

**SPECIAL MEETING of the  
THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
October 16, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Trustees Mattera (chair), Chisholm, Contreras, DeSimone, Katzman, Lutts, Murphy and Wilkens. Also present Trustees Emeritus Scott and Segal. Also participating at the meeting were President Keenan and Board Secretary Montague and Assistant Secretary Hennessey.

**ABSENT:** Zahlaway-Belsito, Butts and Russell

The provisions of General Laws, Chapter 30A, having been complied with and a quorum of the Board being present, the Board of Trustees of Salem State University held a special meeting in Marsh Hall, Room 210, Central Campus, Loring Avenue, Salem, Massachusetts, on October 16, 2019 with Paul Mattera, Chair, presiding.

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**I. CALL TO ORDER** - Chair Mattera called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm. Chair Mattera announced that this was a special meeting of the Board of Trustees. As it is the chair's prerogative to take agenda items out of order, Chair Matter announced that Professor Young and some students have joined the meeting today and would like to address the board so he would like to accommodate them and the next matter of business would be the Open Forum.

*Call to Order*

**II. OPEN FORUM** – Chair Mattera opened the open forum portion of the meeting and invited Professor Young and students, Caitlin Connor and Andrew Cardin, to make remarks. Professor Young thanked the Board of Trustees for their time and shared that the genesis for today's discussion was based on a conversation that he had with some students on a recent camping trip. The students shared their love of Salem State but also their serious concerns about the university. Caitlyn offered her belief that students are leaving campus because they feel they have no voice and that no one is listening to their concerns. She went on to express her feeling of being just part of an overall business operation. She added that while the new food provider is a huge improvement over the last vendor, students are still frustrated over the cutting of programs. Andrew spoke next and shared that he had interviewed a few students to bring their perspective to the meeting as well. One such student was named Kyle. Kyle works two jobs and attends classes. As such, Kyle suggested that Salem State provide more mental health support due to the pressures and stress experienced by today's students. Meghan, a sophomore and double major, also works two jobs and cannot properly prioritize school. She feels that Salem State only values students for their fees. Students cited along the path to higher education there are many roadblocks but especially at Salem State. Among the pluses mentioned is the diversity exhibited here at Salem State, but the one common dominator is that all of the students share the struggle to achieve a higher education. Andrew said it's hard to hear negative things about the university and he is aware that retention is down.

*Open Forum*

Trustee Lutts questioned what had changed since the student's arrival. Andrew cited that the community had changed. The needs of the students and their current struggles create the need for more mental health counseling. Trustee Lutts questioned whether the students are using the Student Government Association (SGA) to have a louder voice on campus. Andrew responded that the SGA was overtaxed. Trustee Wilkens suggested that there are several SGA models available and perhaps implementing a new model would help alleviate SGA burnout.

Professor Young thanked the students for speaking. Young then added that he has been at Salem State since 1995. Since he started, he has experienced an increase in stress in the classroom. Often, students do not come to class due to stressors experienced outside of the classroom. Faculty also feel a bit like they are a number. Young offered that his department is mostly white males. The department does have a Latinx scholar professor that Salem State is letting leave.

Trustee Katzman questioned Professor Young for any suggestions. Professor Young offered his suggestion of the administration providing more strategy on how the university downsizes. Katzman questioned whether the faculty would work with the board on strategizing and Young responded positively. Trustee Katzman offered that if there were opportunities, then the board would like to consider them.

Professor Young offered that the faculty often hear about declining high school graduation rates, but no one hears about declining state appropriations. Salem State is servicing a relatively needy population. There should be more advocacy and Op-eds. Trustee Katzman responded that President Keenan is advocating on an almost weekly basis at the State House and has brought legislators to tour Salem State facilities to see the needs here on campus. Additionally, every one of the board members serves as an advocate for the university.

Chair Mattera thanked Professor Young and the students for taking the time to join the Board of Trustees. He indicated that the board is very aware of the financial hardships. The Trustees are now aware of the sub-optimal communication and mental health services. Programming and class size are not new issues and they come before the board in different ways. The Board of Trustees learn in different ways and this assists the board in prioritizing and moving forward.

