THE INAUGURATION OF

Dr. Todd Pfannestiel

10th President

of Utica University

Friday, September 29, 2023
OUR MISSION AND VALUES

Mission

We empower learners to achieve their career and life goals through personally enriching experiences and outstanding educational pathways.

Values

Utica University’s mission rests upon a foundation of values that guide our decisions and actions:

- Individual attention
- Intellectual growth, creativity, and scholarship in the pursuit of knowledge
- Innovative and relevant approaches to teaching and learning
- Diversity of perspective, background, and experience in an equitable, respectful, and inclusive environment
- Freedom of expression and civil discourse
- Community engagement and service
- Ethical behavior and integrity
- Continuous pursuit of excellence

About Our Institution

Founded in service to the families of the Mohawk Valley and its World War II veterans, Utica University has never veered from its original purpose. Since the first faculty member stood before the first student in the first class on Oneida Square, generations of Utica University faculty, staff, and administrators have distinguished themselves by the depth of their commitment to engaging students where they find them; reaching their imaginations, intellects, and hearts; and challenging their sense of what’s possible.

Today’s Utica University is a leader among educational institutions: a progressive, creative, and adaptive enterprise fully committed to the exploration of pedagogical and structural innovation. The University graduates fundamentally well-educated men and women, able to surely guide the course of their own lives and shape the contributions they will make in the world in which they live.
Dr. Todd Pfannestiel has 25 years of experience in higher education, as a faculty member, school dean, and senior administrator. Through the course of his tenure as Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Utica, he has led and collaborated closely with faculty on a variety of initiatives to raise the academic profile of the University and further its mission. Chief among these achievements was the recently implemented redesign of the University’s general education curriculum, as well as the launch of a number of innovative academic programs designed to address emerging workforce and societal needs.

Drawing on his own experience as a first-generation college student at the University of Arkansas, Dr. Pfannestiel possesses a deep and abiding appreciation for the transformative power of higher education. Under his leadership, the University has met a rapidly changing undergraduate market with its first A.S. and B.B.A. degree programs, providing a greater variety of career pathways for students of all backgrounds.

Prior to joining Utica University, Dr. Pfannestiel served on the faculty of Clarion University of Pennsylvania for 20 years, earning the rank of Professor of History. During his time at Clarion, he also served as Dean of the College of Arts, Education, and Sciences, Interim Provost, and Acting President.

Dr. Pfannestiel earned his Ph.D. in History from the College of William and Mary, where he was a Woodrow Wilson Foundation Fellow in the Humanities; completed post-graduate studies at Duke University as a National Science Foundation Graduate Fellow in Economics, and completed his B.A. in History and Economics at the University of Arkansas as a Fulbright College Scholar summa cum laude.

A native of Sapulpa, Oklahoma, he is married to Dr. Aimee Zellers.
The Inaugural Procession

Division I
The Mace Bearer

Division II
Student-Athlete Advisory Committee Leadership
Academic Marshals

Division III
Utica University Alumni Council

Division IV
Representatives of Graduating Classes and Current Classes

Division V
The President’s and Provost’s Cabinets

Division VI
The Faculty and Staff

Division VII
The Presiding Officers and Executive Council of the Faculty Senate, Professional Staff
Advisory Council, and Student Government Association; and Leadership of the AAUP-Utica

Division VIII
Elected Officials

Division IX
Delegates from Other Colleges and Universities
Entering in Order of Founding Years

Division X
The Board of Trustees, Emeriti Trustees, and Emeritus Members
of the Utica College Foundation Board

Division XI
Platform Party

Division XII
The President
THE INSTALLATION CEREMONY

Jeremy Thurston ’00, B.S.
Chairperson, Utica University Board of Trustees

Thomas A. Rossi, D.B.A.
Mace Bearer

Processional

Narrator:
Gary Leising, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor of English

National Anthem

Rijah Judah ’24

Invocation

The Reverend Father Joseph Salerno

Opening Remarks

Chairperson Thurston

Greetings from Constituencies

Stephanie Nesbitt, J.D., M.B.A.
Interim Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Kathi Jabe ’25
President, Student Government Association

