President's Message

Neil Albert Salonen, President

Two thousand fifteen has been a year filled with events marking the importance of the University of Bridgeport.

In March, Tarek Sobh, dean of the School of Engineering, was invited to the White House to brief officials on "Grand Challenges of Engineering," ways to address society's most challenging problems in the 21st century. Our professors were awarded grants to develop better diagnostic tools for cancer and to improve STEM education in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Our new RN to BSN program in cooperation with Bridgeport Hospital began with the appointment of Founding Dean Carol Papp, and the first nursing students arrived in September. We cut the ribbon opening the Ernest C. Trefz School of Business and added two more concentrations—Analytic Intelligence and Entrepreneurship—to our MBA programs and a CPA track to Accounting. We hired five entrepreneurs-in-residence for our new Student Entrepreneur Center. In October, UB student-entrepreneurs won the Crowd Favorite Award at Connecticut Startup Weekend for a new app, Brighten Me Up, created by SASD design student Giovanna Soares.

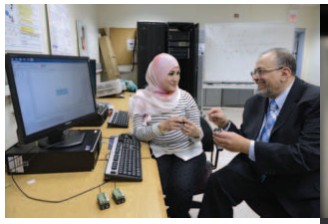
Enrollment has climbed to over 5,400 students—the highest level in 30 years—and we have begun construction on our first new residence hall in 40 years. Our student-athletes continue to win national academic honors alongside their team championships. Graduates from the Class of 2015, representing a broad spectrum of academic departments, from the health sciences to business and education, received job offers at leading companies *before* they graduated. In October, hundreds of alumni came to campus for Welcome Back Weekend, the biggest homecoming event in decades. Individual donors increased support for UB throughout the past year, too, thereby turning tomorrow's potential into today's realities. The effect of their generosity is transformative and lasting.

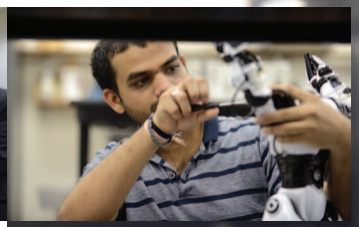
In the midst of accelerating momentum as we address what comes next, it is important to pause and consider how far we've come. This year, we completed our ten-year NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) self-study for accreditation. The process is invaluable as it enables us to work with NEASC representatives to assess how well we serve our students. During my visit to UB's partner schools in China this fall, I was interviewed by *China Daily,* China's largest English-language newspaper and website. In answer to questions, I emphasized UB's mission to educate young people who can face global challenges. The word is out: the University of Bridgeport is a vital resource, not only here in our community, but around the world.

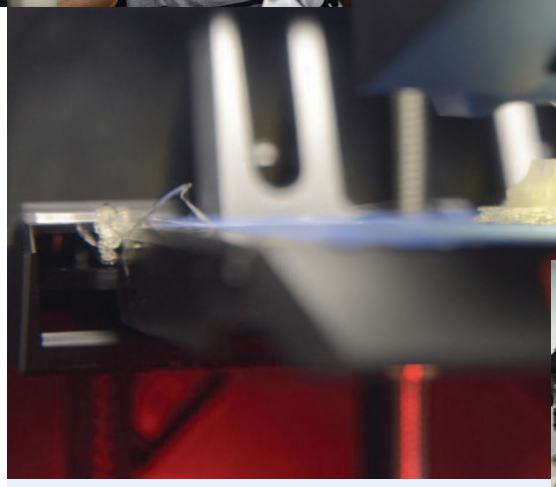
I am proud to present this year's Annual Report, and I invite you to look back with us, albeit briefly, at this year of remarkable progress. Please join me in pledging support as UB continues to grow and expand its capacity to shape the future.

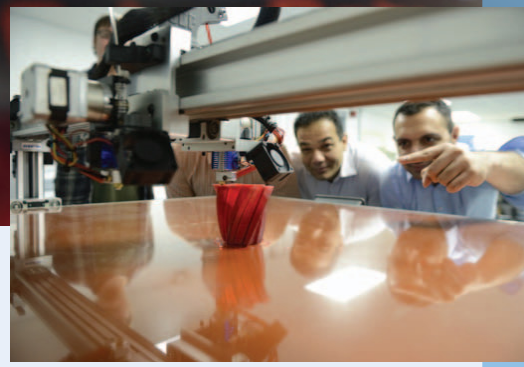
Neil Albert Salonen
President

Winter









The School of Engineering continued to lead the way in STEM education and research in 2014. (From left) Rep. Jim Himes toured the school and its new industrial-sized 3-D printer; professor Dr. Christian Bach delved into the workings of DNA; and computer science graduate student Wafa Elmannai was awarded for being one of the most innovative women in Connecticut.

March 6: Improving the world through engineering

Can medical devices do a better job diagnosing patients? What's the best way to protect businesses from cyber-security risks? Is it possible to purify tainted water?

Increasingly, answers to these and similar questions are coming from engineers. So it was both timely and appropriate that School of Engineering Dean Tarek Sobh was among 122 engineering school deans invited to meet with White House officials, who wanted to know how engineering will solve some of the world's most critical problems. These so-called "Grand Challenges," identified through initiatives such as the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) Grand Challenges for Engineering and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, include goals like engineering better medicines, making solar energy cost-competitive with coal, and making cyberspace more secure.

As a leader in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Medicine (STEM), University of Bridgeport is "well poised" to address Grand Challenges, Sobh reported. In the past year, UB faculty and students advanced our understanding of complex technical issues through breakthrough solutions and research. The value of their work was reflected in numerous prizes and grants.

School of Engineering Associate Dean Dr. Khaled M. Elleithy and Dean/Senior Vice President for Graduate Studies Dr. Tarek Sobh were awarded a Connecticut Quality Improvement Award Competition (CQIA) Gold Innovation Prize for creating the world's first online engineering conference to better disseminate ideas and breakthroughs.

Associate professor of technology Neal Lewis and colleagues were awarded $6,000 from the Connecticut Space Grant College Consortium to develop a robotic puppet that teaches young people about space and science. The puppet was launched from Discovery Museum in Bridgeport in the fall 2015.

The Consortium also awarded UB professor Nelson Ngoh $7,433 to survey Connecticut K-12 science coordinators about the challenges and steps that can be taken to increase earth and space science instruction in grades K-12 within Connecticut.

Computer science doctoral student Wafa Elmannai was recognized as one of the most innovative women in Connecticut by the Connecticut Technology Council. She was also the only student in Connecticut to win a $20,000 AAUW International Fellowship. Other AAUW prizes were awarded to students from Harvard, Duke, Georgetown, and other leading U.S. universities.

As the School of Engineering looks to the future, it will continue to enhance programs that address the Grand Challenges to improve our world. In addition, as part of the Grand Challenge Goals for schools to graduate 20,000 formally recognized "Grand Challenge Engineers" over the next decade, UB will train certain talented students through special programs based on interdisciplinary learning, entrepreneurship, and global perspectives.

DECEMBER — JANUARY — FEBRUARY — MARCH

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