*Institutional  
Strategy  
Presentation*

**III. Institutional Strategy Presentation** – Chair Mattera then moved on to the next matter on the agenda which was the Institutional Strategy Presentation. President Keenan began the discussion by recalling the recent Joint Board of Trustees – Foundation meeting. He spoke about how the campaign discussion got a bit off course when it turned to retention. President Keenan wanted to return to the topic of retention and how the university could best position itself for the next demographic decline and the challenges faced by Salem State students. President Keenan walked through the presentation (attached) and discussed an aspirational vision statement and who the university’s students are today. He then moved on to the institutional challenges of declining student enrollment/retention and housing occupancy, complex students with significant financial needs, stained climate and morale (both students and employees). President Keenan shared the challenges and opportunities that faced the university including student retention initiatives, investing in high impact practices for student engagement and completion, academic excellence, BOLD, and the 2020 campaign. A discussion ensued about the anticipated outcomes and project BOLD and the meeting was called due to lack of time (discussion continued at regular Board meeting, October 16, 2019).

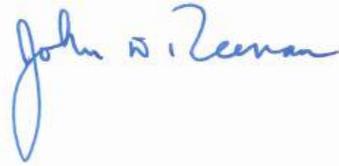
\* \* \*

**IX. ADJOURNMENT** - There being no further business to come before the Board and on a motion made by Trustee Katzman and seconded by Trustee Murphy, at 5:00 pm, by a roll call vote it was unanimously,

*Adjournment*

**VOTED: to adjourn**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John W. Keenan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

John Keenan  
President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynne Montague". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Lynne Montague  
Secretary to the Board of Trustees

# Salem State Institutional Strategy

John D. Keenan, JD, president  
October 16, 2019

# Presentation Agenda

- Salem State Vision
- Today's SSU Students
- Challenges and Opportunities
- Efforts Launched
- Next Steps
- Anticipated Outcomes

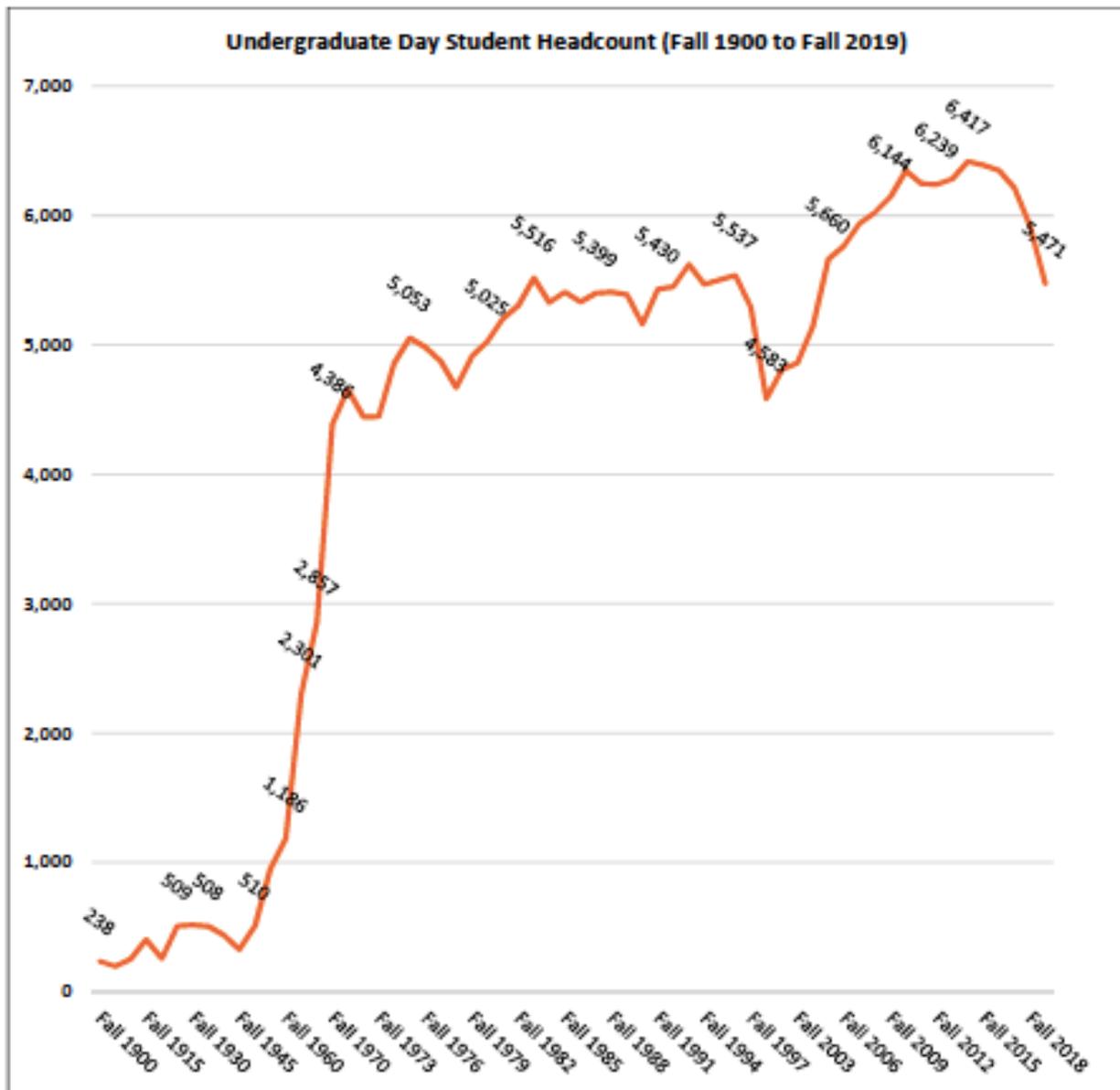
**Salem State University will be a premier teaching university that engages students in an inspiring transformational educational experience.**

