

Chairman Carfagna, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Higher Education Finance Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today and for your clear commitment to making a better life possible for Ohio's citizens. Along with other independent universities in Ohio, The University of Findlay (UF) shares your commitment to affordability, workforce development, and access for veterans.

### **Affordability**

At the University of Findlay, we educate students across the socioeconomic spectrum. Approximately 30% of our students are PELL eligible.

For the 2018-19 academic year, 363 students received OCOG, totaling \$966,012 in funding, which represents 22% of our Ohio-based students. One-quarter of our OCOG recipients are pursuing careers in STEM-related fields. These are students like Emily Peraza who is double majoring in math and computer science and plans to become a mathematician at NASA. Emily is paying her own way through college and without OCOG and the Pell Grant would not be able to follow her dream. Thank you for your continued support to OCOG.

### **Workforce Development**

The University of Findlay has partnerships with 60+ regional businesses placing nearly 200 students in internships in Ohio annually. Over the last 4 years we have participated in the Ohio Means Internship & Co-ops (OMIC) grant as well as the Great Lakes grant, both of which focus on developing paid internship opportunities, workforce development, and closing the skills gap for in-demand careers in Ohio. Since Academic Year 2009-2010, UF has hosted 529 Choose Ohio First Scholars. Thank you for your support of these students.

Of our alumni who responded to a UF Outcomes Survey between 2015 and 2018, 66.2% indicated they are employed within Ohio.

UF offers many short-term certificate programs to address workforce needs in our region:

Undergraduate certificates:

- English as an International Language certificate
- Diagnostic medical sonography certificate
- Echocardiography certificate
- PET/CT certificate
- Gerontology certificate
- Information assurance certificate
- Vascular sonography certificate
- Nuclear medicine certificate

Graduate certificates:

- Environmental management certificate
- Health informatics certificate
- Training and online instruction certificate

Emergency and disaster management certificate  
Occupational health and safety management certificate  
Dual enrollment certificate in mathematics  
Dual enrollment certificate in language arts

The University of Findlay has partnered with Owens Community College to develop the Oiler Express Program--a dual admission program that will make it more affordable for students to earn a four-year degree. The program is designed to remove barriers to individuals in our region to attaining a four-year degree.

### **Veteran Support**

The University of Findlay currently has 73 veterans-- 40 in undergraduate programs and 33 pursuing a master's or doctoral program. Our student-veterans do very well at UF, with 60% of the undergraduate students earning a 3.0 GPA or higher.

UF participates in the Department of Veterans Affairs Yellow Ribbon Program through which student-veterans are awarded an additional \$10,500 annually toward the cost of tuition above the Post 9/11 GI Bill. (Current GI Bill is a max of \$23,672.)

In addition to participating in the Yellow Ribbon Program, the University provides a number of services to support our veterans include ensuring that a VA Outreach Specialist is on campus frequently to help our student-veterans with anything they need regarding their benefits. We also have academic advisors who are trained to work with VA student to ensure that all of their credits transfer seamlessly to Findlay and determine if they qualify for extra credits based on their military experience. Our Financial Aid Office is also trained to support VA students as their status changes if they go in or out of active duty.

The University also has a dedicated space located in one of our main campus buildings that serves as a very visible tribute to all of the veterans who have been students at the University of Findlay. Currently, our Veterans Honor Wall has the names of 710 current and former University of Findlay students who have served in the military.

In summary, I applaud Governor DeWine for his proposed executive budget which will strengthen all of Ohio's higher education sectors. The proposed funding increases to OCOG, Choose Ohio First, and short-term certificates program will greatly aid students at UF as well as the rest of Ohio.

I believe your goals, those of our colleagues in public institutions of higher education, and our goals in independent higher education are aligned in important ways. The independent sector brings these strengths to the cause: agility in program development, a high completion rate, a low student-loan default rate, and generous financial aid packages from our own resources. Together with you and other educational sectors, we can accomplish much for Ohio. I urge you

to keep the whole array of post-secondary education in mind as you make far-reaching decisions about how best to deploy the resources of our state. Each sector can deliver a strong return on the investment of public dollars.