



President's Perspective

REV. VINCENT M. COOKE, S.J.

AS PRESIDENT OF CANISIUS COLLEGE, I am the CEO in charge of academics, facilities, student life and advancement. It is an exciting, multi-faceted job, especially with everything that has been happening at the college over the past 10 years.

Behind the president, however, is a talented group of 35 individuals who comprise our board of trustees. Our board consists of 27 lay members and eight Jesuits; 27 males and eight females; 14 alumni and 21 non-alumni. Seventeen trustees are from Western New York; 18 are from outside the area. The board is led by James F. Lyons '56, HON '98, who follows in a long line of distinguished Canisius alumni who have served in this most important role for *alma mater*.

The board's responsibilities are complex and critical to the current operation and long term future of the college. In just the past 12 months, our board has:

- Participated in the development of and adopted a strategic plan for Canisius;
- Approved the purchase of the BlueCross BlueShield building for \$18.5 million;
- Approved a major realignment of the college's Athletics Program;
- Commenced planning for the next comprehensive campaign for the college; and
- Participated in a self-study and board retreat to assess the board's effectiveness and chart its course for the future.

It has been a busy but productive 12 months that has seen our board take some giant steps toward becoming a more active, engaged body providing critical guidance on the strategic issues facing the college. The board self-study, conducted this summer, identified several areas where the board believes its performance could be better and where the flow of information between the college administration and the trustees could be improved. The board is considering a significant overhaul of its committee structure and its meeting processes. The goal is to make our trustees better informed about the key areas of the college - academics (including student recruitment), finances and facilities, student life, institutional advancement, and mission and identity – so that they can fulfill their fiduciary responsibilities to Canisius.

Our trustees have expressed a keen interest in matters relating to the college's Catholic, Jesuit identity and the mission of a Catholic, Jesuit university in the 21st century. These will be important discussions in the months and years ahead — for Canisius College, for the Catholic Church, for our Roman Catholic Diocese of Buffalo and for you, our alumni and friends. I am expecting great things from them. Stay tuned.

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