MEMORANDUM

November 20, 2019

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Kristina M. Johnson, Chancellor

SUBJECT: Establishment and Naming of a Research Center at the State University of New York at Buffalo

Action Requested

The proposed resolution approves the action taken by the State University of New York at Buffalo Council on September 9, 2019, establishing and naming the "Atif Zafar Applied Science and Technology Innovative Research Center (ASTIR)" within the University’s School of Engineering and Applied Sciences.

Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Resolved that the action taken by the State University of New York at Buffalo Council, establishing and naming the "Atif Zafar Applied Science and Technology Innovative Research Center (ASTIR)" within the University’s School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, be, and hereby is, approved.

Background

The proposed resolution approves the September 9, 2019 decision of the State University of New York at Buffalo (UB) Council to establish the “Atif Zafar Applied Science and Technology Innovative Research Center (ASTIR)” within the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences at UB. The Council’s action was taken in recognition of a significant gift of $5 million from UB alumnus Atif Zfar, MD (BA ’89, MD ’94).

Through his founding investment, Dr. Zafar seeks to provide opportunities through a student-centric innovation center that will promote intellectual growth among students and cultivate the important work that UB researchers undertake to introduce ideas to the marketplace. The new ASTIR Center will teach
innovation as a way of thinking, through both coursework and hands-on experience, and promote partnerships with private industry to further accelerate the already rapid evolution of technology. Dr. Zafar’s generous support of UB’s ASTIR Center will include the establishment of an endowed chair dedicated to the center, exploration and research, and capital needs.

Dr. Zafar, a board certified internist accomplished in medical informatics, earned his undergraduate degrees, cum laude, in biological sciences and mathematics from UB in 1989 and his medical degree from UB’s School of Medicine in 1994. He completed his post-doctoral training, internship and residency at the University of Cincinnati Hospital in Cincinnati, OH and an Informatics Fellowship at the Regenstrief Institute for Healthcare on the campus of Indiana University, dedicated to applying technological and engineering advances to improve healthcare. As an Associate Professor of Medicine at Indiana University, Dr. Zafar taught medical students about healthcare IT as well as clinical medicine.

Dr. Zafar was a founding member of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) National Health IT Resource Center, credited for advancing the adoption of electronic health records nationwide. His was one of the principle designers of the National Healthcare IT Resource Center website (www.healthit.ahrq.gov).