

KANIKA JELKS-TOMALIN, L.P.D.

April 21, 2022

President Rhea Law
University of South Florida

Regional Chancellor, USFSP Campus Search Committee

Robin Reyes
SP&A Executive Search

Dear Pres. Law, Members of the Search Committee & Ms. Reyes:

I am deeply humbled to have been nominated to serve as Regional Chancellor of the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and enthusiastically offer this summary of my experience, skills, talents, and passion for your consideration. It would be a privilege of the highest honor to lead the USFSP campus through its next chapter. Like the campus, the university of which it is a part, and the community it calls home, I am an innovative leader whose trajectory has been defined by impressive outcomes made possible through partnership, collaborative relationships, and passion-fueled progress that generates opportunity for others. As a committed servant leader who has built a lauded career by giving back to this community that has given so much to me, I recognize the distinction and care with which the call for the university's next Regional Chancellor was specially crafted. It rises to the mandates of this moment. I am ready to answer.

USF, *US News and World Report's* fastest rising university in America, is an extraordinary institution, distinguished by its preeminence and revered for its possibilities. USFSP is a stellar campus that seamlessly blends the rigor of a top-tier research university with the high-touch, familiar offerings and support of a small liberal arts college. St. Pete is an exciting cradle of culture, commerce, and civic engagement that is moving with purpose along the margin of excellence from great to iconic city. And, I am the leader who can strategically combine it all: the promise of our community, with the excellence of our campus, in inspiring, inclusive ways that more than deliver the vision of our university.

In addition to satisfying the role's requirements, I bring exceptional experience and demonstrated success in the field of public service and executive leadership. My professional career has been marked

by extensive service that covers every corner of our community and has produced collaborations and partnerships that contribute to its character, priorities and development in signature ways.

I currently serve as Eckerd College's Chief Operating Officer and Vice President of Strategy. In this role I am responsible for long-term and strategic planning, as well as the daily operations of the college. I work closely with the President to strategically advance the college toward its goals, optimizing intersections between faculty, students and staff to support the academic and environmental outcomes required for our students' and faculty's success. Much of my work focuses on connecting our campus to our community - positioning the city as a classroom and our campus as a lab - in effort to empower and prepare our students to be effective change agents in a changing world. As the founding director of the recently-created Eckerd College St. Pete Center for Civic Engagement and Social Impact, I generate partnerships and opportunities for our students and faculty to contribute transformative solutions for complex problems that define quality of life in our community. In partnership with faculty leadership, I work to support Eckerd's pedagogical approach to the practical high-touch, high-impact teaching, research and service required for preparation of the whole student.

My other areas of responsibility include oversight of Eckerd's recently adopted strategic plan, IT, resilience and sustainability efforts, institutional effectiveness and Board of Trustees engagement. I am co-chairing a board task force to reimagine the college's business model, in support of a strategic goal to improve financial resilience; while serving as the executive lead on campus master and resilience plans that address space utilization and environmental resilience. Leadership of capital asset management, construction, and deferred maintenance round out my portfolio of responsibilities.

Prior to joining Eckerd College, I served as St. Petersburg's Deputy Mayor and City Administrator. As the fifth generation of my family to call St. Petersburg home, and the city's first African-American female Deputy Mayor, I was deeply honored and motivated by the historic opportunity to help chart the course of one of my hometown's most prolific chapters. In this role I functioned as the City's Chief Operations and Administrative Officer, guiding the provision of resources and services for 270,000 residents via the servant leadership of more than 3,000 team members. This included oversight of the City's \$700 million budget and all business and service functions. The Kriseman Administration focused on equity and opportunity as foundational pillars of our vision and I was privileged to create many innovative policies and programs that continue to impact the lives of our residents and quality of our community. I am very proud of the ways and magnitude to which this impact touches USFSP.

As a community leader at the highest levels of influence, I have remained intentional in my commitment to elevate USF's opportunity-yielding agenda and invest capital of every kind: financial, intellectual, human and social, to propel it toward its goals. Just this week, I delivered an address to the USFSP King Suites Scholars, a living-learning community of students of color, at their year-end celebration. While the motivational speech was intended to reinforce and inspire the excellence and commitment required for the students' successful matriculation through USF's rigorous curriculum, I am happy to share that their enthusiastic engagement and appreciation left me equally inspired.

Some of the many additional ways my leadership has supported USFSP include securing funding to support important campus initiatives such as the recently-created Community Engagement Director; fellowships for underrepresented doctoral students in the College of Marine Science; commissioning USF's experts in the City of St. Pete's 2021 study on Systemic Racism; service as an Innovation Scholars mentor and on the USFSP Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Taskforce, participation on the USFSP Celebrates 50! Host Committee, creation and support of the St. Pete Innovation District, advocacy for its legislative priorities at every level of government, and much more.

I've been a champion of the goals and priorities of USFSP long before the opportunity to formally lead the campus emerged. A brick that bears my name, in recognition of meritorious contributions and support of the university, evidences this truth and leaves me honored every time I walk by it. A library collection and endowed scholarship named for my late husband Terry Tomalin, a double Bull who studied Florida and taught about its great outdoors in the campus' classrooms, reinforces my family's perpetual connection. Childhood memories of sitting alongside my father in the library, as he squeezed in studying after work and before class, until he attained his dream and degree, stirs my gratitude. USFSP is a personal passion that symbolizes and reflects my love of opportunity, commitment to higher education, connection to community and belief in the power of transformation.

