

## Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy®

*igniting and nurturing creative, ethical, scientific minds that advance the human condition*

### REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

**José M. Torres, Ph.D.**

**September 20, 2017**

#### LEADERSHIP MATTERS

The following provides an update on my leadership of the Academy.

##### Leadership Priorities and Profile

To provide Trustees with a report of activities and efforts of note, I organize the Report of the President, where appropriate, around the **Priorities for 2017-2018**:

- ❖ Guide the integration of UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals
- ❖ Advance equity and excellence
- ❖ Host the International Student Science Fair in June 2018
- ❖ Meet the 12 targets proposed on the IMSA Operational Excellence Dashboard organized under the seven Priority Outcomes

and the **Leadership Profile Components** used by the Trustees to evaluate the President's performance:

- 1) Institutional Planning (and Executing);
- 2) Financial/Business Model;
- 3) Innovations in Teaching and Learning and in STEM Talent Development;
- 4) Institutional Research and Scholarship on Program Effectiveness and RoI;
- 5) Thought Leadership in STEM Education Policy; and
- 6) Stakeholder's Positive Action(s) on Behalf of IMSA.

For additional information and updates on IMSA, please see my [Personal Reflections](#) that provide general observations shared with IMSA stakeholders throughout the year.

##### Integrating UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

We continue to make progress integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into IMSA. I shared a document containing learning objectives for the 17 SDGs with the CALs (Curriculum Assessment Leaders): Mary Beth McCarthy, Dave Lundgren, Lee Eysturlid, Don Dosch, Maria del Carmen De Avila, Devon Madon, Carlo Ordonez, and Karen Schwartz. I also shared the document with leaders of Professional Field Services, Student Affairs, SIR, and IN2. The Guide includes cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioral learning objectives for each of the 17 SDGs.

During my classroom visits and conversations around the Academy, I have observed and learned that a number of faculty are actively incorporating the SDGs into their curriculum and more are taking the SDGs into consideration as they plan for the future. A number of our students are also undertaking research addressing the SDGs. Finally, Student Life continues to integrate the SDGs in our student Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) program.

### **Advance Equity and Excellence**

During today's Board of Trustee meeting, Dr. Adrienne Coleman, Director of Equity and Inclusion will provide a full report of the Diversity Plan Status Report, including an update on activities and initiatives for this school year. One initiative with institutional impact is the Diversity and Inclusion Assessment. The Assessment uses the Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks of competence, compliance, dignity, organization development and social justice. This set of standards, developed by Diversity Collegium, will allow IMSA to measure progress in managing diversity and fostering inclusion.

On September 13-15, 2017, Dr. Coleman and I participated in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion EPEX hosted by The Broad Center in Washington, DC. We shared "Inclusivity at IMSA," the work that we have been doing to promote inclusion at IMSA and received feedback from participants.

### **Host the International Student Science Fair in June 2018**

Three of our students, as well as faculty and staff, attended the International Student Science Fair (ISSF 2017) in Busan, South Korea. Our students did an excellent job. Sonya Gupta '18 received First Place in the Excellence in Leadership Award; Darius Hong '18 received the Excellent Post Presentation award; Sonya and Nabeel Rasheed '18 received the Most Ambitious Research Award; and Nabeel won Second Place in the Future City Design Science Competition.

We sent additional staff to Korea because we wanted to take the opportunity to learn more about the logistics of hosting the event. The trip was invaluable to all who participated, including Katie Berger, Acting Executive Director, Student Affairs, Mary Collins, Director of Special Projects and Executive Assistant to the President, Julie Dowling, Mathematics Faculty, and Dave Lundgren, Wellness Faculty. We learned some very valuable lessons and will apply them to ensure ISSF 2018 at IMSA next year is a world class event. The program committee chose three specific SDGs—Clean and Affordable Energy, Clean Water and Zero Hunger as themes for the 2018 International Student Science Fair that we will be hosting June 27 through July 1, 2018.

