



Wednesday, April 15, 2020

Dear CSUSM Community,

Last fall, when I announced that we would launch a national search for our next permanent provost and vice president of academic affairs, I am certain that none of us could have predicted that we would be concluding the process in the midst of a global pandemic. However, I want to thank all of those who attended our candidate open forums – whether in person or via Zoom – and provided valuable feedback and input to the search committee.

Today, I am pleased to share with you that Dr. Carl Kemnitz, Ph.D., has accepted my offer and will join us as our next provost and vice president for Academic Affairs on July 1, 2020.

Dr. Kemnitz is an accomplished academic leader with broad experience in the California State University system. Since 2015, he has served as senior vice provost of Academic Affairs at San Jose State University with direct responsibility for the academic budget as well as the recruitment, retention and development of faculty, department chairs and divisional staff.

Before joining SJSU, Dr. Kemnitz served in a variety of faculty and administrative roles at California State University, Bakersfield, including associate vice president for Academic Programs, dean of Undergraduate Studies, dean of Graduate Studies, associate dean of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, chair of the Department of Chemistry, and director for several successful STEM diversity programs.

He has been involved in several campus-wide initiatives, including the Four Pillars of Student Success – which resulted in a 15-point increase in graduation rates – the Strategic Plan for Research and Scholarship, and the transition from quarters to semesters. These exemplify his ability to work collaboratively across divisions and with a variety of campus constituents, including students, faculty and staff, to build long-lasting, positive relationships.

Dr. Kemnitz strongly believes in the teacher-scholar model, is a strong faculty advocate and is driven by the success of students. He joins me as a champion for shared governance, innovation, diversity and inclusive excellence. I believe he will be a true advocate for our students, our faculty and staff, not only internally but externally with our community partners, leaders and donors.

I want to sincerely thank Dr. Ranjeeta Basu, who has served in the interim position since February. Dr. Basu set aside numerous professional and personal commitments to take on this role on very short notice, and I could not be more grateful to her for her contributions, wisdom and leadership. While we've only worked together for a few short months, I've learned so much from her and I could not imagine navigating this transition period without her.

Please also join me in thanking all the members of the search committee. Their dedication and commitment during this process – which took a few twists and turns along the way – brought forward four very strong candidates. I appreciate their diligence in seeking input and thoughtful feedback throughout the process.

I am delighted that Dr. Kemnitz will join us in this vital role. We know that CSUSM is a very special university with unmatched potential. As we work together through our current crisis and build our future together, I look forward to seeing how his wonderful talents, perspectives and expertise contributes to our path forward. I am delighted that Dr. Kemnitz will join us in this vital role, and we will schedule a virtual welcome forum with him soon so that you have an opportunity to meet and hear from him.

Sincerely,

Ellen Neufeldt  
President

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