My love of USF and special regard for USFSP manifests in ownership of its outcomes and stewardship of its journey. More than requisite resident's pride or distant admiration for this anchor institution that shines as one of the most important assets in our Sunshine City fuels my aspiration to be the campus' next leader.

A clear understanding of USF's stunning future and the role USFSP will play in the actualization of its goals may be the most exciting element of this opportunity. Signature academic programs that are

delivered by committed, distinguished faculty have been buoyed by an infusion of trajectory-shifting resources and community-wide support. Recent landmark legislation that will build a world-class Center of Excellence in Oceanographic and Environmental Science will not only amplify the outcomes of the College of Marine Science, USF, and St. Pete, but stands to exponentially advance discovery and critical solutions to some of our world's most pressing problems. Kate Tiedemann and Ellen Cotton's legacy-building gift of \$14 million to the Tiedemann School of Business and Finance breathes life into the Muma College of Business' vision to become a hub of excellence in fintech. And, faculty and students from various colleges throughout the campus are earning prestigious recognition and resources that fund research and program development. These game-changing opportunities require proven leadership that can guide such monumental projects to successful completion, while continuing to lead and manage through the many other worthy demands that come with daily operations at a complex organization. My experience overseeing multiple generational projects, while running the City, ideally prepares me for this responsibility.

As the Regional Chancellor of USFSP I will prioritize internal and external partnerships in service of the university's strategic and operational goals for the St. Pete campus. As Champion-in-Chief, I will work closely with administrators, faculty, staff, students, families, alumni, community and government leaders, and others to identify opportunities to leverage and advance the performance of students, faculty and staff, as prescribed by the goals and vision of One USF.

In addition to carrying out President Law's vision, reinforcing the positive attributes of campus culture with a focus on establishing trust and stability, and leading the day-to-day operations of the campus, specific opportunities for continued excellence at USFSP that I would prioritize as its Regional Chancellor include:

One USF: Proactive and positive positioning of the benefits of One USF, the university's pursuit and commitment to the 12 metrics of preeminent status and USFSP's role in the perpetuation of this defining distinction that serves to further distinguish the institution, enhance opportunities for its graduates, and continue the stunning trajectory experienced over the past decade.

Access, Equity and Opportunity: Promotion and cultivation of an inclusive culture of belonging that helps every student see themselves and their success in the educational experience of USF on the campus of USFSP. This will include focused partnership to recruit and retain diverse students, faculty and staff at every level within the institution.

Innovative partnerships and strategies: Management of the challenges and unintended consequences that come with elevated admissions standards and the university's celebrated continued ascent, to ensure academic selectivity does not cannibalize, or be perceived to compromise, access for non-traditional and underrepresented students. This differentiator is a signature element of USFSP's history and culture and, subsequently, an important point of pride for our community. Intentional focus to recruit and retain the area's highest performing students, while helping students in Pinellas and surrounding counties clear the raised bar of competitive performance to attain the readiness required for success at a highly-selective institution will yield desired results that can be universally embraced.

Partnerships that Perform: Pursuit of collaborations with the region's corporate and community-based entities to build partnerships that enhance the academic portfolio, improve student outcomes, and generate diverse post-graduation career and community placements. It is important to retain the talent we cultivate by formalizing the pipeline of symbiotic opportunities that benefit our students and economy.

Regional resources and relationships: Identify and secure the additional resources required for innovation and continued growth through philanthropy, entrepreneurial ideation and relationships that yield shared ownership and investment in USF's goals and priorities.

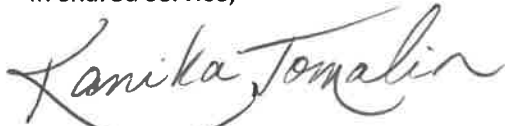
Education at the Urban Edge: Partnered coordination and leadership of emerging opportunities to blend USFSP's footprint into its surrounding community with seamless sophistication and confidence that celebrates the simultaneous advancement of the university and the community it calls home. From the water's edge to the ever-evolving urban edge... downtown, to the redevelopment of Tropicana Field...the Innovation District to the ever-expanding Edge District, USFSP must be positioned as a ubiquitous beacon of progress.

We celebrate a special time in our city, for our university, on our campus. It is a time unlike any other history has marked to date and is defined by the possibilities that are borne of such transformation. This time, for our university, on our campus, in our city demands enthusiastic, expert leadership that understands the complexities of higher education and views each challenge as an opportunity waiting to be born. The performance required of USFSP's next Chancellor is a unique mix of expertise, skill, talent and referent leadership that manifests as unwavering commitment to academic excellence, proven community impact, deep relationships that yield collaborative, symbiotic outcomes and bold,

aspirational vision that is backed by precise operations experience that produces measured, equitable outcomes that matter.

I am the leader for this time. I am and will always be a champion of USF, with special love for USFSP. I would be honored to serve under President Law's visionary leadership and am excited about the opportunity to step into the role of Champion-In-Chief. The work to help author the campus' story of success in the university's next chapter is critical to USF's and our entire community's continued climb. I look forward to speaking with you more about this exciting opportunity.

In shared service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kanika Tomalin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping underline that extends under the rest of the name.

Kanika Tomalin