Christopher Specht, G’23, M.B.A.
President, Professional Staff Advisory Council

Adam Pack, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor of Biology

Elizabeth Bernabe ’92, Ed.D.
President, Utica University Alumni Council

Robert Esche
President, Mohawk Valley Garden, and Honorary Alumnus

Anthony J. Picente, Jr. ’94, B.S.
Oneida County Executive
Presidential Installation
Chairperson Thurston

Presentation of the Symbols of Office
Chairperson Thurston

Presentation of the Institutional Charter
Robert Brvenik ’77, B.S.
Immediate Past Chairperson of the Board of Trustees

Presentation of the Presidential Medallion
Laura Casamento, Ed.D.
Ninth President of Utica University

Presentation of the Mace
Professor Rossi

Presentation of the Tenth President
Ronald Nowaczyk, Ph.D.
President, Frostburg State University and Commissioner, Middle States Commission on Higher Education

Inaugural Address
President Todd Pfannestiel
Tenth President of Utica University

Alma Mater

Benediction
Aimee Zellers, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Philosophy and Interim Associate Provost, Carlow University

Concluding Remarks
Chairman Thurston

Recessional
The audience will remain seated until the academic procession has concluded.
Additional Participants in the Installation Ceremony

**Flag Bearers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United States Flag</th>
<th>Utica University Flag</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taylor Kraft ’25</td>
<td>Nicole Fitzgerald ’24</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Co-President, Student-Athlete Advisory Committee</em></td>
<td><em>Co-President, Student-Athlete Advisory Committee</em></td>
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**Academic Marshals**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>School of Business and Justice Studies</th>
<th>School of Arts and Sciences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anais Jakissoon ’24</td>
<td>Jacob Carissimo ’24</td>
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<tr>
<td>School of Health Professions and Education</td>
<td>Utica University Alumni</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jack Serrano ’24</td>
<td>Shayla Pominville ’24</td>
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**Faculty Marshals**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lawrence Aaronson, Ph.D.</th>
<th>Luke Perry, Ph.D.</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Distinguished Professor of Biology</em></td>
<td><em>Distinguished Professor of Political Science</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>David Chanatry, M.S.</td>
<td>Terri Provost, Ph.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Distinguished Professor of Journalism</em></td>
<td><em>Professor of Biology</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Patrice Hallock, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Mary Siniscarco, M.S.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Professor of Education</em></td>
<td><em>Associate Professor of Health Studies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhaodan Huang, Ph.D.</td>
<td>Patricia Swann, M.S.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Distinguished Professor of Finance</em></td>
<td><em>Distinguished Professor of Public Relations and Management</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharon Kanfoush, Ph.D.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Distinguished Professor of Geology</em></td>
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**Student Marshals**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sarah Durost ’25</th>
<th>Tohbi Raton ’26</th>
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<tr>
<td>Leah Griffin ’25</td>
<td>Julianna Ryczek ’25</td>
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<td>Michelle Holland ’25</td>
<td>Julyanna Sauschuck ’24</td>
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<td>Alyssa Perez ’24</td>
<td>Erin Taylor ’25</td>
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**Dramaturg**

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<tr>
<th>Rachel Wolfe, Ph.D.</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Associate Professor of Theater</em></td>
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</table>
**ACADEMIC TRADITIONS AND SYMBOLS**

**Academic Regalia**

The academic procession is a pageant bright with the dress and ceremony inherited from the medieval universities of the 11th and 12th centuries. The caps, gowns, and hoods were worn to keep students and professors warm and distinguish clerical and academic groups from laity. Academic regalia is worn today by those who play an academic role at celebrations of scholarly significance.

The traditional costumes were used in few universities in America prior to the 1880s. With the growth in the late 19th century of institutions of higher learning, American universities in 1895 agreed on a definite system and set up a suitable code of academic dress for colleges and universities in the United States. In 1932 the American Council on Education presented a revised code, which, for the most part, governs the style of academic dress today.

