

# Southern Connecticut State University

## *Our Priorities for 2021 and Beyond*

PRESIDENT JOE BERTOLINO

As we aspire to be the **Social Justice and Anti-Racist Public University of Connecticut**, this overarching goal is influenced by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the new economic and social realities faced by many members of our extended community. We will strive to address these challenges, advance our mission of access and affordability, and ensure student success by committing to the following priorities:

### 1. Preparing Southern for the Future

- Stabilize the University's fiscal position.
- Develop new revenue streams, including external grants, corporate partnerships and contracts to enhance financial aid/scholarship funding, research/creative activity and program development.
- Establish and market distinctive identity for Southern.
- Create maximum flexibility in both curriculum and services.
- Create a fundraising strategic plan to intentionally focus on DEI initiatives.

### 2. Driving Enrollment

- Use data-informed decision making to enhance graduation and retention rates.
- Focus on regional needs, workforce development and industries of the future.
- Identify and promote/market select, nationally competitive degree programs.
- In our focus on college transitions and preparations, continue to examine basic barriers to access through the perspectives of first generation, low income, international, rural, and BIPOC student populations.
- Develop a clear, intentional, and personalized outreach strategy that makes Southern a first choice for diverse students by involving community and support networks such as family, K-12 teachers, counselors and schools, community organizations, community colleges.
- Become the transfer institution of choice among the CSUs.
- Expand and create opportunities for enhanced student and faculty scholarship through growth of external support.

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### 3. Ensuring Student Success

- Remove obstacles to graduation in both curriculum and bureaucratic processes while providing quality service and an ethic of care to students.
- Promote student well-being (mental and physical health, resiliency, self-care, confidence and resourcefulness).
- Enhance focus on outcomes – career readiness, preparation and employability.
- Create a culture of engagement and belonging for each and every student.

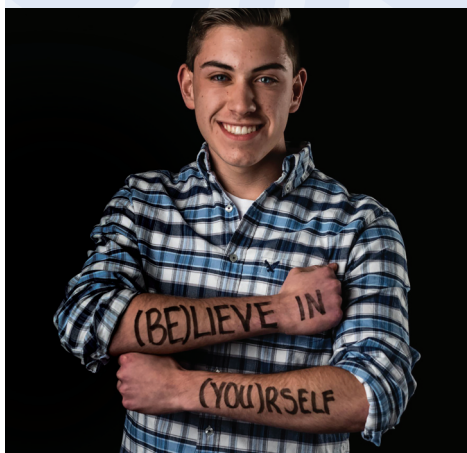
### 4. Advancing Social Justice and Anti-Racism on Campus and Beyond

- Build the Division of Equity and Inclusion and implement the recommendations of the DEI Advisory Council through the active cooperation of senior leadership, deans, chairs and directors.
- Create a community and culture of accountability committed to social justice.
- Recruit and retain more faculty and staff of color to reflect the diversity of the student population.
- Make data-informed decisions to review and realign policies and procedures that perpetuate inequity, racism, and bias.
- Support building diversity and equity into relevant content for curriculum.



### 5. Engaging Our Community and Expanding Our Reach

- Expand opportunities for experiential learning, internships and off-campus employment.
- Create and/or grow significant, self-supported Centers and Institutes in areas of high reputational value (e.g. Social Justice, Sustainability, Autism, Assessment).
- Create new partnerships with area schools, non-profits and the corporate sector.
- Expand the University's donor base and enhance connections with alumni, with renewed focus on promoting alumni success stories.
- Generate additional financial resources to support the development of community programs.
- Engage diverse alumni by understanding and addressing the structural barriers and challenges that can prevent engagement with these critical populations.



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