



# A MESSAGE *from the Provost*

November 8, 2021

Dear USF friends and colleagues,

The past 18 months have been a difficult period for all of us, our university and the wider communities we serve. This time has also helped us sharpen our focus around those who mean so much to us, the lives we live, and the importance of how we spend each day. I have been a part of the University of South Florida community for nearly 20 years, serving as provost since January 2008, with each year defined by a wide array of opportunities, challenges and accomplishments. While the university has, in so many ways, become an extended family for me over the years I regret to say I have repeatedly failed the work-life balance test.

Recently I notified President Law of my plans to step aside as provost next year and return to the faculty. I plan to remain in my current position as long as is necessary to assist with the important and seamless transition to a new president, strategic plan, and my successor. As a member of the USF faculty, I look forward to engaging, once more, in the important work of teaching and learning, mentoring, scholarship and engagement -- something I largely set aside when I dedicated my effort to higher education leadership and serving the needs of our faculty, staff and students.

As I reflect on where we are today, I can say with the utmost confidence that USF's position has never been stronger, especially given our gains in student success, faculty accomplishments and, most recently, consolidation. Our national and international stature is stronger than ever, which is proud testament to the remarkably talented people at USF -- our faculty, staff, leadership, students, alumni, donors and friends of the university.

Serving as provost and executive vice president at USF since January 2008 has been the greatest privilege of my professional career. As you may know, it is rare for a provost's term to extend beyond five years, let alone close-in on 15, and I count myself fortunate to have been afforded the opportunity to contribute in small part toward USF's transformation into the academic powerhouse it is today.

USF's relentless pursuit of excellence must and will continue. As I have said often, we should be proud to celebrate all that we have accomplished over the years, yet we cannot be satisfied. Our students, alumni, faculty, staff and community always deserve our very best. I am confident that USF's best years lie ahead, and I look forward to contributing further to our university as a proud member of the faculty.

Most of all, it's been such a pleasure to learn from, partner with, and support the accomplishments of so many friends, colleagues, and students across a quite remarkable academic community. I want to thank you for your support, friendship and shared sense of purpose as we've worked together to make USF the university it is today. I especially want to thank President Law for her leadership during this critical turning point for USF, as well as our Board of Trustees for their tireless devotion to USF's continued success.

With deep pride and sincere gratitude,

Thank you,

**Ralph C. Wilcox**

Provost & Executive Vice President  
University of South Florida

