



June 2, 2022

Dear Lumberjacks,

With the release of *NAU 2025 – Elevating Excellence*, we have reached a crucial milestone in our collective efforts to clarify our vision, sharpen our focus, and set a strong foundation for the bold and boundless future ahead.

Securing the conditions for success

We must now engage and mobilize a broad sector of internal stakeholders and external audiences as we seek to make the vision of a New NAU—an NAU that serves as a preeminent engine of opportunity, vehicle of economic mobility, and driver of social impact in Arizona and beyond—a reality.

The challenge, as I have heard from many of you, will be to secure the conditions that will allow the NAU of today to continue to prosper and excel, while building the structural and organizational capacity that will enable the New NAU to take shape in a way that will not only help us accelerate progress in our strategic priorities, but also contribute to the financial health of the university through the generation of new recurring funding streams.

To this end, based on my previous experience driving transformative institutional change in large organizations with bold aspirations, I am pleased to announce the establishment of the Office for Economic Mobility and Social Impact at NAU.

Office of Economic Mobility and Social Impact

NAU's Office of Economic Mobility and Social Impact will focus on strengthening and building out our statewide footprint to better meet the demographic, social, economic, and workforce needs of Arizona residents through what we envision as the New NAU System. Specifically, this office will be charged with coordinating, managing, and facilitating the strategic, policy, and analytic work of the several universitywide, cross-divisional committees, task forces, and working groups that we will need to advance NAU's endeavors to be Arizona's top social impact organization.

The office will be led by the **Vice President of Economic Mobility and Social Impact (VP EMSI)**. Staffing and budgeting for the Office of EMSI and the linkages between this office and other existing units and programs will be determined through a cross-divisional collaborative planning process in the coming months and will be designed to optimize institutional effectiveness and maximize financial sustainability and support the overall financial health of the

university.

Announcing the appointment of Dr. Jonathan Gagliardi as founding Vice President of EMSI

Today, with the above framework in mind—and the urgent need to pivot from planning to action—I am pleased to announce the appointment of **Dr. Jonathan S. Gagliardi** as the founding Vice President of EMSI. Dr. Gagliardi, who currently serves as Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Effectiveness and Innovation at the City University of New York, will start on July 1.

I know from my own experience working with Jonathan in various capacities during the last 10 years—and what I have learned in the past 12 months about the Lumberjack community and our place in the Arizona higher education landscape—that he will add immediate value and drive transformational change as we seek to advance *Elevating Excellence*. At the State University of New York (SUNY), Jonathan led efforts to expand a degree completion agenda, working with partners in government, the private sector, civic society, and across the colleges to dramatically increase the impact of a SUNY credential by focusing on systemness. At the National Association of System Heads (NASH), Jonathan co-founded Taking Student Success to Scale, an effort that harnessed the power of systems to pilot and scale evidence-based practices including high-impact practices, predictive analytics, and redesigned math pathways. And, most recently, at CUNY, he has spearheaded efforts to drive upward mobility and opportunity for students through innovative and modern approaches, extensive system-wide strategic planning, and numerous other student-centered, equity-driven efforts.

His ability to orchestrate complex organizations in pursuit of large-scale change with a transparent and communicative approach will enhance NAU's already sterling reputation, broaden its reach, and accelerate its impact for the people of Arizona and beyond.

Jonathan is also a leading scholar on the evolving nature of institutional research and was recently elected as Vice President of the Board of the Association for Institutional Research (AIR). His books include the *Analytics Revolution in Higher Education: Big Data, Organizational Learning, and Student Success*; *Higher Education Systems Redesigned* (in press, SUNY press); and *How Colleges Use Data* (in press, John Hopkins press).

The road ahead

I look forward to sharing more in the weeks ahead about this exciting development that will do much to propel *Elevating Excellence* and the New NAU.

In the meantime, please join me in welcoming Jonathan to the Lumberjack community. In the next few weeks, as he transitions into his role, we will schedule meetings with key university constituents.

Sincerely,

José Luis

José Luis Cruz Rivera
President



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