



2021

FUTURE FOCUSED

A Message from Our President

Dr. Sean L. Huddleston



From
Dr. Sean L. Huddleston

Happy New Year! 2021 is officially here, allowing all of us to close the door on a very challenging 2020 finally. Indeed, last year introduced unprecedented challenges and concerns that impacted just about every sector of our country. Most colleges and universities faced the sobering reality that the COVID-19 health pandemic would be somewhat devastating for higher education. Schools across our nation faced declining enrollment, shuttered buildings, and other challenges that substantially limited the probability of achieving revenue projections. However, the most critical collateral damage became the students who were eager to start or continue their college journeys. Students and faculty were introduced to each other virtually, and ironically, tried to build social bridges and connections through

social distancing. And, as we dealt with one public health pandemic, another pandemic emerged that many would argue has always been there. Structural and systemic racial inequality and injustice issues that have plagued our nation since the first slave ship arrived in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619 were bought to another crescendo in 2020. For higher education, this shined an even brighter light on the persistent inequities that can negatively impact the campus climate and, ultimately, the bottom line for institutions.

Although Martin University was certainly not immune to the trials and challenges of 2020, I am proud to say that our institution boldly responded. Martin Strong took on a whole new meaning as our beloved institution's resilience, and resolve was on full display.

What We Accomplished in 2020

Our students, employees, partners, and friends helped us make great strides forward last year.

Below is a list of ten of our major accomplishments for 2020:

1. In 2020, Martin University awarded over \$200,000 in scholarships to students to help defray the cost of their education. The scholarship awards assisted 85 students in meeting their financial needs and continuing their education at Martin.
2. In response to the health pandemic, we invested in and deployed the technology resources needed to create Martin University's first-ever virtual teaching and learning environment. This gave our students the benefit of uninterrupted education during the pandemic. Student Success Coaches also attended classes to serve as resources for students who may have needed additional academic support.
3. Recognizing that we needed to offer alternatives for students

who might struggle with online learning, we introduced MU Flex as a new option for learning and course attendance at Martin. MU Flex allows students to attend class either in person or online during the semester, offering students the ability to attend courses face-to-face or virtually at any given time based on their needs and preferences. Because of the COVID-19 health pandemic, attendance for in-person classes was limited to no more than ten students.

4. We also introduced 8-week courses so that students could complete their courses and degree requirements in less time. Each semester at Martin University now consists of two eight-week terms, potentially cutting the time to degree completion in half.
5. To help students navigate the admissions and enrollment processes more efficiently, we launched the Martin University Express Enrollment Center. The Express Enrollment Center is a one-stop-shop for students to complete their admissions, financial aid, and registration





requirements while preparing them for success at Martin.

6. While the pandemic eliminated most in-person events, we still wanted to celebrate our 2020 graduates. Martin University's first outdoor Commencement Ceremony was held in August, honoring one of our largest graduating classes in recent years. Dr. Katrice Albert, Dennis Bland, and Dr. Gene Sease were also conferred honorary doctorates during the ceremony for their groundbreaking and tireless leadership.
7. We leaned in on our important role as a Communiversities. In partnership with Eskenazi Health, we conducted two community food giveaways during the summer. Hundreds of families in and around the Martindale-Brightwood community were served.
8. In December, we partnered with Reverend Richard Hunter Ministries for their 25th Annual Christmas Help Program. The program served over 550 Indianapolis area families with boxes filled with fresh fruits, vegetables, and other staples. We also partnered with Prince Hall Masonic Lodge to host their inaugural Holiday Toy Give-Away and served approximately 250 families during the same month.
9. Our fundraising efforts resulted in a near-historic year for Martin in gifts, donations, and grants made to the University. In addition to the awarded scholarships, we created an emergency fund for students and were awarded grants to help launch several transformative institutional initiatives.
10. We held several successful virtual events, including a Juneteenth Celebration, the Hope Moves Us Forward Fall fundraiser in partnership with WishTV, and a Christmas Eve Holiday Celebration and partnership with WHMB Channel 40.



What We are Planning for in 2021

We have several initiatives planned for 2021 that will be transformative for Martin University. Most of the groundwork was done in 2020 to ensure and prepare for successful launches in 2021.

In 2021, we will launch Martin University's new Urban Work College program called Martin WORKS, embedding employer-based apprenticeships into our academic programs. Martin WORKS will be the first work



college model in the State of Indiana and the first university-based Urban Work College model to focus on working adult students in the United States. Under this model, Martin University will develop a market niche, focusing our undergraduate and graduate degree programs in areas of current and future workforce demand. Students participating in Martin WORKS will receive paid apprenticeships with major Indiana-based employers in their chosen fields of study. Our goal is to ensure that our students receive career training and exposure while completing their degree programs, better enabling them to enter or advance their chosen careers by the time they graduate.

In December 2020, Martin University and Ivy Tech announced our new partnership that will begin in the fall of 2021. This exciting two-year and four-year higher education institution



collaboration offers guaranteed admission to Martin University and full transfer of all credits earned at Ivy Tech. Additionally, Martin

University and Ivy Tech will develop a joint Cyber-Entrepreneurship bachelor's degree, create faster degree completion pathways for students who wish to become teachers, and increase the number of faculty who are qualified to teach dual enrollment courses at high schools.



National Center for
**RACIAL EQUITY
AND INCLUSION**

In 2021, Martin University will launch our new National Center for Racial Equity and Inclusion. The Center will focus on two primary areas of practice. One area of practice will

assist businesses, non-profit organizations, educational systems and institutions, and others with developing sustainable diversity, equity, and inclusion practices. These services will be provided through direct consulting engagements and on-demand training and development events. The other area of practice will focus on constructive and collaborative initiatives that address the persistent racial equity and inclusion gaps that have impacted African Americans and other racial minorities in our region and country.

We will also spend 2021 developing Martin University's next 5-year Strategic Plan that will culminate at the 50th anniversary of our beloved institution in 2027. Development of the strategic plan will be an inclusive process and invite the active participation of internal and external stakeholders.

We are excited and more than ready to begin what we expect to be a productive and progressive year for Martin University. We sincerely thank you for your commitment and partnership throughout 2020 and look forward to a prosperous 2021 together.

Best Regards,

Dr. Sean L. Huddleston
Martin University President





2186 North Sherman Drive,
Indianapolis, IN 46218

Phone (317) 543-3235
Toll Free (866) 344-3114
Fax (317) 917-3393

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