

Date: March 17, 2010
To: KCAI Faculty, Staff, Students, and Alumni
From: Kathleen Collins, president
Re: My plans to retire in June 2011

At the meeting of the board of trustees on Wednesday, March 17th, I officially announced my plans to retire on June 30th, 2011. This has not been an easy decision, as I will have had the privilege of serving KCAI for fifteen years upon my retirement.

KCAI is an extraordinary place. There are so many wonderful and talented people here who, as members of this college community, are poised to be a part of the college's next wave of accomplishments and success.

I have been fortunate to have played a role in stabilizing the college so that it could begin to grow and thrive in new ways. The college is well positioned to attract a talented and accomplished person who can provide the leadership for the next major phase of growth and development.

It was important to me to make my decision and announce it this spring to ensure sufficient time for the KCAI community to reflect on the past and envision the future, as the college proceeds into the search for a new president.

During my next fourteen months, I will continue working on new initiatives, as well as attending to the everyday aspects of my job. I look forward to the time when I will be able to thank many of you for your valuable contributions and support. In the meantime, I am grateful that tomorrow will simply be a day like any other, full of challenges, daily tasks, and all the elements that make my job as president so fascinating and rewarding. I welcome the opportunity to continue working with you as we proceed through this transition period.

Each and every person, faculty, staff, students, alumni and trustees, with whom I have had contact, has brought something important to the work we do together. When I think of what it means to leave KCAI, it is the people that I think of first and it will be the people I will remember most when I leave.

KC/slk

Date: March 17, 2010

To: KCAI Faculty, Staff, Students and Alumni

From: Gary Gradinger, Chairman -- Board of Trustees

Re: President Collins to retire in June 2011

President Kathleen Collins has forwarded a letter to all of you announcing her intention to retire at the end of the next academic year, June 2011. As chairman of the board of trustees and as a member of the board for 12 years, I know I can speak for the whole board in recognizing her many accomplishments during these past 14 years.

The board has worked closely with her during these years to move the college from a difficult deficit position to a position of financial stability. Long-term board member Barbara Marshall responded to the college's stabilized position in 2005 by offering a \$10 million challenge grant to double the value of the endowment, which has been critical to the long-term health of KCAI.

President Collins has spearheaded one major master planning process and is now leading a second major master planning process that will provide the blueprint for continuing to renew and expand KCAI's campus well into the future. In the first 12 years of her presidency, the campus added \$29 million in renovations and new buildings.

In 2000, the president received approval from the board of trustees to create four new schools at the college: the School of the Foundation Year; the School of Fine Arts, the School of Design; and the School of Liberal Arts. New curricular planning and program development has flowed from the combined work of faculty, administration and the president, leading to the launch of an animation major, the restructuring of the graphic design department and the planned launch of a new digital media major, among other curricular changes and additions. Enrollment has increased over time from a particularly difficult downward swing, and the college is now able to plan for increased growth in enrollment, programs and facilities.

Under her leadership, the college has literally taken down walls and turned its attention to reaching out and contributing to the community through initiatives such as its Community Arts and Service Learning certification program, the Art in the Loop project, the Brush Creek Community Rain Garden and many others.

When Kathleen Collins is asked what she takes much pride in, she will always mention her first important building project, the creation of the H&R Block Artspace, as well as its programming, which has been developed over the last 10 years. She also takes great pride in the development of the Jannes Library and Learning Center, which opened in 2002, as well as the Dodge Painting Building, which opened in 2006. Knowing that the financial position of the college is critical and that the state of the physical campus is equally critical, she takes the same pride in the excellence of the faculty, staff and administration and the strategic planning that they have accomplished as a team.

The work that KCAI has accomplished under the leadership of President Collins successfully positions the college to seek a successor who can lead the college through the upcoming decade and beyond. The search process to identify this individual will entail thoughtful discussion about the future of KCAI. The executive council of the board, along with representation from the faculty and administration, will be selecting a search firm to conduct a national search. The board greatly appreciates President Collins' decision to announce this spring her 2011 retirement, so that a deliberate and thorough search can be undertaken to identify the best possible candidate. Throughout the coming months, we will maintain a steady momentum, and the college will continue to build on the accomplishments of the past decade and a half.

As chairman of the board, I will continue to keep the KCAI community posted as we develop a timeline and take our next steps to fill President Collins' position.

GG/slk