EXHIBIT 33

REDESIGNING THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON

**Affirming Our Promises  
in the Post-COVID World**

Posted April 23, 2020 | See [video of President Gary L. Miller delivering these remarks](https://www.uakron.edu/president/news-and-messages/redesigning-our-university-video).

To my colleagues, our students, faculty, staff and friends of The University of Akron…I wish we could be together right now on this beautiful spring morning, but the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves in unfortunately make that impossible.

I want to share some important information with you.

There are three main elements to my message:

* First, I want to describe what we should expect The University of Akron to look like in the post-COVID world;
* I want to talk about how we will have to work together much differently to achieve the new vision; and
* I want to emphasize how this is a defining moment in the history of the University, a moment that will test our courage, resolve and our commitment to the institution and to this great community.

When Georgia and I arrived in Akron last October, we began an intensive conversation with you about your hopes and dreams for the University. We found a faculty, staff and community ready to move forward with an accelerated process to refine the University’s mission and move quickly into an era of prosperity and growth.

With your support The University initiated the *Affirming Our Promises* strategic planning process with the goal of doubling down on our historic strengths, investing in promising new areas and continuing the strategic examination of all of our academic and non-academic programs. We enthusiastically agreed we should be an inclusive university characterized by opportunity, innovation and creative partnerships. We embraced the importance of our role in Akron and Northeast Ohio.

In the first draft of the *Affirming Our Promises* strategic plan, we made five important promises to ourselves, to current and future students and to this community. We promised:

* To provide education and to share knowledge with those who seek it.
* To connect to and serve our community.
* To increase our commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity.
* To nurture research and innovation.
* To ensure the long-term viability of this great University.

These promises rest on the foundation of a historically resilient, creative and influential public urban research university. There has never been a time in the history of this University when these promises were more important.

A global event has increased the urgency of achieving these promises.

Our intention was to present a full strategic plan to the Board of Trustees at its June 2020 meeting. We were well on our way to achieving that goal.

We now face a very different – and unprecedented – set of circumstances. These are circumstances not of a political nature. Circumstances not related to a policy change or workforce reorganization or routine competitive pressures. These are circumstances not related to our own pattern of work or the internal give and take, which are features of all large organizations.

We are now faced with circumstances foisted upon us by an infectious disease having a global impact. All areas of commerce, social interaction, education, even the climate, are affected by this global event.

Your response to this pandemic has been beyond extraordinary. I could not be prouder to work with colleagues who in the space of two weeks transitioned the entire curriculum of a major research university to a remote format, engaged all of our students and integrated them into the new model, continued their important work with one another via video and telephone and, through it all, continued to care for each other, our students and this community.

Thanks to your work, The University of Akron is open for business.

We are also looking forward to the future. We are recruiting our next diverse class of Zips. We look forward to welcoming the class of 2024.

We have admirably weathered the first shocks of this pandemic and kept the University operating. We must now turn our attention to the future. This will require us to act immediately and with bold confidence to deploy a new design for this University.

The environment in which we now operate is vastly different and will never be the same.

Over the past week or so, we have provided detailed briefings to the Board of Trustees, University senior leadership, our shared governance groups, other groups of faculty and staff and our community partners about the particulars of our current situation. In these briefings we have emphasized the global nature of our challenges. Nothing about this situation is of our doing. We are a fundamentally strong university with an uncommon understanding of our mission and importance to our community. We have the potential to become an even stronger institution in the future. But, like all other universities in Ohio and elsewhere, the pandemic has weakened us to an extent requiring immediate and decisive action.

Here are some things we must all accept about our current situation:

* All University revenue sources have been significantly diminished by the pandemic. Recovery of these revenue sources will be slow. We must adjust immediately to the limitations of our financial resources.
* The pandemic has fundamentally altered the lives of those who would benefit the most from our academic programs: our students. We must always keep that in mind as we go forward.
* Third, the future is highly uncertain so we must act based on our current circumstances. We do not have the luxury of waiting until things improve – which, of course, eventually they will!
* No existing program, pattern of work, policy, organizational structure, way of governing or pedagogical approach can be assumed to be effective in the new environment in which we now work. We must consider everything.

Given these realities, we must imagine a very different university, a university that can and must fulfill its promises, but in a very different way.

Imagine the rising University of Akron.

In the post-COVID world, The University of Akron will continue to be a strong and engaged university. As now, the academic programs we offer will be among the best in the country. We will have an exceptional faculty and staff, as we do now. We will be a diverse and inclusive university of opportunity for this region. We will be known for our support of our students and each other. We will fulfill our promises.

But the financial, economic and social realities of the post-COVID world mean The University of Akron that prevails within our tradition of excellence will, without question, have to be a very different university.

* We will be leaner and much more integrated in our work.
* We will retain our strengths in science and engineering, business, law, social science, health science, and select areas of the arts and humanities, which are critical to this region. But, we will deploy those programs in a new design with fewer colleges and less administration.
* We will leverage what we have learned in this crisis to deploy a more creative mix of remote and face-to-face learning in order to meet the needs of the varied circumstances of our students.
* We will have a smaller physical footprint.
* We will maintain a program mix that pays close attention to redundancy with sister institutions in the region.
* We will have a much leaner and more focused research operation.
* We will have a much leaner and smaller athletics program.
* We will all work in ways different than those traditionally common in the Academy.
* We will share governance, negotiate, make decisions and take action with greater efficiency.