### **IMSA Operational Excellence Dashboard**

During the May 2017 Board of Trustees' retreat, the Trustees supported the indicators and measures identified in the IMSA Operational Excellence Dashboard (See Appendix A). The Dashboard was presented to faculty and staff at the June 5 Community Day. We solicited and received questions that enabled us to fine tune the Dashboard and bring greater clarity to our strategic plan. In July, I held a Cabinet retreat and during the two day session, we spent time addressing staff questions regarding IMSA's immediate and long-term future. We used the following summary statement with faculty and staff at our August 16 Community Day to "connect the dots" for everyone.

*IMSA is an **inclusive learning laboratory** that explores and disseminates new ways of **solving problems** guided by the **United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals—SDG** so that we impact the world.*

*This work must be iterative, allow for risk and failure and necessarily must include a diverse group of dedicated people who embrace our **Belief Statements** and accountability. Within each department, we are asking teams to create and execute goals and objectives that **contribute** to this body of work.*

The Cabinet and I made a “Connecting the Dots” presentation that showed the linkages between the planning documents we have developed or relied on over the past three years, including IMSA’s Mission Statement and Beliefs, IMSA Impact and Outcomes, and Dashboard. A copy of the presentation is contained in the BoardDocs Appendix.

### **Institutional Planning (and Executing)**

I am so grateful for Dr. Robert Hernandez’s willingness to serve as Interim Principal as IMSA begins the school year. Now that the school year has begun, I have already begun to solicit input on a proposed timeline and process for recruiting our next Academy Leader (principal). I’m also pleased to announce that Ms. Katie Berger has agreed to serve as Acting Executive Director of Student Affairs during Dr. Hernandez’s absence from Student Affairs. In addition to providing leadership and direction to my cabinet composed of Dr. Hernandez, Katie Berger, Lawrence “Bud” Bergie, COO/CIO, Traci Ellis, Executive Director, Human Resources, and Dr. Norman “Storm” Robinson III, Executive Director, Professional Field Services, I am supervising the following four leaders: Tami Armstrong, Director, Office of Public Affairs, Barbara Graham, Executive Director, Development, Britta McKenna, Chief Innovations Officer, Innovation (IN2), and Dr. Sanza Kazadi, Director, Student Inquiry and Research (SIR).

To build leadership capacity to accomplish our ambitious goals, I invited 18 senior leaders from IMSA to participate at a satellite location of the Global Leadership Summit, a two day leadership conference. The speakers focused on topics including teamwork and leadership effectiveness. I have started to implement the lessons I learned during the two-day summit and am working with my direct reports and Cabinet to encourage them to share and incorporate what they learned within each of their departments.

We officially welcomed the class of 2020 at our Convocation held on August 21, 2017. Gouthami Rao ’08 was our keynote speaker. She has dedicated her life’s work to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in developing countries. She is currently working as an environmental microbiologist for the Center for Disease Control (CDC). Nathan Huxtable ’14 provided the musical selection.

At Convocation, we welcomed 250 sophomores, 207 juniors and 195 seniors. During today’s Board meeting, we are presenting on the Class of 2020. Regarding the Class of 2020, Dave McGovern, IMSA College and Academic Counselor, shared this with me, “I saw this line in an email from Georgia Tech...*Last week, we welcomed our new freshman class to campus. Apparently, congregating this many amazing students in one place has a blinding effect because we had to hand out special glasses to deal with it on the first day.*” I wish I had come up with this!

After Convocation, we held an all campus picnic and provided eclipse glasses, so all could participate in watching the eclipse (and observe our new Class of 2020!). While the weather was not optimal for viewing, we were still able to see most of the eclipse. We are looking forward to a great school year.

### **Innovations in Teaching and Learning and in STEM Talent Development**

In light of our recommitment to being a learning laboratory, we are piloting a new, one-year introduction to Biology course called Advanced Biological Systems (ABS) and conducting a research study to assess the effectiveness of the pilot as compared with the current one-semester Scientific Inquiries Biology (SI-Biology) course. The pilot and study will be conducted from fall of 2017 through

spring of 2021. All students from the classes of 2020 and 2021 will be participants in the study. See Appendix for additional information.

