



March 14, 2018

To the Purchase Community:

I am writing today to let you know that I will step down from the presidency at the end of 2018-2019 academic year. I believe that the time is right as the management of our college is in capable hands with a stable group of qualified officers and leadership throughout the institution, and a transition to a new president will be seamless.

I would like to extend my thanks to the faculty and staff, whose commitment and dedication to the college, our public mission and our growing diversity is clear. I began my presidency at Purchase in 2002 and am proud of what we have accomplished together over these past 16 years. The college is vastly different from the one I joined. Our graduation rates have almost doubled. The tagline, "Think Wide Open," adopted in 2004, defines and unifies our community of students, faculty and staff devoted to promoting creativity and individuality. We are a more cohesive campus thanks to our efforts to focus our education on interdisciplinary learning across and among the arts and liberal arts. The college has become a nationwide leader in its commitment to conservation and sustainability. We are ranked among the best schools by the *Princeton Review*, and *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* recognizes Purchase College as one of the top 100 Best Values in Public Colleges.

We look different: the new plaza, the Student Services Building, Fort Awesome, the Student Center (the "Stood"), Alumni Village, Humanities: these are the important projects that have transformed life on campus. Soon we will open the Center for Media, Film and Theatre, and in 2019, a new residence hall- further evidence of our commitment to academic excellence and the quality of life of our students. Our commitment to student success is evidenced in our learning, advising, multicultural, wellness, and career counseling centers, all of which have been created or expanded since 2002. We continue to be among the leaders in our EOP program. We have vibrant intramural and varsity teams.

I am proud to report that the college is financially fit. The fiscal crisis of 2002 is a dim, dark memory. The endowment of the Purchase College Foundation and charitable entities has risen from approximately \$35 million to \$87 million. I am hopeful that we can make it to \$100 million before my departure. And the college is in good hands, with a team of Vice Presidents who will

provide leadership and stability, and with a strong and functioning shared governance structure which has been recognized across the SUNY system.

I want to thank specifically our CSEA employees for their dedication and pride with which they do their work. It will be hard to say goodbye to their warmth toward me—the smiles, handshakes, and hugs. A special thanks as well to our University Police for their honored service. We forget that although our usual contacts may not always be in extreme situations, these men and woman undergo serious training in dealing with life threatening situations of the worst kind, run toward trouble and not away, and deserve our appreciation and respect.

It has been a distinct pleasure to get to know the supporters of this college. The successes of our alumni, whether in business, in the laboratory, in the studio or on stage, resonate across our campus. The college is the lucky beneficiary of the tremendous generosity of the members of our Purchase College Foundation and Performing Arts Center Council, Friends of the Neuberger, as well as community members who have adopted the college as their own.

It is the students of Purchase College who have made this job so interesting and, quite frankly, so hard to leave. I have had the pleasure of knowing many who have graduated and have drawn inspiration from their talents, successes, life stories and experiences. Our students define diversity. I am intensely proud of their commitment to find themselves, to support others in their journeys, to transform their work on campus into fulfilling careers, and to recognize their roles in improving our communities. I have felt their joy, as well as their pain and frustration, and shared in their triumphs as they've crossed the stage at Commencement.

Next academic year, I will devote my energies to the Senior Learning Community project. I intend to visit college affiliated retirement communities around the country in order to create a manual of best practices that would be of assistance to the success of our project. I also will be working with Institutional Advancement on various significant fundraising opportunities. I look forward to playing a role in these projects that are vital to providing scholarship and faculty support. After I step down, I will continue to be a member of the Board that is directing the Senior Learning Community project.

In the near future, the College Council will form a Presidential Search Committee of Council members, faculty, staff, students and alumni to oversee a search for the new President. It is likely that interviews of candidates will take place in the fall, and a new President will be named perhaps as early as spring 2019. I will, of course, be on hand to help with a smooth transition.

Once again, my thanks to the Purchase family of faculty, staff, students, alumni and supporters.
I look forward to continuing to work with you over the next year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Thomas J. Schwarz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'S' at the end.

Thomas J. Schwarz
President