**The Gown**

The flowing gown comes from the 12th century. It has become symbolic of the democracy of scholarship, for it completely covers any dress rank or social standing underneath. It generally is black for all degrees, with pointed sleeves for the bachelor’s degree; closed sleeves for the master’s degree, with a slit for the arm; and round, open sleeves for the doctoral degree. Holders of doctoral degrees from some universities may wear gowns of bright colors agreed to by the granting university. For the bachelor’s or master’s degree, the gown has no trimmings. For the doctoral degree, it is faced down the front with velvet and has three bars of velvet across the sleeves, in the color distinctive of the faculty or discipline to which the degree pertains. Some of the colors most frequently seen and the fields of learning they represent are: blue—philosophy; purple—law; green—medicine; yellow—science; light blue—education; and red— theology.

**The Cap**

When Roman law freed the slave, he won the privilege of wearing a cap. So the academic cap is a sign of freedom of scholarship and the responsibility and dignity with which scholarship endows the wearer. For the doctoral outfit, the tassel may be of gold bullion.

**The Hood**

The hood is an inverted shield with one or more chevrons of a secondary color on the ground of the primary color of the college. The color of the facing of the academic hood denotes the discipline in which the degree is earned.
The Kente Cloth

The kente cloth is a celebratory garment worn by some students at academic ceremonies. The cloth is made from richly patterned fabric principally produced in West Africa. It once was worn by African royalty to signify power, prestige, and high style. Woven of cotton, silk, and sometimes, gold thread, each color and some combinations woven into the kente cloth symbolize a concept. For instance, red and yellow combinations suggest life and its power over sickness; green and white represent bountiful harvest; and blue represents love and tenderness. Many people of African descent wear the kente cloth as a symbol of cultural pride and heritage.

The Mace of Utica University

The mace is a symbol of the unique mission of Utica University, which is to provide a higher education that is accessible to all, liberal and humanizing, practical and purposeful.

The basalt foot is a symbol of our commonality and shared predicament as children of the Earth, mother of all living things.

Strength, endurance, and beauty are characteristics of the black walnut core. These characteristics are symbolic of the peoples who have come to share this culture. The inlays of woods from around the world are symbols of the interdependence of modern civilizations and the enrichment of the human life that results when we learn from one another.

Peaceful common endeavor and its bountiful harvest are symbolized by the shaft of the mace, which has the form of a sheaf of wheat.

Unity, totality, and perfection have been expressed by the sphere since ancient times. It was the shape of the cosmos, a symbol for the totality of vision that the seeker of wisdom pursues.

Four metals are found in the mace. In ascending order, they are iron, bronze, silver, and gold. They were for ancient poets and thinkers images of the capacities and of the perfectibility of man.

Beads of silver shot border the University motto. They represent the multiplicity of disciplines that are pursued in the modern university.

Love and transcending beauty are symbolized by the rose. It appears as a gratuitous asymmetry on the sphere. Made of gold, the most precious of the metals, symbolic of the loftiest aspirations of man, the rose symbolizes the ultimate goals of human activity, wisdom, goodness and love.

The mace of the University is a gift of the Class of 1989, an idea proposed by Richard Frank and Kay Hobaica from the Office of Student Activities. It was designed and made by James F. Caron, professor of philosophy, with the collaboration of professors Randall Huta, Edward Jones, Stephen Peek, Ralph Fimmano, and David Moore. The mace was adopted in 1990, just as Utica College was beginning its transition to an independent institution, and its origin as a College of Syracuse University can be seen both on the mace and on the stand.
The Presidential Medallion

The medallion, with which the president is invested during the installation ceremony, is an emblem of office worn on official occasions of the University. It is hung on a chain, which is placed around the President’s neck. The medallion, which bears the institution’s original name Utica College, is a gift to the University from Trustee Lauren E. Bull ’74.

The face of the medallion bears the corporate seal, which incorporates a number of symbols. The focal point of the seal is a shield, used in heraldry, that represents Utica’s “family ties” to Syracuse University as well as the University community as a family. Its “U” shape stands for Utica and Utica University. The book represents learning and knowledge. The laurel symbolizes honor and achievement.

The peak on the bottom of the seal’s shield is an abstract representation of the Frank E. Gannett Memorial Library, the center of learning on campus. The arch, formed by white space, represents the archway at Plymouth Church through which thousands of students passed to take classes on the original Oneida Square campus. The five bars, depicted as the five stripes of white space stemming from the peak, represent the five areas in which the University reaches out to students to educate and develop them: liberal arts, sciences, professional studies, extracurricular activities, and continuing education.

