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### 2013 Welcome to The 2013-14 Academic Year

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*Otterbein University*

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**Otterbein University**  
**University Update: Welcome to the 2013/14 Academic Year**  
**President Kathy A. Krendl**  
**August 23, 2013**

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Welcome to the 2013/14 academic year! I hope you had a great summer with plenty of opportunities to relax and spend time in the sun with family and friends. Summer is a time of transition for many of us both personally and professionally. I've enjoyed the chance to catch up with many of you who have shared the exciting transitions that you, too, are experiencing. As for my family, Richard and I are helping our daughter, Claire, plan her fall wedding. We also welcomed our son, Tom, back to the States after two years abroad. Believe me, I understand transitions!

It was wonderful to see so many of you at the Welcome Back Kick-Off on Monday. I especially want to thank all of those who contributed to the video -- students, faculty, and staff -- as well as those who were interviewed as part of the Otterbein brand initiative. As a result of all of our conversations over the past 2 years, we can now speak with one voice in answer to the question of who we are today and also who we are in the process of becoming. Our goal as members of this community is to distinguish Otterbein -- its unique history and its aspirations for the future -- for both those we recruit to join our institution, whether as students, faculty or staff, and for external audiences as we move Otterbein's profile from that of a regional institution to that of a nationally recognized institution.

For the past several years as we have discussed our Mission and our Vision in meetings all over campus and provided feedback through updates at University Summits, Senate meetings, Alumni Council sessions, Administrative Council meetings, and Board of Trustees meetings, I have heard common themes emerging from the process. I want to thank the team in Institutional Advancement for their efforts in compiling all of the information and comments from these discussions and distilling them into the four brand pillars that summarize Otterbein's distinguishing qualities.

Otterbein offers:

- The smartest way to learn;
- A place to belong;
- The opportunity to realize one's personal best;
- And values that guide serving the common good.

The work of the Institutional Advancement team also resulted in the Otterbein video that you saw on Monday. This video consists of a compilation of comments from individuals who have served Otterbein for many years, as well as those who have joined our community more recently. Thanks to Gina Calcamuggio, Senior Message and Event Strategist, especially, for her tireless efforts to conduct one more interview, meet with one more group, return to the Brand Advisory Committee for guidance, and then finally pull everything together. Her work will help us launch the conversation about the ways in which Otterbein will move forward as we aspire to establish and distinguish our institution as a model community for higher education. We already do so in terms of curricular innovations and have won national recognition for our work. Now it's time to embrace the idea of being a model community for higher education in other aspects of our institution.

This is the conversation I invite you to join in the coming months. This is the work we do best. This is what distinguishes us. I have listened carefully to what you've shared as a part of the coffee

conversations we've had over the past year. I heard you when you told me you wanted more opportunities to feel proud and to celebrate your university.

There are many ways that this can be accomplished. I'll be asking all of you as educators, leaders, and learners – all contributing members of our Otterbein community - to take initiative and help build these ideas and suggestions into meaningful, visible programs, practices, and behaviors.

One of your suggestions that came up repeatedly was that we establish "Cardinal Pride Days." Many of you said you want to see red—a sea of Cardinal Red --with plenty of Otterbein spirit apparel. As I mentioned on Monday, fall is a great time to start such a tradition. I proposed we start with demonstrating our Cardinal Pride by showing up for work in Cardinal Red for the start of Homecoming Weekend on Friday, September 20. However, after the Welcome Back Kick-off, a great idea came forward from Mark Moffitt, Director of Adult and Transfer Enrollment, to start showing our Cardinal Pride as a community sooner rather than later. Mark suggested that we wear red to demonstrate our pride to our new and returning students on **Monday, August 26**, the first day of fall semester. It's a great idea! Let's do it!

Through our coffees I heard a lot about communication. With that in mind, we will launch an on-going lunch conversation series in the newly refreshed 1847 Room as an opportunity for you to share ideas and "**Join the Conversation**" on topics that will change each month. I will host the first lunch conversation on **Friday, September 27 at noon** to continue the conversation we've started about what it means to be a model community at Otterbein. We had to change the date from the one announced on Monday due to a scheduling conflict, so please make a note of it.

I also hope you'll take advantage of a new offering that lets you purchase 10 lunches for \$60, and you'll get one lunch free. Feel free to split the cost of a pass and share it with a colleague if that works best for you.

Many of you shared that you want more opportunities to come together and enjoy the company of your colleagues. In addition to hosting monthly birthday party receptions at the President's House – they have proven to be popular - the Otterbein Holiday Party will return to the President's House this year. Many of you told me you thought this practice was more personal and special—and that's part of who we are, so save the date of **December 11 from 4-7** for this year's Holiday Party at the President's House.

As many of you know, we gave you a small gift at the Welcome Back Kick-off - - a coffee mug with a simple reminder printed on the side. You are a member of this community. With that membership are privileges. One small perk we wanted to offer is to provide you with opportunities to bump into colleagues more regularly. For the rest of August and September, if you bring this mug into the Roost or the OtterBean you'll get a cup of coffee or tea for free.

Starting in October, if you bring this mug in—it will cost you only \$1 to fill your mug. Now, this doesn't include Starbucks specialty drinks—but a good, strong cup of coffee or tea to start your day seemed like a nice way to say welcome back and invite you to join the conversation. I'll be announcing dates in the Monday Tweet and through other social media to invite you to join me for informal get-togethers around campus. If you bring your mug—it will be my treat. For those who were unable to attend the Welcome Back Kick-off, please stop by the President's Office - a coffee mug will be waiting for you.

In addition to the wonderful suggestions that many of you have already made about ways in which Otterbein can become a model community, I am certain that there are many other great ideas percolating around campus. If you have an idea--I invite you to send an email to [greatideas@otterbein.edu](mailto:greatideas@otterbein.edu). It's a virtual suggestion box, another suggestion from the recent coffee conversations. Let me know what topics you're interested in exploring. I encourage you to "Join the Conversation" and continue to build upon and enrich the development of our model community.

I want to share some final important notes. First, we are pleased to announce that on Thursday, April 10, the Otterbein University Vernon L. Pack Distinguished Lecture Series will welcome Sir Salman Rushdie for a public lecture entitled "Public Events, Private Lives: Literature and Politics in the Modern World." The evening events will include a reception and book signing. He will also be on campus to meet with select student groups on Friday, April 11. More information will be forthcoming from Academic Affairs in the months ahead.

And, in closing, I wanted to let everyone know that Barb Wharton, Assistant VP for Institutional Planning and Effectiveness, accepted a position at Ohio University and started there last week on the heels of her vacation. She will lead their Institutional Research Office. We will miss her greatly, but the opportunity to run an entire office of analysts presented a huge opportunity for Barb. We will be launching a search soon for her replacement. We wish her the best.

Welcome back. Let's have a great year!

Sincerely,  
President Krendl