November 29, 2012

Dear members of the Dartmouth community,

I am delighted to let you know that Philip J. Hanlon ‘77, PhD, will be the next president of Dartmouth. Phil is a world-class academic, an accomplished administrative leader, and a passionate scholar-teacher. He now serves as provost and executive vice president for academic affairs at the University of Michigan, where he is the Donald J. Lewis Professor of Mathematics.

My fellow trustees and I are pleased to say that the presidential search process yielded a terrific leader. The community's input was instrumental in identifying the many strengths we sought in our 18th president. Phil embodies those strengths, and we have been inspired by the exceptional qualities he will bring to the presidency. We could not be happier to welcome him home to Dartmouth.

Phil's impressive experience as provost of the University of Michigan—with 95 departments in the top 10 nationally and $1.27 billion in annual research spending, second among all universities—means that Dartmouth will be in very capable hands. Phil truly understands how great scholarship and research are essential to an undergraduate learning experience that produces leaders who can shape and change a world that is increasingly complex, diverse, and interdisciplinary. This insight, combined with his personal integrity, his strength of purpose, and his deep love for Dartmouth, made him the unanimous choice of the Board as we build upon the strong groundwork laid by the strategic planning process, chart an ambitious academic future, and look toward our 250th anniversary in 2019.

On January 11, soon after the start of winter term, we will hold a welcome celebration on campus for Phil and his wife, Gail Gentes. Phil will take office on July 1. Carol L. Folt, to whom we are indebted for her tremendous leadership during this transitional year, will continue to serve as interim president until June 30, when she will resume her role as provost.

Dartmouth is truly at the heart of Phil's remarkable life story. Having grown up in Gouverneur, a small mining community in upstate New York, he credits his experiences at Dartmouth with shaping him both professionally and personally. As he explains, he gained confidence in his mathematical abilities through the guidance and patience of a number of professors at Dartmouth, and formed lifelong friendships and bonds. In fact, Phil's wife is the sister of one of his classmates, Bill Gentes '77.

A University of Michigan faculty member since 1986, Phil has held administrative leadership positions for more than a decade. As provost, he is the chief academic officer and chief
budgetary officer of the university and is responsible for sustaining its academic excellence in teaching, research, and creative endeavors. Previously, as vice provost, Phil was instrumental in putting in place measures to ensure that higher education remains affordable regardless of income. He also led campus-wide initiatives on multidisciplinary learning and team teaching at the undergraduate level and established new policies and processes designed to make more effective use of space and facilities.

Phil is also a passionate teacher with an unshakeable conviction in the power of a broad liberal arts education. He believes it is our role to produce citizen leaders with the creativity, entrepreneurial spirit, cultural awareness, and flexibility to make a difference in today's world. He continues to teach first-year calculus at Michigan, where he has been honored with an Arthur F. Thurnau Professorship, the university's highest recognition of faculty whose commitment to undergraduate teaching has had a demonstrable impact on the intellectual development and lives of their students. Phil plans to continue to teach at Dartmouth, based on his strong belief that great universities are distinguished by their focus on preparing the next generation of leaders for a lifetime of impact and learning.

As a mathematician, Phil focuses on probability and combinatorics, the study of finite structures and their significance as they relate to bioinformatics, computer science, and other fields. He is an expert on topics such as computational genetics and cryptology and built a world-class combinatorics group at Michigan that consistently ranks among the top five in the nation. He holds a doctorate from the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) and was an instructor of applied mathematics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a Bantrell Fellow in Mathematics at Caltech before joining the University of Michigan as a tenured associate professor.

Phil has earned numerous academic honors and awards, including a Sloan Fellowship, a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Henry Russel Award, and the National Science Foundation Presidential Young Investigator Award. He is the author or co-author of more than 60 peer-reviewed research articles and studies that have been published in leading mathematics journals, and has held visiting positions at prestigious academic institutions in Europe and the United States.

Phil is also a member of the Board of Directors of the University of Michigan Hospitals and Health Centers and a director of the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan. He serves on the editorial boards of the Journal of Algebraic Combinatorics and the Electronic Journal of Combinatorics and is a member and past chairman of the mathematics sub-panel of the National Security Agency Advisory Board, on which he served for 13 years until 2007.

Gail Gentes is the director of research and faculty support at the Ross School of Business within the University of Michigan. She earned her MBA from Boston University after graduating from Wells College. The couple has three children, all in their 20s. Phil and Gail are active hikers, golfers, skiers, and cyclists, as well as enthusiastic fans of a variety of college sports, so expect to see them rooting regularly for our Big Green teams. They also share a love of the arts, from musical theater to art exhibitions and student performances.
Phil's election resulted from a rigorous and inclusive search process led by a Presidential Search Committee of 16 trustee, faculty, student, alumni, and staff representatives selected for their breadth of expertise and understanding of Dartmouth and the qualities required of its next president. Chair Bill Helman '80, Vice Chair Diana Taylor '77, and their fellow committee members spent more than six months soliciting input from the Dartmouth community and identifying, reviewing, and interviewing a deep and talented pool of candidates.

All of us on the Board are grateful to the search committee for helping us to identify a president with a passion for Dartmouth and the strength of vision that will help ensure that Dartmouth builds on the outstanding legacy of Phil's predecessors and excels in an age of unprecedented challenge and opportunity for higher education.

Please visit the President-Elect website (http://www.dartmouth.edu/~presidentelect) to learn more about Dartmouth's next president. I also hope you will be able to join us on January 11 to welcome Phil and Gail to Hanover. Details will follow as the date approaches.

Best regards,

Steve Mandel '78
Chair, Dartmouth Board of Trustees