

**From:** President Dan Martin <president@spu.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 30, 2021 1:07 PM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** Resignation announcement from President Martin



Dear Seattle Pacific Community,

I write to you today to share that after deep consideration and reflection, I have decided it is the right time to transition from my role as president of Seattle Pacific University. Following this decision, I accepted an offer to serve in a leadership role at a health care foundation for a national health system. The nature of the role and the health care system's expectations that I begin my new position before the end of April, will require me to transition prior to the conclusion of the academic year. Given this, my last day in the office will be April 2. However, I will remain available beyond that date as a resource to facilitate the transition in executive leadership. Unfortunately, spring break delayed the timing of this announcement to the community.

As I have prayed about and thoughtfully weighed both the leadership needed for Seattle Pacific's future as well as my own future and vocational path, I have concluded it is time for a new chapter for me and for this incredible institution. I continue to be deeply humbled and honored to have served the mission of SPU over these past nine years. I am immensely grateful for the faculty, staff, students, families, alumni, and trustees who I have had the privilege of serving alongside and becoming friends with along the way. The chief reason I was drawn to SPU was because of our incredible, world-class faculty and staff who possess a deep commitment to Christ and to the University's mission. Time and again, I share with those outside our campus community how SPU is comprised of committed professionals who exhibit excellence at every level and position on this campus.

This collective commitment has created a vibrant educational experience that creates deep impact in the lives of students and — in turn — the world around us. I am full of pride when I hear from students and alumni about the influence of our faculty and staff and the academic rigor they experienced at Seattle Pacific in preparation for their own vocational calling. Beyond that, they often reflect how SPU is a place that challenges them to fully live into the greater purpose God has for them by discovering their own path to make a difference in our world.

When I look back on my nine years at SPU, I have witnessed the light of God's love through moments of extraordinary loss, like the tragic campus shooting. I continue to remember in prayer all those personally impacted by that unimaginable event. During those days, our community came together and leaned into our faith in Christ in remarkable, supportive ways — even in the face of grief and trauma. This was a glimpse into our community's core identity as people of faith that I will always remember. Most recently, during the unprecedented challenges brought on by COVID-19 this past year, I witnessed again the resilience and courage of our faculty and staff to care for students, even while their own lives were disrupted at a significant level. There have been many challenging issues and times over the past nine years. And, in response, you have stepped forward into the uncomfortable and challenging places with courage and resolve, and you have also come alongside one another, reflecting the community we are called to be.

Throughout my time at SPU we have also accomplished much together. I have seen students passionately pursue knowledge, seek God, express creativity, and exhibit a love for people and our world like no other university community. For me, some of the most enjoyable aspects of serving at Seattle Pacific are experiencing this dynamic campus and engaging with our students, whether it is worshipping together in chapel, cheering on Falcon athletics, serving alongside each other in the Seattle community, attending first-rate campus concerts, theatre

productions, thoughtful symposiums and academic events, and art gallery showings, or simply enjoying a meal in Gwinn with students as they share about their lives and hopes for the future.

As we know, this has been a difficult year for everyone. Professionally, leading the University through the impact of the pandemic was certainly challenging, but, as I have shared, 2020 was also a year of significant personal loss for me with the death of both my father and my sister. As I journeyed with them through their battles with Alzheimer's and cancer, I am grateful the focus for the next chapter in my professional calling will be empowering and resourcing others who face similar critical health concerns. I am also grateful as the foundation I will serve is close to my hometown and family; especially near to my mother and my sister's family. As with our students, this place has shaped me in ways that will prepare me to move out into the world to make a difference. For that, I will always be grateful.

My openness to consider a new role was prompted in part by my belief that organizations move through unique stages of development and require different leaders in certain seasons in order to advance the organization into the future with greater success. In addition to addressing the pandemic over the last year, I have continued to engage in our future-focused strategic planning and thinking process as well as consider other matters of significance and importance to our mission and future. It is this context that contributes to my understanding that this is the right time for a transition for me as well as for SPU. I have great confidence in our faculty, staff, and Senior Leadership Council, and I continue to believe SPU's best days are ahead — days I am confident will fully reflect our Statement of Faith and institutional identity.