- We put students first in all that we do and are committed to their success.
- We are a community of learners where all faculty, staff and students have the opportunity to grow as individuals.
- We are innovators, offering a unique brand of public higher education that inspires students to reach higher and achieve more.
- We remain true to our heritage as a liberal arts university while we prepare students for today's workforce.
- We serve the communities of the North Shore while we create an ever more globally aware and culturally diverse campus environment.

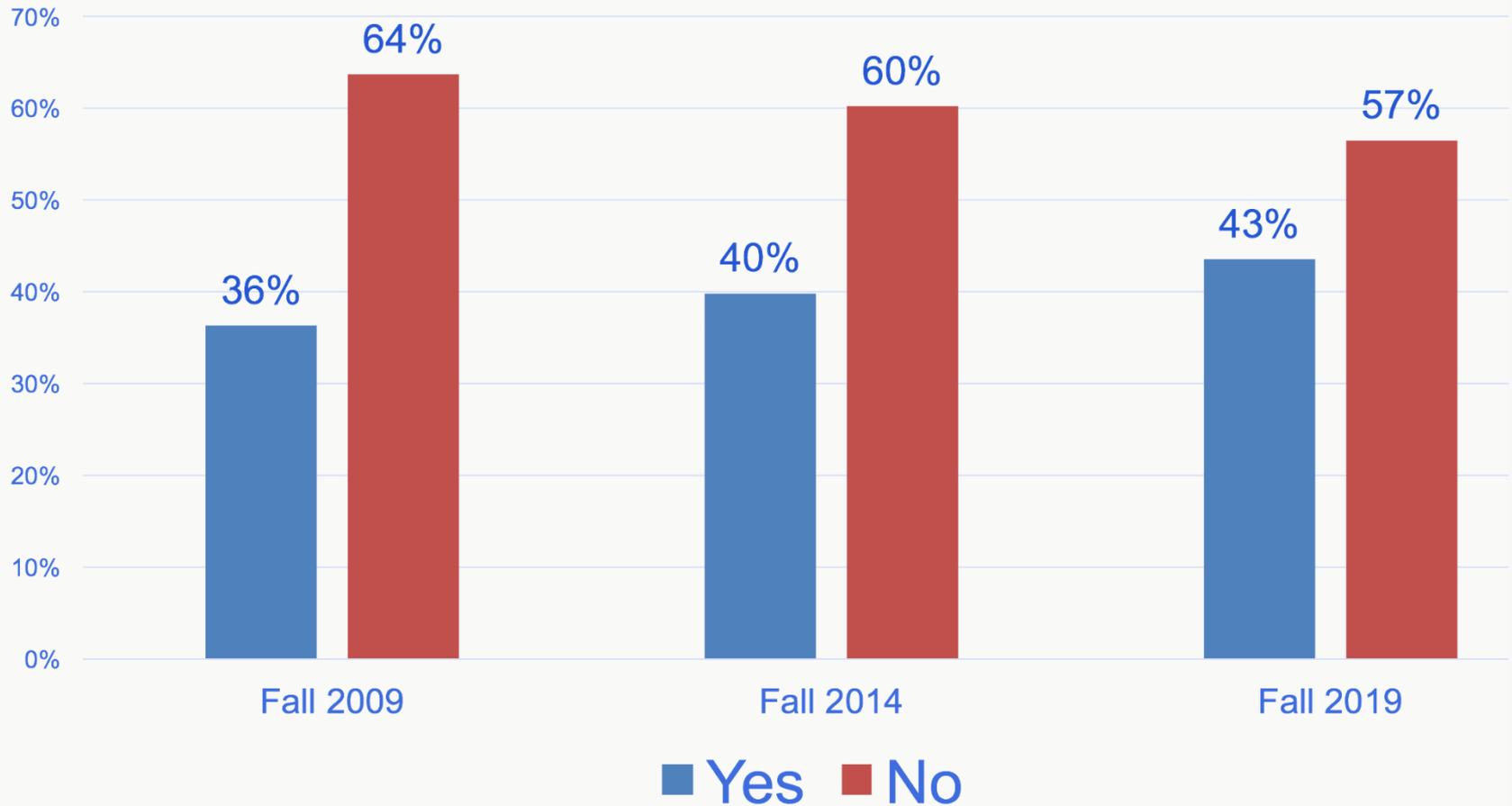
# Salem State Students Are:

