



Dear VUFA Members,

I have been privileged to have found myself in the role of President of VIUFA during this difficult time. I am amazed by the professionalism everyone has shown and I have been humbled by the stories of struggle and success I have been allowed to hear.

Words of Thanks

I want to begin by thanking VIUFA's amazing staff who have kept VIUFA moving forward on an even keel: Laura Buechler who has kept our office running smoothly and Neil McLeod who helps us to look after members' concerns and who seems to be able to take everything in stride.

I'd also like to thank the amazing VIUFA Executive who have been admirable in advocating and working for members during a tumultuous year. Our Executive will see a few changes this year as individuals contemplate other opportunities to serve their colleagues and the University.

I particularly want to acknowledge Colleen Price for her work as Chief Steward. She truly has been a remarkable champion on behalf of members when they find themselves most in need of empathy and help.

I need too to recognize Laura Suski for her amazing leadership as VIUFA's Chief Bargainer. As an advocate, Laura never lost sight of the concerns and needs of VIUFA's membership. The bargaining team's success, in the past round of very difficult bargaining rests overwhelmingly with her.

The Past Year

VIUFA

Because of Covid-19, members of VIUFA have worked more closely with VIU's administration than they ever have before. I believe our collegial approach has meant that we have sidestepped a lot of the difficulties other faculty associations have experienced. It has also meant that, together, we have been able to sustain our momentum moving a great deal of important work forward.

FPSE

I started the year by running for, and being elected to, the position of VP2 at FPSE. In running, I proposed that FPSE needs change to position itself for its next 50 years. That work has begun, and the past year has proved to be a difficult one as a new Executive works to update FPSE's policies and procedures. This transition has forced member locals to ask themselves what they need and want from the organization as it moves forward.

Looking Ahead

Anticipating what the next few years will look like for the membership, I am concerned Covid-19 will leave us all with increased workloads, to be borne under more stressful working conditions. At this time, we do not yet know how the government will perceive the past year's work and whether they intend to reward us or to lean on us during bargaining.

I am concerned too about how the pandemic will alter the landscape for our sector. My hope is governments will recognize the nurturing value of thriving campuses and want to protect them. My worry is governments will see the last year as evidence that more can be done with less, and they will be encouraged to explore decentralized teaching models.

Finally

Thank you again for putting your trust in me during a turbulent year. I am again putting my name forward for the role of president of VIUFA for what will be the last time. If elected, my main task will be to help VIUFA transition into new leadership and to prepare for the next round of bargaining.

Respectfully submitted,

Chris Jaeger

President, VIUFA