As I begin to transition to what God has for me next, the Board of Trustees has been working on a transition plan for the University. I am certain our Senior Leadership Council, along with our faculty and staff, will continue to provide the educational experience and opportunities our students deserve. You can expect to see details on next steps in an email later today from the Board of Trustees.

I am grateful to each one of you and to Seattle Pacific University and I look forward to watching the University continue to flourish and thrive in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

Dan



3307 3rd Ave West, Seattle WA 98119-1997

**From:** Cedric Davis for the Board of Trustees <SPU-Board@spu.edu>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 30, 2021 2:07 PM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** President Martin's resignation



## Board of Trustees

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We come to you, our Seattle Pacific University community, regarding the news that President Daniel J. Martin has made the decision to resign from SPU to pursue a new position located closer to his family. Though we are saddened to learn of President Martin's planned departure to pursue a new chapter in his life, we are also indebted to his remarkable and dedicated leadership over the past nine years of service as president of our beloved SPU.

As you read the deeply personal message that President Martin shared with our SPU community we want to add to his comments. We would like to take this moment to showcase some of his accomplishments serving as our 10th president.

- Since taking office in 2012, President Martin has become known as a strategic planner, seasoned fundraiser, and a "student's president," famous for knowing students by name and a regular presence at hundreds of student events and athletic competitions each year.
- President Martin initiated a strategic planning process with specific goals to maintain excellence in SPU's core identity and how to best position the University for the future. The University has been ranked a "Best National University" by *US News & World Report* for the past five years.
- President Martin not only led the \$6 million fundraising effort to restore and retrofit Alexander Hall, the University's oldest building named after SPU's first president, but changed the building's name to reflect the contributions of the first president's wife, Adelaide Beers. The building is now named Alexander and Adelaide Hall. The University

has marked several fundraising milestones under his leadership, as well as top tier nationwide rankings for endowment investments.

- In his nine years, SPU saw incredible growth in the endowment. In 2012, the endowment was \$42 million and by December 31, 2020, the endowment had reached nearly \$137 million. Additionally, under President Martin's leadership SPU's fundraising increased dramatically: fiscal year 2019 was the largest year in SPU's history, exceeding \$27 million including multiyear pledges and bequests.
- In 2015, he launched the Committee on Homelessness to keep one of Seattle's most pressing issues in front of the SPU community and after a second short-term visit by Tent City 3, a portable, self-managed community of people experiencing homelessness. SPU welcomed the community back to campus for a third time in 2017.
- During his tenure, President Martin expanded the leadership team to include a new vice president of inclusive excellence to lead the University's diversity efforts, celebrated the University's 125th anniversary, and oversaw construction of a new residence hall, a state-of-the-art health sciences building, and a music performance and rehearsal studio.
- President Martin has carefully guided SPU through the range of COVID-19 related challenges through decisive choices and wise planning.
- Through the initiation of a research project and more than two years of development, SPU launched a bold initiative to address undergraduate pricing. The project culminated with the launch of "Tuition Reimagined" which reduced undergraduate tuition by 25%, offering new scholarship initiatives, and putting a cap on future tuition increases.

These highlights showcase a range of ways that SPU, under President Martin's leadership, has moved forward with wisdom and foresight.

Upon receiving President Martin's resignation, the Board began working on a transition plan for interim leadership. The Board intends to appoint an interim president while a search for SPU's 11th president occurs. However, as the Board considers who to appoint as interim president, it has identified [Provost Laura Hartley](#) as executive-in-charge of SPU to oversee operations as President Martin departs. Provost Hartley is a gifted academic leader with the experience and expertise we seek to guide the campus. She has a reputation for being an administrator skilled in caring for the welfare and needs of faculty, staff, and students. We will continue to communicate with the community as we work through this time of leadership transition.

We thank President Martin for his extraordinary care for our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and all of the friends of SPU. While we are disappointed the pandemic precludes us from gathering in person, we are exploring how we might come together to honor the president in the future. We invite you in the meantime to send a farewell message to President Martin via a dedicated email account we've assigned to receive your messages. Even after he has completed his time at SPU, you may send your messages to <redacted>

Cedric Davis

Chair

SPU Board of Trustees



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