. As Dean of the Henson School, she was a co-principal investigator for a \$996,000 National Science Foundation (NSF) grant — representing the largest NSF grant in SU history at that time — to fund the University's Bridges to SUCCESS (SU Connections to Careers for Every STEM Student) program, designed to increase science, technology, engineering, and mathematics graduates by 75% within five years. In her role as Dean, she also helped open SU's Richard A. Henson Medical Simulation Center.

During Dr. Olmstead's tenure as Provost, SU set new records for Fulbright Students and Scholars, being named a top producer in the U.S. for both. She also focused on support for faculty careers with the appointment of an Assistant Provost for Faculty Success, the launch of SU's Center for the Advancement of Faculty Excellence, and two awards from the National Science Foundation to support career equity for science faculty.

We are also incredibly grateful for the leadership she displayed during COVID-19 in both the University's response and ability to rebound from the pandemic. Through troubled times she brought a calming and reassuring presence to the campus — something that will be difficult to replace.

Dr. Olmstead has made an undeniable impact on our campus community. Her leadership and achievements will leave a legacy for future generations of faculty, staff, and students.

In the coming months, the University will move forward with the challenging task of finding a successor for Dr. Olmstead. With the help of an executive search firm, we will soon begin a robust national search process with the aim of making a selection before the conclusion of the spring semester. A search committee will be appointed shortly, and members of the campus community, including faculty, staff and students, will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the final candidates, and input from all groups will be considered in selecting the new provost. I am grateful that Dr. Olmstead has agreed to continue to serve the university until an acceptable candidate has been selected.

In the meantime, please join me in thanking Dr. Olmstead for her many years of service, and wishing her all the best in her well-deserved retirement. She is a remarkable colleague and leader, and she will be greatly missed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Carolyn R. Lepre".

Dr. Carolyn Lepre
President