

April 20, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you for placing your trust in me to act as your president over the past six years. It has been an extraordinary experience.

I have some parting thoughts to share, but first I need to acknowledge the tremendous help I have received along the way from members of our staff and the executive. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the support Laura Buechler has offered VIUFA, the executive and me throughout this trying time. Her remarkable dedication keeps VIUFA running seamlessly. Thank you.

Special thanks, as always, goes to Neil McLeod whose capacity and grace in taking on the work of the membership always amazes me. I will miss being able to work alongside someone I have come to consider as a friend, more than anything else.

The past year has seen some major changes in the VIUFA Executive. This year will include more change. Regardless, the members of the executive are dedicated to advocating on members' behalf and they deserve our recognition for the work they do. A big thanks to them for keeping the union relevant for the membership.

#### Looking Ahead for VIUFA

I have the following two recommendations to VIUFA's members:

- **The general membership should commit to reviewing VIUFA's operations every five years.** The pandemic has highlighted that VIUFA operates with part-time leadership. Over the past two years, we received any number of calls asking the Union's position related to working under Covid. Often, we didn't have ready answers. For a long time now, it has been a conscious decision to have an Executive that remains closely connected to the profession. I believe this reasoning should be reviewed; not because I think it doesn't work, but the membership should be able to confirm, on a regular basis, what its needs are and if they are being met.
- **The general membership should commit to five-year reviews of VIUFA's membership in FPSE.** Each year, VIUFA's members contribute almost \$500,000 to FPSE and few understand what they are receiving in return. It is only prudent that the membership should periodically assess VIUFA's relationship with FPSE, and its other locals, and to weigh the value received in relation to any possible alternatives.

My advice is that these reviews should be completed by balanced committees, and be chaired by a general VIUFA member, not a member of the Executive. I would also encourage these efforts to be underwritten by release time, to ensure they can be completed objectively and given the proper attention they deserve.

#### Looking Ahead for Myself

I will be running again to act as VP2 at FPSE. The organization is transforming itself to meet the challenges of its next 50 years, and I am hoping to be able to help finish the difficult work we started two years ago.

In closing, thank you again for your support over the past six years. I will always be grateful to you for all of the many kind, encouraging words and emails I have received along the way.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Jaeger  
President, VIUFA