

Dear Colleagues,

With the end of my first semester at USF fast approaching, I want to take a moment to share a new faculty and librarian diversity hiring initiative developed by the provost's team in partnership with academic deans, and celebrate some recent accomplishments of our faculty.

### Rebuilding and Diversifying Our Faculty and Librarians

I am pleased to launch a new **faculty and librarian diversity hiring initiative** that will: address student demand for a faculty that better reflects their identities and experiences; bring new expertise and perspectives to our campus; and begin to rebuild our full-time faculty and librarians after several years of declining numbers. The initiative leverages vacated faculty lines to develop a cluster hire with a focus on diverse faculty and librarians with expertise in, or dedication to, antiracism, decoloniality, and equity. Several searches are underway or planned in the schools, the college, and Gleeson Library. New hires in the cluster will receive cohort-based mentoring and support and be part of a campus ecosystem geared toward increasing diversity and advancing inclusive excellence at USF.

I am also delighted to announce that we are expanding the **Gerardo Marín Diversity Fellowship Program**. The program aims to increase the presence of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups in the U.S. professoriate and at USF by building a pipeline of BIPOC doctoral students and postdoctoral candidates into tenure track positions. Gerardo Marín Diversity Fellowships will be awarded to at least four postdoctoral scholars or advanced doctoral candidates during completion of their dissertation during AY2022. We look forward to welcoming our cohort of fellows to campus in fall 2022 and supporting, mentoring, and championing their work with the same commitment and dedication to faculty diversity that Gerardo Marín was known for.

I am grateful to our deans in the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Education, School of Law, School of Management, School of Nursing and Health Professions, and Gleeson Library for their strong support of these initiatives and to Pamela Balls Organista, senior vice provost for equity, inclusion, and faculty excellence, and Gladys Perez, program assistant for DECO, for their dedicated work on this initiative. Please spread the word about these opportunities on your networks.

### Celebrating Faculty Accomplishments

Please join me in congratulating the following faculty on their successful application to become our first cohort of National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity (NCFDD) **12-week Faculty Success Program** fellows:

**Omar F. Miranda**, Assistant Professor, English, College of Arts and Sciences  
**Alice Fiddian-Green**, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing and Health Professions  
**Matthew Liebman**, Associate Professor, School of Law  
**Janice Mark**, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing and Health Professions  
**Joseph Nguyen**, S.J., Assistant Professor, Theology and Religious Studies, College of Arts and Sciences

Supported by the Provost's Fund for Faculty Excellence and Diversity, the Faculty Success Program (FSP) is designed to provide participants with a supportive community and strategies to help them to align their time and galvanize their scholarly productivity while giving attention to holistic work-life balance. Our successful applicants applied to the FSP because of its "tailored mentorship, skills training, and networking opportunities." In addition to the five faculty supported through the Provost's Fund, **Evelyn Rodriguez**, associate professor of sociology in the College of Arts and Sciences, successfully applied to the CAS Faculty Development Fund and will attend the FSP. With 98 percent of prior participants reporting increased writing productivity and 93 percent reporting better work-life balance as a result of the program, I am optimistic that it will make a real difference in the professional lives of our faculty, and I look forward to seeing the new insights and skills they bring back to their work and share with their colleagues.

At the other end of their careers, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation for faculty who are transitioning to emeriti faculty status. Please join me in acknowledging our colleagues for their combined 203 years of exceptional scholarship and dedicated service to our students and the USF community:

**Andrew Heinz**, Professor of History, College of Arts and Sciences  
**Anne Mairesse**, Professor of French Studies, Languages, Literatures, and Cultures, College of Arts and Sciences  
**John Nelson**, Professor of Theology and Religious Studies, College of Arts and Sciences  
**Robert Burns**, Professor in the Learning and Instruction Department, School of Education  
**Jack Garvey**, Professor of Law, School of Law  
**David Batstone**, Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, School of Management  
**Joel Oberstone**, Professor of Business Analytics, School of Management  
**Nicholas Imparato**, Professor of Marketing and Management, School of Management

A highlight of this semester has been the opportunity to learn about the research and creative work conducted by USF faculty and students — work that seeks not only to understand, but also to change our world. From Professor Vijaya Nagarajan's book on the traditional women's artform of *Kōlam*, discussed in a **recent article in *The New York Times***, to Professor Alessandra Cassar's **research findings** on women's orientation to competition, from Professor Lara Bazelon's story about why prosecutors often get away with misconduct, discussed in a **recent article in *The Washington Post***, to Adjunct Professor Davis Yee's paper "Promoting Diversity as Professionalism", for which he was **awarded the Warren E. Burger Prize** from the American Inns of Court, our faculty are challenging dominant perspectives, telling the stories of the excluded and overlooked, and upholding Jesuit values. There are many more examples across disciplines, and I look forward to finding new ways to elevate the powerful research and creative work being produced by our faculty and students. One exciting opportunity is the university's new website, slated to launch in June 2022. The website will feature a new section on USF's research contributions, and will be an exciting opportunity to demonstrate how research and creativity can advance social justice and humanize our world.

I recently had the pleasure of accompanying students from Professor Sarah Camhi's kinesiology class on the URBAN trail, a mindful walk through campus that encourages us to take time to pause, nurture our minds and spirits, and share gratitude with one another. Each of you offers gifts to our community, that — like the URBAN trail — have the capacity to change the world from here, one word, one reflection, one affirmation at a time. I am grateful for all the gifts that you have shared with me, with our students, and with the world.

Warmly,

Chinyere

Julia Chinyere Oparah  
Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

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