

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Rice University is an outstanding research university and an extraordinary community. We take pride in our contributions to the world and the excellence of our teaching, creativity, scholarship and research. We work to foster our distinctive and supportive culture. Now eight years into our second century, Rice University has changed a tremendous amount since 59 students and 12 faculty members participated in the first matriculation in the early fall of 1912. But while our university has changed in important aspects, including our commitment to a diverse community gathered from across the globe, we have built upon the best of our founding ideals and ambitions. The result of a century of thoughtful progress has been the creation of one of the great universities of America. Rice's mission and aspirations today are captured in our mission statement:

As a leading research university with a distinctive commitment to undergraduate education, Rice University aspires to pathbreaking research, unsurpassed teaching, and contributions to the betterment of our world. It seeks to fulfill this mission by cultivating a diverse community of learning and discovery that produces leaders across the spectrum of human endeavor.

Universities and other institutions are often distinguished by how they fare and what they achieve when confronted with challenges. These are indeed unusual and challenging times. All of our students moved to a completely online education in March 2020. But although our students and faculty may only have seen each other on screens for the remainder of that semester, and some for longer than that, our community and sense of belonging remain strong. We are eager to continue that community during this unprecedented time – a period in which we will undoubtedly continue to face unique challenges but, working together in pursuit of a common vision, a time in which we can continue to support each other as members of the Rice community.

Although with somewhat over 7,000 students we remain a comparatively small research university, we aim for the highest levels of achievement and contribution. We are committed to a wide range of endeavors and disciplines across our eight schools and many interdisciplinary institutes and centers. Our success is built on the contributions of every part of our community: graduate and undergraduate students, faculty and staff, alumni and other supporters across our city and around the world.

We strive to be bold in our aspirations and entrepreneurial in our approach. We seek to make a distinctive contribution to our home city of Houston while achieving a global impact through education, research and service. We are committed to enriching understanding, creating opportunity, discovering knowledge and improving our world. Reflecting these ambitions, we have adopted a new strategic plan, the "V2C2," which you can learn more about at <https://v2c2.rice.edu/>.

The General Announcements of the University sets forth the immense array of opportunities for our students, as well as the rules and policies which govern their participation in the university. But we demand more of each other than just adherence to rules and policies. We expect that all members of our community will be guided in all their endeavors by the core Rice values: Responsibility, Integrity, Community and Excellence. These values are just as important as the academic offerings and rules included in these announcements. If you have questions about how rules

and policies may apply to you, we urge you to seek advice from one of the many sources available to you.

We take great pride and joy in the diversity of our community in every aspect, even while recognizing we must continue the work of building a more diverse and inclusive community across the entire university. Our success requires thoughtfulness and respect in every interaction on our campus, whether with members of the Rice community or the visitors we welcome. Each of us has a role to play in helping to assure access and inclusion for all members of our community. Our "culture of care" demands not only that we not cause harm to others, but also that we look out for each other, listen to each other, and provide or seek help when needed. It falls on each of us to do our part to welcome, help and listen to those who may not always feel supported and included, recognizing that some come from backgrounds of great privilege, while others have overcome enormous obstacles to be part of our community.

We are pleased that you have chosen to become a part of this dynamic university as it embarks on its second century of excellence and achievement. On behalf of our faculty and staff, I wish you every success as you pursue your educational endeavors, and I look forward to working with you as you seize the opportunities Rice offers to achieve your aspirations and dreams.

David W. Leebron
President
Rice University