

## **A Message of Holiday Thanks From Chancellor Gold**

Hello Mavericks, I'm Jeff Gold and I have the honor of serving as your chancellor here at UNO. And whether you are viewing this message in between preparing for your final exams, making holiday plans, zooming in and out of meetings with colleagues or preparing for your future after commencement, I hope it finds you in good health and in good spirits.

Even with all that we have accomplished this semester and all of the challenges we have to overcome as a community it has come and gone in the blink of an eye. With all of the changes we have encountered and those we have adapted to the one constant has been the undercurrent of kindness, patience and optimism that finds its way into everything that we do.

This semester, I'm reminded by a passage from the novel "Contact" by the late, great astrophysicist, and former professor of mine, Dr. Carl Sagan. And I quote, "For small creatures such as we, the vastness is only bearable through love," end quote. There are times when we can feel small, but I truly believe that love, the love that we have for each other, the love that we have for this university, and the love that we have for this community, is what has sustained us this semester, and has made such a large presence in this state. It will also be what propels us into the new year ahead.

As I shared recently in my state of the university address in early October, there are times that we act and times that we reflect, this would be a time to consider both. First, it's a time to reflect, to recharge and to rest. The perfect place to do this, as in Omaha's beautiful Lauritzen Gardens, who are partnered with our campus to welcome UNO faculty and staff, as well as members of your immediate family, at no cost through their Merry and Bright displays, Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> through Jan. 3<sup>rd</sup>. To walk through the gardens and to reflect on all of the things that we have to be thankful for, the many family and community blessings that we have.

But this is also a time to act, a time to reach out. My strong suggestion for each of you as our students, faculty, and staff - use this as a time to express your love and your thankfulness to those around you. Many of us are experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation due to this pandemic. And whether the sentiment is shared through a screen, at a safe physical distance, or in person, it can make a real difference. Tiny acts of kindness go a long way, a very long way. Particularly during the holidays and particularly during this trying year.

There is a bittersweetness to the fact that this will most likely be my last winter holiday season with the UNO community as this exceptional university's chancellor. I'm excited about the future for UNO, but rest assured I will always consider myself a Maverick and look forward to being with the Maverick family. I too look forward to making 2021 another landmark Maverick year for and with each of you every day.

I thank you and as always, Go Mavericks!