Our summer outreach programs were very successful; we had 69 educators participating in our IN2 Summer Institute—TALENT Entrepreneurship Live Lab, Design Thinking, Designing Innovative Spaces, Entrepreneurial Thinking and Makerspace Faststart. A total of 150 middle and high school students participated in weeklong TALENT entrepreneurship programs and makerspace programs.

**Summer@IMSA** delivered 24 student enrichment programs at four locations (Aurora, Springfield-Lincoln Land Community College, Chicago -Perspectives –Joslin Campus, Belleville-Belle Valley School) across Illinois this past summer over the course of six weeks, serving a total of 1,129 students – 1,030 campers and 99 high school Allies. These IMSA-created programs, both day and residential, were for students in grades 3-9 and were taught by pre-service teachers through our pilot SITE internship programs, as well as by in-service educators and high school student Allies. Summer@IMSA offered full scholarships to 133 students, 35 of whom were in our Integrated Science program.

### **Thought Leadership in STEM Education Policy**

Over a year ago, I began working with staff at the Eli and Edith Broad Foundation based in Los Angeles as a thought partner assisting them to conceive of ways to create a STEM school in California focused on underrepresented populations. Sue Chi, Director at the Foundation wrote in August 2017, “It’s been almost a year since we connected last on the need for California to have a specialized school like the one you lead in Illinois, and we are excited to see that the state’s leaders have developed a proposal to create a state school through this legislative session.” I wrote to the Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor of California in support of AB 1217, which passed the Senate and was to be heard on the floor the week of September 13. I have also reached out to our IMSA alumni in Los Angeles and in San Francisco informing them of how they can get involved to support this effort in California.

### **Stakeholder’s Positive Action(s) on Behalf of IMSA**

We finally have a budget! As I indicated over the summer, the Senate and the House, in bipartisan fashion, overrode the veto of the Governor on SB 6 and the other two budget related bills (SB 9, Revenue and SB 42, Budget Implementation). The budget we were awarded is approximately one million dollars less than our request. I have been working with the Cabinet to review each department’s budget request to determine what can be eliminated with the least negative impact. This month, we begin the budget process for next fiscal year by proposing a budget to you, the Board of Trustees, in preparation for our discussions with the staff of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in October 2017.

On September 7, I participated in the Governor’s Cabinet for Children and Youth held at the UIC, Chicago Campus. Our very own Trustee and College of Education Dean, Alfred Tatum, provided the welcome. These Cabinet meetings afford me the opportunity to have “face time” with the Governor and agency cabinet leaders (i.e., Secretary of Education, Dr. Elizabeth Purvis and ISBE State Superintendent, Dr. Tony Smith) on a quarterly basis. On September 11, I attended the P-20 Council at Chicago State University. At the end of this meeting, Dr. Purvis announced that her last day at the Governor’s Office would be Friday, September 15. Dr. Purvis has been my contact and advocate in the Governor’s Office and has been extremely helpful to IMSA.

Tami Armstrong, Director, Office of Public Affairs, and her team in partnership with staff from the Development Department, led by Barbara Graham, Executive Director, completed the *IMSA 360 Fall 2017* digital flipbook edition. The flipbook was distributed to IMSA stakeholders including staff, alumni, legislators, and friends via Constant Contact e-mail. It is also available on our website under Institutional Publications. We expect to publish IMSA 360 again in the winter and spring. See <http://staff.imsa.edu/imsa360/fall2017/>

Last Fiscal Year (FY17), the IMSA Fund awarded \$2.166 million in restricted and unrestricted gifts to the Academy. We're very grateful to those who contributed to the IMSA Fund and for Ms. Barbara Graham's leadership.

In light of our postponement of the June 2017 IMSA 30 event, I have asked Ms. Graham to lead a Planning Oversight Committee to include two members from the Board of Trustees and two members from the IMSA Fund Board of Directors. As you know, Rich Harvest Farms opened its doors for IMSA to hold its IMSA 30 celebration, including recognizing the Trustees and IMSA Fund Board of Director Awards. Registrations for the event led us to make the decision to postpone this event. The Planning Oversight Committee will recommend next steps.

#### **Leadership Update from Cabinet Members**

Dr. Hernandez and Dr. Robinson will provide brief updates during our Board meeting. These will appear as Attachments B and C to my report.