The dates on the seal mark four important years in the University’s history: its first year as a college (1946), its origins as a Syracuse University extension site (1933), the year the University was chartered by the Board of Regents as an independent institution (1995), and the year the Regents awarded Utica university status (2022).
THE UNIVERSITY ALMA MATER

“Our Utica”  
*Composed by George Wald Lyrics by Norman Nathan*

Our Utica proclaimed at birth that she was here to stay;  
Her graduates in Mohawk’s vale now everywhere hold sway.  
While loyal students spread our fame both far and near we sing,  
Our power lies in daily search for truth to which we cling.  
Though college days are stirring days, for learning’s fruit we sigh;  
Commencement’s thrill shines bright until the seniors say goodbye.  
But wisdom crowned they venture forth still young in heart they’ll sing,  
Our power lies in daily search for truth to which we cling.
Delegates from Institutions of Higher Education

1787
University of Pittsburgh
Susan O’Rourke ’99

1797
Hartwick College
Aaron Tolbert

1812
Hamilton College
Richard Tantillo

1829
Rochester Institute of Technology
Ryne Raffaelle

1846
University at Buffalo
Walter Kunz ’60

1853
Mount Aloysius College
Jacob Yale

1855
Elmira College
Travis Hill

1856
St. Lawrence University
Barbara Knauf P’23, P’25

1868
State University of New York at Cortland
AnnaMaria Omilanowicz ’10

1870
Syracuse University
Michael Frasciello

1878
Duquesne University
Aimee Zellers

1883
Houghton University
Matthew Webb

1887
Nebraska Wesleyan University
Frederik Ohles

1898
Frostburg State University
Ronald Nowaczyk

1908
State University of New York at Morrisville
Suzan Harkness

1946
Mohawk Valley Community College
Jennifer DeWeerth

1947
Texas Southern University
Brenda Dede

1961
Onondaga Community College
Denise Valdes ’02

1963
Fulton-Montgomery Community College
Catherine Geniti ’13

1966
Herkimer College
Nicholas Laino

1966
State University of New York Polytechnic Institute
Andrew Russell

1971
Excelsior University
Scott Dolan
# Delegates from the Utica University Alumni Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Michele Ford Adams ’01</th>
<th>Shannon Cool ’19, G’22</th>
<th>Joel Kaigler ’20</th>
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<tr>
<td>Keron Alleyne ’12</td>
<td>MaKenna Cooley ’18</td>
<td>Susan Keehle ’07</td>
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<td>Maria Araujo ’99</td>
<td>Christopher Cooper ’12</td>
<td>Jacqueline Klotzbach ’10</td>
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<td>James Asher ’70</td>
<td>Eunice Cruz-Cales ’03</td>
<td>Walter Kunz ’60</td>
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<td>Tracy Balduzzi ’14</td>
<td>Ricardo Cumberbatch ’83</td>
<td>David Lamb ’76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Balduzzi ’17</td>
<td>Hollie David ’23</td>
<td>Martha Sutton Lamb ’77</td>
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<td>Christopher Bandura ’99</td>
<td>Laura DeStefanis ’98</td>
<td>Luke Lambert ’86</td>
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<td>Kenneth Barneys ’87</td>
<td>Kyo Dolan ’98</td>
<td>Cory Lavalette ’99</td>
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<td>Allen Berger ’57</td>
<td>Hamza Ditta ’19</td>
<td>James Leach ’67</td>
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<td>Elizabeth Bernabe ’92</td>
<td>Anne Dunn ’65</td>
<td>Melissa Lomanto ’06</td>
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<td>Michael Betrus ’74</td>
<td>Violet Eagan ’73</td>
<td>Dominick Mattia ’64</td>
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<td>James Boehlert ’58</td>
<td>Jaime Evanoff ’11</td>
<td>Frank Maurizio ’77</td>
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<td>David Bonacci ’72</td>
<td>Anthony Fabbio ’56</td>
<td>Isabella Mesturini ’20</td>
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<td>Matthew Breault ’22</td>
<td>Christine Farley ’92</td>
<td>Janice Miles ’74</td>
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<td>John Burkholder ’75</td>
<td>Jonathan Fiore ’16</td>
<td>Lourdes Miranda ’94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anne Burton ’63</td>
<td>Sara Furlong ’06</td>
<td>Frank Mondi ’62</td>
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<td>Joseph Calabrese ’73</td>
<td>Anthony Garramone ’61</td>
<td>Mariann Munson ’85</td>