Stats on students:

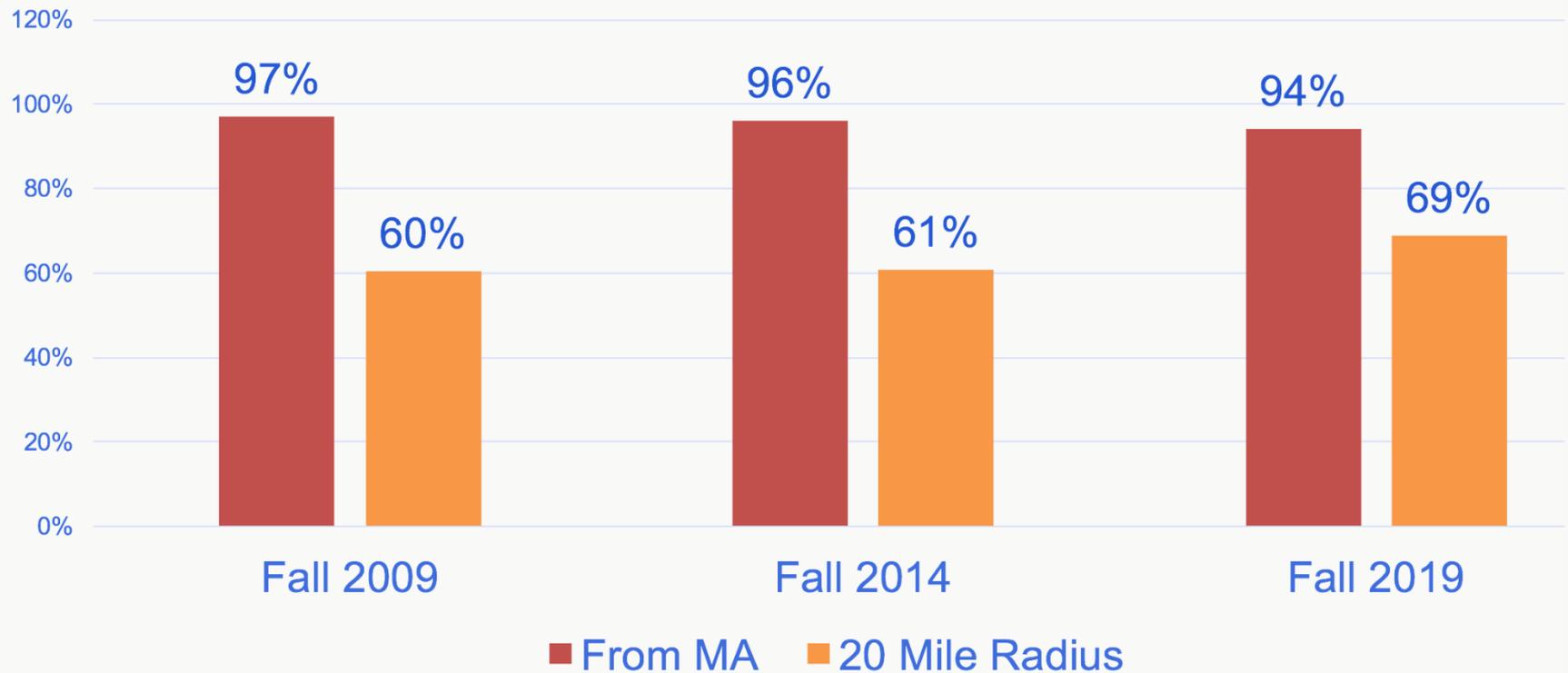
- Total undergraduate enrollment (chart)
- Pell and EFC (chart)
- Regional (chart)
- Race/Ethnicity
- Special populations we serve including Veterans, First-Generation
- Multi-complexities: mental health, family responsibilities, identity etc.



