

Happy Holidays from Dean Burgess

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Dear Colleague,

As we break for the year I want to thank you for your contribution to our college.

Precipitated by our third budget cut in my four years here, 2015 for me included the most difficult decisions I have had to make since I arrived. I have also been privileged to see first-hand the amazing things that you have accomplished in our education, extension and research missions.

You have achieved more in these three mission areas combined in 2015, with relatively less than has ever been provided to you to do it, in the college's history. I know it has not been easy. I don't take it for granted. Although faculty are most often most overtly recognized, the fundamental work of our other appointed personnel and staff was critical. Particularly unsung are those in business management—from our college's central administration to the academic, experiment station and extension units. Regardless, your gift to us all of your initiative and creativity in, and passion for, our common purpose of improving our colleagues' and students' lives, serving our families, discovery and facilitating our economy, was central to our creative and resilient college of 2015. Our college was as central to UA's 2015 success as any.

For two years now economists have told us that the *Great Recession*, precipitated by a global financial crisis, is in the rear-view mirror. It often doesn't feel that way. Unlike the US as a whole, Arizona still hasn't fully recovered. However, 2015 brought us university management-system changes that ensure our shared future is in your hands. For the first time ever in UA history, we will be rewarded directly for your 2015 achievements. Your successes will give us more resources to invest back into your goals.

I remain committed to our pathway of transparency, accountability, equity and focusing on outcomes. I believe that the future belongs to the swiftest and so I am committed to decision making to where implementation occurs—where the “rubber meets the road”, with you. We should continue to focus on building trust: with each other; between our college's units; with other colleges; with central administration; as well as with our extramural partners, stakeholders and elected officials. High trust doesn't mean we'll agree on everything, but it does mean we can have the open, candid and respectful conversations central to expeditiously coming to agreements (even when an agreement is to not work together presently). I'll continue to ask our academic, experiment station and extension unit leaders to continue their course of growing the greatest management and leadership knowledge, skills and talents of any of UA's unit leaders. Likewise, I ask it of our three mission leaders, our business and finance leadership, and myself.

I hope that your plans for the break include resting and recharging for you, as well as spending time with those closest to you. Mine do. I want to thank especially your families, and others close to you, because they have given also to our success in 2015—I know that they will again in 2016. In 2016 we again need to tap into your knowledge, ideas, energy and power; we all again need your gift of purposeful engagement; your gift of leadership.

Regards,
Shane

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