



# LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

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Board of Curators

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April 8, 2024

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**VIA EMAIL ([bshermanbo@aol.com](mailto:bshermanbo@aol.com)) AND REGULAR MAIL**

Sherman Bonds, Ed.D., President  
LU National Alumni Association  
1750 Jefferson Street, Box 104762  
Jefferson City, MO 65109-9998

Dear Dr. Bonds:

I am responding to your letter of March 21<sup>st</sup> sent to the Board of Curators and shared with the Lincoln alumni community at large. While the Board of Curators always appreciates the willingness of our alumni to share their thoughts and ideas, it is with the hope that we are all working toward a shared goal of strengthening Lincoln University, not tearing it down. Your letter unfairly and inaccurately portrays Lincoln as a university in dire straits and stagnating under President Moseley's leadership during the last two years. That is simply a false narrative. These are the facts:

Like many HBCUs, Lincoln University is at an inflection point in the makeup of our student body – roughly split between students of color and white students – as well as in the challenges we face. Those challenges are longstanding and common to most institutions of higher learning across the country, ranging from inadequate and scarce resources to challenges with recruitment and retention. To be clear, these challenges long pre-date President Moseley's tenure but the Board has been consistently impressed by President Moseley's work to address these challenges and strengthen the University.

In the area of capital improvements, we have just completed renovations to Pawley Theatre and the construction of a new softball field complex with an artificial turf playing surface that was supported by a half million dollar donation obtained by President Moseley. We are in the middle of a \$21 million renovation to Dawson Hall scheduled to be completed this January, and we are exploring bonding options for plans to renovate additional residential halls if enrollment continues to grow. Through President Moseley's outreach to community partners, we have completed an Innovation Lab in Schweich Hall. Even more exciting is that we are now in the design phase for the construction of a new \$40 million Health & Security Sciences Institute to be built near the corner of Lafayette and Dunklin.

Dr. Sherman Bonds

April 8, 2024

Page 2

To meet the rising costs of a college education and fulfill an HBCU's core mission, one of President Moseley's first actions was to modify the academic scholarship model and provide more equity in its distribution by eliminating the use of standardized test scores. This new model allowed more students to qualify for scholarships based on high school academic performance and benefited students of color.

Under President Moseley's leadership, the academic performance of all students has increased over the past two Fall semesters. In Fall of 2023, 49% of all full-time undergraduate students made the Dean's list. Additionally, the number of full-time freshmen on the Dean's list increased from 30% in Fall 2022 to 45% in Fall 2023. This includes a significant increase in academic performance of our students of color.

For the first time in 11 years, Lincoln has seen increased overall enrollment both for students of color and white students – including first-time student enrollment, reversing a decade-long trend of decreasing enrollment.

Financially, Lincoln University received a full 1-to-1 match of state funds from the State Legislature equal to the Federal Land Grant monies for the first time in our school's history. Also, for the first time in school history, the Higher Learning Commission Review of university operations found zero deficiencies, resulting in full accreditation for Lincoln for the next 10 years.

To address enrollment challenges, President Moseley has hired Regional Recruiters for the Admissions Office who reside in the areas from which 80% of Lincoln's students have traditionally originated: St. Louis, Kansas City, Chicago, mid-Missouri and the Bootheel. He has relaunched a Master's in Higher Education with an emphasis in HBCUs after the program was allowed to become dormant during previous administrations. He is reinstating a Music degree after it was eliminated in 2016. The University has hired its first full time faculty member who specializes in African American History since 2018. And he has led a partnership with the Mid-Missouri Black Nurses Association to support students of color and faculty within the School of Nursing.

To better recruit and retain faculty and staff, President Moseley has put Lincoln's employees on par with other state employees by moving Lincoln University to the Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan, made possible through an additional \$2.1 million in funding from the State Legislature – and he has provided salary increases each of the years he has served as President, including the largest salary increase on record in 2023-2024, when 75% of faculty received an 11% increase. And, despite the challenges of enticing new talent to mid-Missouri, he has included more Black leaders on his leadership team than any recent Lincoln President.

Dr. Sherman Bonds

April 8, 2024

Page 3

With the above actions and accomplishments, along with many others not mentioned, President Moseley and his entire leadership team have established a solid record of progress that is benefiting all members of the Lincoln community – and bodes well for the future of Lincoln University. Contrary to some suggestions, President Moseley does not view his role as changing the culture of Lincoln. Rather, he sees it as building on the values that make Lincoln special.

There is no doubt that the tragic death of Dr. Antoinette “Bonnie” Candia-Bailey has cast a pall over the spirit of our Lincoln community this semester and is a tragedy that will stay with our school for years to come. The loss of a university administrator who oversaw mental health services on campus underscores the fact that simple access to mental health care is not enough, and we are working diligently to expand our mental and behavioral health support services through a program called Becoming a Healthier LU. This is a literal work in progress designed to promote a better Lincoln University by providing a strategic and well-defined focus on the health and well-being that goes beyond access and embraces acceptance and normalization in a continuing dialogue to support the health needs of everyone at the University.

We can always do better and we will – but we can maximize our opportunities to strengthen Lincoln University by working together, rather than tearing one another down.

I close with the observation that a stable and enduring relationship between the University and the Alumni Association is vital for the future growth and success of Lincoln and for all those who are part of the Blue Tiger community. I again remind you of the Board’s many unsuccessful efforts to engage with the Alumni Association to re-establish an operational Memorandum of Understanding that will allow us to work together in an orderly manner for the success of our beloved University. We look forward to re-engaging on this issue in the near future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Victor B. Pasley".

Victor B. Pasley, President  
Board of Curators

cc: LUAA Board and Members