

# PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

## ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SYNODS AND CONGREGATIONS OF REGION 1 | 2018

### A MESSAGE FROM ALLAN BELTON, ACTING PRESIDENT

Pacific Lutheran University's priority is to continue to focus on our students — their learning and their success. We realize this priority when we increase scholarship opportunities, when we invest in academic programs that match 21st-century needs, or when we develop new resources that support students from admission to graduation at PLU. This year, several projects and initiatives undertaken stand out as especially noteworthy for the positive impact they've had and will continue to have on this institution and its students.

We are hard at work on a **new student success center** (located in the Mortvedt Library) that will provide our students with individualized academic and personal support and resources through a collaborative, student-centered approach. Services offered will include academic advising, tutoring, supplemental course instruction, registration transactions, coaching and other specific support services for all students, with particular attention to first-generation, low-income, first-year, veteran and transfer students.

Another way we've invested in student success is by creating a one-stop financial shop by restructuring **Financial Aid and Student Services**. This newly created office provides students with counseling and processing for financial aid, billing and payments, VA benefits, financial literacy and student loan repayment. This effort has been an example of how PLU can innovate on behalf of our students.

Service is a fundamental part of our university's mission, and as Lutes we've always tried to answer the needs of our communities. **The PLU School of Nursing** recently received a \$1.4 million ANEW grant from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). The grant is targeted at expanding curriculum, doubling nurse practitioner student numbers and sending those students

into medically underserved areas around the state. With support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, faculty continue to explore important curricular revisions that create strong learning communities, build intentional connections across the curriculum, and foster our Integrative Learning Objectives. Two Mellon Foundation grants — an initial grant for \$100,000, and a second grant awarded this summer for \$500,000 — provide funding for building faculty capacity across a range of curricular initiatives.

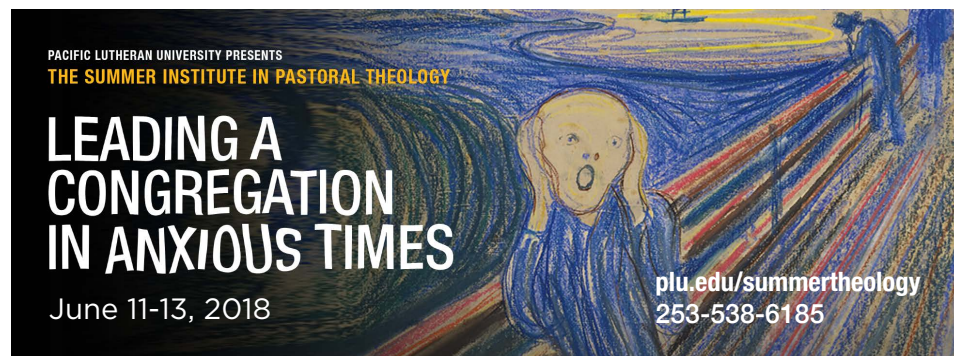
Supporting social justice is intrinsic to the core tenets of Lutheran higher education. **The Undocumented Student Task Force** was formed in fall of 2016 with the goal of purposefully reviewing and addressing the unique barriers to success that undocumented students experience at PLU. The Task Force initiated a crowdfunding campaign and raised over \$30,000 — nearly four times the group's original goal of \$8,000. The funds have assisted individual undocumented students in persisting at PLU and also assisted in setting up a textbook lending library.

Beginning in January 2018, Dr. Jennifer Smith was installed as PLU's first **Dean for Inclusive Excellence**. In this role, Dr. Smith provides necessary attention to diversity and inclusion issues directly affecting student success, while simultaneously investing in professional development and support for faculty in areas ranging from recruitment and hiring to curriculum development.

This past year also included meeting

our challenges head on. Twenty members of the Faculty Joint Committee took on the challenge of realigning our educational program to meet the needs of our student body. The committee, comprised of faculty representatives from every academic division and school, spent seven months reviewing enrollment data, soliciting narratives from academic leaders to understand their enrollment trends, and analyzing the higher-ed landscape to develop its recommendations. The faculty took ownership of our educational mission and made the difficult choice to reduce their own ranks. In time of need, they didn't bury their heads in the sand, they stood up to the challenge. PLU will be a stronger university as a result of that work.

In the midst of challenges and opportunities, the power of our greatest resource — our people — and the impact they will continue to have for generations to come has never been more apparent. We are the heirs of an unfinished Reformation, a reform that is ongoing and that must always be open to new voices and fresh perspectives. At PLU, we are inspired by this challenge. We are convinced that our future will be as transformational as our past. In that conviction, we will continue to celebrate our successes and confront our challenges with a reforming spirit and unwavering resilience. In a world that faces growing uncertainty and societal divides, the world needs more Lutes — now more than ever.



PACIFIC LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY PRESENTS  
THE SUMMER INSTITUTE IN PASTORAL THEOLOGY

# LEADING A CONGREGATION IN ANXIOUS TIMES

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