

## **Beginning this work together: A message from President Loren J. Blanchard**

Hello Beach community!

Today, I begin my service as President of Cal State Long Beach with both gratitude and a strong sense of responsibility.

You see, I was the first in my family to pursue a college degree. So, knowing that more than 50% of the students here are first generation resonates with me on a deeply personal level. I know from experience that degree completion changes more than individual lives; it changes entire families and, consequently, communities. That awareness, that conviction, has shaped my work in higher education for more than 30 years, and now it informs the way I begin this presidency.

Cal State Long Beach is a university of academic excellence and real opportunity. It is a place shaped by creativity, resilience, and a deep commitment to the public good. And, its diversity is not incidental to its strength, it is central to it. Our students come to us with limitless talent, ambition, and hope. Their success here matters far beyond their own lives, it ripples through those close to them and directly impacts the future prosperity of California. Student success is, therefore, more than the guiding force of our collective work; it is a moral imperative, and it must continue to undergird everything we do at this university.

I also begin with deep respect for the faculty and staff whose daily commitment sustains this campus, as well as for Acting President Andy Jones who led this university with heart during this period of transition. Universities do not fulfill their missions by reputation alone. They do so through the work of people who teach, mentor, create solutions, solve problems, and serve with integrity. That work is visible across Cal State Long Beach. So, I begin today confident in the genuine commitment of all who serve here, confident in the promise of our students, and

confident in what this university contributes to its surrounding community, city, state, and world.

I am tremendously grateful for the warm welcome so many of you have already extended. In the months ahead, I will prioritize learning from you - our faculty, staff, students, and community partners. I will listen carefully to your insights regarding what is working, where challenges exist, and how to move forward together.

Thank you again for welcoming me back to Long Beach. I am honored to now build on the momentum you have already created.

Go Beach!