# Pell Eligible – Financial Need



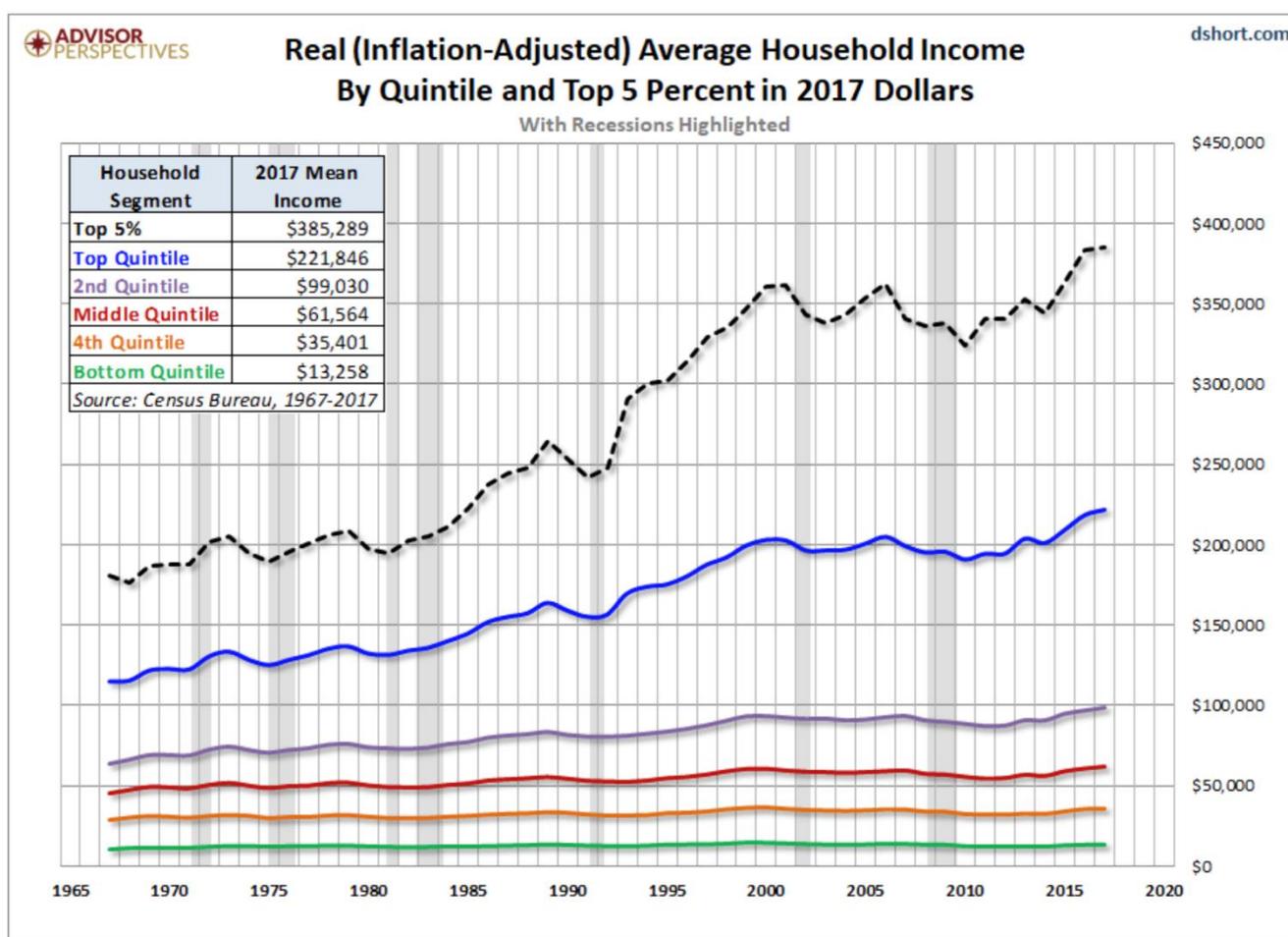
# Proximity



# Industry Challenges

- Declining college age students and increasing Latinx college age student
- Economy is strong (counter cyclical to all higher education, includes community colleges)
- Changing and growing workforce demands (e.g. healthcare)
- Insufficient state support for operations and facilities
- Fierce competition among other colleges and universities
- Cost of living is out paced by family income

# Family income chart



# Institutional Challenges

- Declining student enrollment/retention and housing occupancy
- Multi-complex students with significant financial need (first generation, told not worthy, etc. )
- Work to Rule
- Shifting to a “Student-Ready College”
- Strained climate and morale (both students and employees)
- Facilities with
  - Significant deferred maintenance
  - Outdated facilities for STEM

