October 20, 2014

Dear Colleagues,

I have received several requests for the list of accolades mentioned during the October 15 State of the University address and I am happy to include the most recent ‘Points of Pride’ in this issue of the President’s Pause. While it is important to celebrate our successes, we must also remind ourselves that there are ways in which we must continue to improve as a university and as a campus community.

Publicly sharing these ‘Points of Pride’ is not intended to be part of a superficial pep rally. They are meant to highlight the genuine successes of our students, faculty, and staff, and should be viewed as achievements associated with goals articulated in the 2020 Strategic Vision. In order to realize the overall, long-term vision that was developed in collaboration with every constituency of our campus, we must align initiatives, programs, and campus efforts with the 2020 Strategic Vision. Our ‘Points of Pride’ illustrate that our strategic vision is not an abstract document. Rather, it is a well-worn map for our university and will be coupled with our Campus Master Plan and Comprehensive Campaign to take us successfully into the future.

That being said, the University of La Verne has a long road ahead. There are ways in which we can continue to improve and build upon our achievements. These include the campus and community environment, as well as academic distinction. I am convinced that by understanding the shared goals and vision of the strategic vision and by staying focused on our core values, we will continue our positive trajectory.
Below are the recognitions mentioned during last week’s State of the University presentation. Take pride in these accomplishments and use them as inspiration as we continue working toward achieving the goals of the 2020 Strategic Vision.

- The University of La Verne was ranked #7 in the nation’s Top 50 Colleges for Hispanic Students by BestColleges.com. The list includes many other top public and private higher education institutions. The data used to develop the list took into account each college's academic standards, percentage of Latino students currently enrolled, and tuition, among other key factors. In addition, each school on the list has a cultural center, academic programs, and/or scholarships dedicated to enhancing the experiences of Latino students.
- According to the U.S. Department of Education data, the University of La Verne’s 58% six-year graduation rate for Latino students ranks 6th among the nation’s Hispanic Serving Institutions.
- For the second consecutive year, La Verne was included in Washington Monthly’s ‘Best Bang for the Buck’ rankings for national universities. La Verne ranked #58 nationally, out of nearly 2,000 schools. This competitive list ranked La Verne No. 1 among California private schools that are most successful in helping students attain marketable degrees at affordable prices.

- White House officials named the University of La Verne a recipient of the 2014 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll.
- The White House designated the University of La Verne one of the top 5 institutions in the Interfaith Cooperation and Community Service. Programs that set La Verne apart from other institutions include First Year La Verne Experience’s (FLEX) Community Engagement Day and the Summer Service Program.
- Moody’s rating agency upgraded the University’s bonds to Baa1 with a stable outlook. Fitch rating agency affirmed the University’s BBB+ rating with a “Positive” outlook. Only 9 institutions in the country were upgraded by Fitch during 2013-14.
- The Los Angeles Business Journal named University of La Verne Chief Financial Officer Avo Kechichian “CFO of the Year.” Avo was among 42 finalists representing a wide variety of private and public companies, as well as government and nonprofit organizations.
- The State Bar of California recently honored College of Law Dean Gilbert Holmes with one of its five inaugural Presidential Recognition Awards, presenting him with the Access to Justice Award.
Congratulations to all those across our four colleges and 11 campuses who work tirelessly to help the University of La Verne achieve these significant and admirable recognitions. Together, we are all working to bring the 2020 Strategic Vision to fruition.

Sincerely,

Devorah Lieberman, Ph.D.
President