

October 13, 2011

Messages & Writings : October 2011

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Recommended Citation

Aoun, Joseph E., "Messages & Writings : October 2011" (2011). *Aoun University Messages*. Paper 56. <http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20003439>

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Our Shared Success

Yesterday our Northeastern community gathered for the annual State of the University town hall meeting. Some of you were part of the standing room only crowd in the Curry Ballroom and even more of you participated remotely, tuning into Northeastern's Facebook page and sending your questions online. It was a terrific opportunity to expand our conversation and to celebrate our collective achievements.

These many achievements—in faculty hiring, research, student quality and diversity—are no accident. Building on the work of our predecessors, they are the result of a deliberate strategy to focus on our unique strengths and chart a distinctive path to the future. Co-op has always been our DNA, and we took it global. We also created a 4-year/2 co-op option as a way to expand co-op.

Early on we saw a future in interdisciplinary research, and we invested in it while also building within the disciplines. We augmented our strong faculty, hiring while others retrenched. We focused on national imperatives—health, security, sustainability—and built strength in these areas. In everything we did, we concentrated on quality.

Ultimately, we made bets, and these bets have paid off. Increasingly the world is taking notice. The metrics are impressive, but it's important to remember that they are merely a reflection of our success. They do not define it. (You can view our [Institutional Accomplishments](#) online).

As Provost Director and I emphasized, we should take collective pride in our achievements, but we should not rest on our laurels. There is still much to be done.

Yesterday, we discussed five areas of focus that, together, we will advance in the year ahead:

The Northeastern Advantage: What are the defining traits of a Northeastern education? How can we better support that education through curriculum, through advising, through our co-op infrastructure? We will examine this through conversations, dialogues and self-study.

University Professors: Building on our already strong faculty, we will recruit new scholars of global stature who are transforming their fields, shaping new areas of inquiry and who will be inspiring mentors to talented colleagues.

Security Research: The opening of the Kostas Institute for Homeland Security—and our other security research programs—position Northeastern for a national leadership role. We will seek out promising partnerships and continue to work with Congress and agency leaders in Washington, DC.

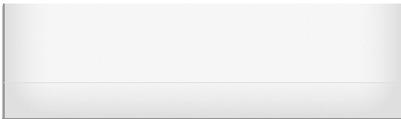
Master Planning: We have an opportunity to envision the Northeastern of the future—on our Boston campus and beyond. Together we will think about classrooms, labs, and common spaces that will enhance the academic mission and student life.

Fundraising Campaign: We will capitalize on our momentum to secure large-scale financial investments to realize our vision. Our story is compelling, and becomes more so each year.

I want to thank Senate Agenda Committee Chair Lou Kruger and all of you—no matter what your role is at Northeastern—for all that you do and all we will do together in the years ahead.

We are making history at Northeastern. But as we discussed yesterday, it did not start with us and will not end with us. We have benefitted from the work of those who came before us; and as we focus on the current generation of students and alumni, we also have an obligation to leave the university stronger for the students, faculty, and staff of the future.

Sincerely,



Joseph E. Aoun
President

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