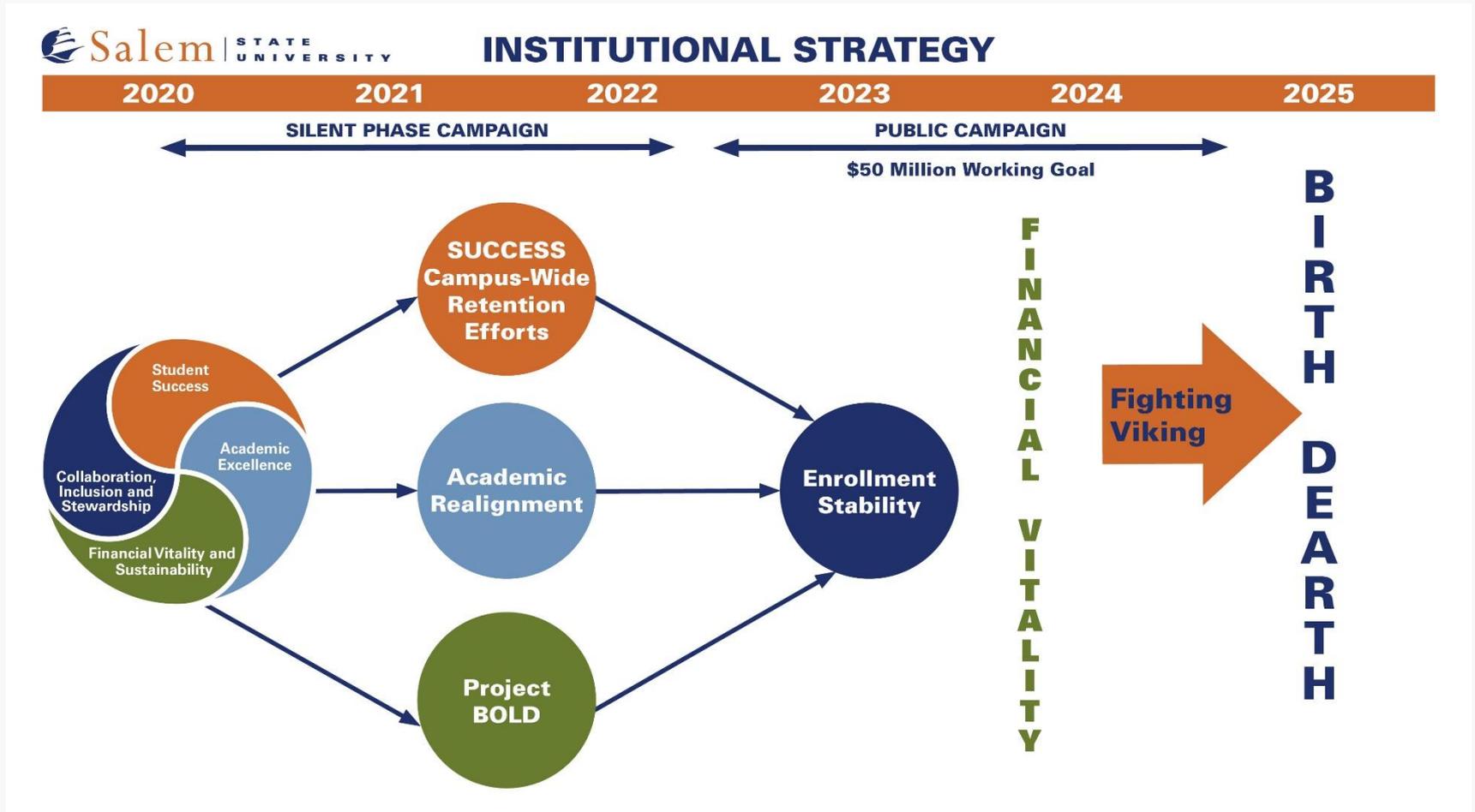
# Opportunities

- Stabilize and increase enrollment
- Workforce alignment
- Financial aid
- Fundraising
- SSU BOLD
- Responsive academic program development
- Sharing compelling experiences

# University Efforts Launched to Date

- Financial Vitality
  - Positively managed net income and increased cash (FY19 Results)
    - Improved financial ratios
  - SSU employee alignment
    - Hiring freeze
    - VSIP and \$6.7 million future cost savings
  - Pre-campaign planning
- Student Success and Academic Excellence
  - Program review
  - New dining service program
  - Navigate student platform tool
  - EAB partnership and financial aid leveraging
  - NSCC seamless partnership
  - Invested in physical development of campus
  - Campus climate study (increased internal communications, ERGs, NCBI, Etc.)
  - Cabot Wealth Management Lab

# Institutional Strategy Graphic



# The Plan: A Holistic Approach

- Student Retention Initiatives
- Invest in High Impact Practices (HIPS) for Student Engagement and Completion
  - Campus-wide coaching model alignment; Living and Learning Communities; Exploratory major (versus undeclared)
- Academic Excellence
  - Streamline offerings
  - Better aligning programs with workforce need/student demand
  - Clarifying pathways toward degree completion
- SSU BOLD
  - \$11-\$15 million from sale
  - \$4.2 million annually as a result of increase enrollment after full implementation
  - Unlock resources that can be reinvested
- 2020 Campaign
  - \$50 million working goal
  - Campaign early focus will be on the following priorities:
    - Retention programs
    - Financial aid