The major work we have before us in the next two months is to implement the details of the new University of Akron.

What is your part?

It is very important we all get involved in this work. Each of you has a role in communicating with your shared governance representatives and the leadership team that you work with.

I have a few specific requests of you in these very special times:

* Please take care of each other. The changes necessary at this moment in time will affect individuals. Nothing we do should overshadow our compassion for one another.
* Please suspend your disbelief in the ability of great universities to make rapid, positive and dramatic change. We can do this. We must do this.
* Please continue to nurture and support our students. They need it more than ever.
* Please expect and accept a more rapid shared governance process. We will continue to be transparent, and we will continue to seek collaboration with our campus shared governance groups. But, we must collaborate efficiently and move to decisions in a timely matter.
* Please continue working together, moving forward and representing the strength, resilience and irreplaceable role that defines our commitment to both the Akron community and Northeast Ohio.

What is the decision process?

Ultimately the Board of Trustees, through their authority and I through that authority which extends to me, will make the very difficult decisions to reshape The University of Akron for the future. The Board and I strongly believe the best and most inclusive decisions will be made in collaboration with faculty, staff and students. But, in the current environment, we also know decisions will have to be made at a pace far more intense than in normal times. To ensure we both have the proper input and can move efficiently, I have asked Faculty Senate and University Council to adopt new operating models for the near term that will give their Executive Committees considerably more authority to make recommendations to me in the absence of full Senate or Council consideration.

We will work together with a number of new and established groups to accomplish the task before us. These groups include the deans, the officers of Faculty Senate, the University Council Executive Committee, the University Council Budget and Finance Committee and a group of faculty members who have advised me informally since my arrival. I ask you to support the work of these groups who will take on an extraordinary and time-consuming task in the coming weeks.

Here are some immediate actions to get us started.

I have emphasized the need to move quickly to reshape and redesign the University. I want to announce several actions to get us started:

* I have asked senior administrators hired before April 1, 2020, to join me in taking a salary reduction of 10% for the fiscal year 2021.
* I have directed the Athletic Director to provide a plan for a 20% reduction in athletic expenditures for FY21. There is considerable uncertainty about the future of mid-major Division I athletics. Additional reorganization and reduction may be necessary in that area as we learn more about the future of athletics.
* I have directed all non-academic administrative divisions to present plans for a 20% reduction in expenditures for FY21.
* I have directed the Provost and his leadership team (including the deans) to present a plan for a full reorganization of the academic division that reduces the number of colleges and the number of programs while fine-tuning our traditional strength areas.
* I have directed a pause in all hiring for the rest of this academic year and all of the next academic year with rare exceptions related to safety, security and revenue generation.
* I have directed a halt in all non-essential operations expenditures.
* I have directed an increase in our efforts to reach out to current and future students to ensure they understand the value of the UA degree and our great desire to be a partner in their educational journey.
* I have directed the development of new work rules for classified, unclassified and contract professionals to be issued as soon as possible for a 30-day public comment, review of those comments by administration and then advanced to the Board of Trustees for consideration.
* I have directed our representatives to engage in the reopening of negotiations with all bargaining units, including the AAUP, for the purpose of expanding flexibility in collective bargaining agreements with unionized employees.

I anticipate additional announcements regarding expenditures and organization in the near future.

To students

I want to say something to our current students. We are deeply impressed by your courage, your resiliency and your determination to learn. I want you to know we are here for you.

We have the support you need to fulfill your dream. The very difficult work you see your University undertaking right now is a demonstration of what we all can learn about overcoming challenges, deploying imagination and working together with people to achieve an important goal. We are open for business for you. Stay with us. We need your passion.

To those future students who have a dream, we are here ready to help you make that dream come true. You will join one of the very best universities in the country. We know from the success of our 180,000 alumni that a degree from The University of Akron opens doors and nurtures success. We can help you aim high and then rise higher. Join us. We can help you fulfill your dream.

To the community

I want to say something to the great community of Akron. From its beginning, The University of Akron has served this community. We have created talent, provided opportunities, produced art and music and engaged in service. Our origins are in Akron and so is our future.

Changes that we are making in response to COVID-19, such as increased online learning and a reorganization of colleges, will increase our flexibility, nimbleness and responsiveness to industry and business needs. We look forward to assisting with our region’s economic recovery. We need your advice and support as we engage in the hard work ahead of us to redesign this University for the future.

Keeping our promises

For 150 years this University has made and kept promises to this community, to each other and to our students. It is absolutely essential we continue that tradition and our commitment to inclusive excellence.

The circumstances we face are not of our making. They have nothing to do with any direction this University has taken recently or in the past. However, these external forces have marshaled our resilience, our creativity and our commitment to our students. I am not sanguine about the difficulty of the task before us. I know there will be grief and disappointment as we make the changes we must make. I know there will be passionate disagreements. There always are in higher education. But I am optimistic that what we do now, though it will be the most difficult thing we ever do together, will distinguish us for our imagination and our love for one another and this great University. Remember, we are Akron. We rise together!

Thank you. Go Zips!