    - SSU BOLD
    - Annual fund: academic and unrestricted support
    - Building pride and reputation

# SSU BOLD

- Project Components:

- Exit South Campus

- Harrington Building, Bates residence halls (avoid future investment), and other facilities not in use
    - Leverage proceeds of property sale for this project

- Unify North Campus and Strengthen Sciences/STEM

- Fully renovate Horace Mann for CJ, Health Care Studies, Nursing, and OT
    - Build small addition on Meier Hall for 7 new idealized wet labs
    - Create 4 flexibly designed digital teaching and learning spaces in Berry Library
    - Create new parking using funds on-hand (no garage)

# SSU BOLD

- Financial Matters:
  - Project Budget: \$66.0M including Bates pay-off; assumes \$30.0M from Commonwealth; \$13M from sale of South Campus; \$10.0M from SSU Cash and Debt; \$12.5M Gifts and Grants; and \$500K on hand at MSCBA
  - **Generates \$4.8 million in net income annually (or \$7.6 million excluding depreciation, which is non-cash expense) due primarily to increased enrollment capacity and attractiveness**
  - Debt service on \$10.0M is \$800,000 annually
  - Eliminates \$70.7M in deferred maintenance

# Anticipated Outcomes

## Student Success, Academic Excellence, SSU BOLD, and 2020 Campaign will:

- Increased retention and enrollment
- Effective and impactful student services
- Increased student satisfaction
- Smaller and stronger SSU
- Science teaching labs
- Enhanced reputation for SSU
- Increased job placement and workforce alignment
- Efficient use of resources
- Unified campus
- \$50 million dollars, or more

# Institutional Strategy Graphic