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<td>Alfonso Cales ’04</td>
<td>Judith Gorman ’64</td>
<td>Robert Munson ’85</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Caloia ’12</td>
<td>Anna Green ’73</td>
<td>Ronald O’Brien ’82</td>
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<td>Thomas Caputo ’22</td>
<td>Jennifer Herzog ’97</td>
<td>Paula O’Brien ’82</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dana Christofferson ’14</td>
<td>Mark Hobaica ’80</td>
<td>David Palmer ’96</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ann Ciancia ’18, G’21</td>
<td>Amber Jenkins ’21</td>
<td>Jean Palmer ’02</td>
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<td>Timothy Coakley ’59</td>
<td>Robert Julian ’71</td>
<td>Michael Pandolfo ’78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Randolph Collins ’83</td>
<td>Eric Kahl ’10</td>
<td>Frank Perretta ’66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oliver Perry '74</td>
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<td>Karen Pezzulo '98</td>
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<td>Richard Pratt '90, P’25</td>
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<td>Doris Rice '68</td>
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<td>Eric Rightmier '15</td>
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<td>Brooke Riscica '23</td>
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<td>Jolene Riscica '92</td>
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<td>Anthony Rorick '93</td>
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<td>Leah Scalise '21</td>
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<td>Judith Sheehan '83</td>
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<td>Louis Shkane '87</td>
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<td>Richard Short '88</td>
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<td>Wendy Short '81</td>
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<td>Valerie Smith '09</td>
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<td>Courtney Souvenir '95</td>
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<td>Sukeena Stephens '95</td>
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<td>David Suuronen '69</td>
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<td>Ann Tabrizi '94</td>
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<td>Ericka Tate-Souvenir '95</td>
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<td>Shawntay Thompson '16</td>
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<td>Tracy Tolles-Rueckert '90</td>
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<td>Jenna Urbanke '13</td>
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<td>Steven Urbanke '17</td>
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<td>Kenneth Visalli '08</td>
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<td>Alfonzon Whitehurst '18</td>
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<td>Courtney Witherspoon '08</td>
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<td>Stephanie Zimmer '96</td>
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History of Leadership

Ralph F. Strebel  
*Dean of Utica College*  
1947-1959

Dr. James W. Harrison  
*Dean of Utica College*  
1959-1962

Dr. J. Kenneth Donahue  
*President of Utica College*  
1963-1970

Ambrose J. deFlumere  
*President of Utica College*  
1970-1976

Dr. Harold J. Rankin  
*Acting President of Utica College*  
1976-1977

Dr. Thomas D. Sheldon  
*President of Utica College*  
1977-1982

Dr. Lansing G. Baker  
*President of Utica College*  
1982-1987

Dr. Michael Simpson  
*President of Utica College*  
1988–1997

Dr. Thomas G. Brown  
*Interim President of Utica College*  
January – July 1998

Dr. Todd S. Hutton  
*President of Utica College*  
1998-2016

Dr. Laura M. Casamento  
*President of Utica University*  
2016-2023
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Dr. Gerard T. Capraro ’66, Vice Chairperson
Krista M. DiBerardino ’82, Vice Chairperson
Heidi M. Hoeller ’91, Vice Chairperson
Kenneth D. Bell ’75, Secretary
Robert A. Brvenik ’77, Immediate Past Chairperson

Lauren E. Bull ’74  Christian W. Meyer, III ’79
Mikhail D. Bushinski ’17, G’18  Wester E. Miga ’76
John P. Casellini ’81  Mark A. Pilipczuk ’88
Christopher J. Crolius ’80  Eugene F. Quadraro Jr. ’71
Ronald A. Cuccaro ’66  Solade E. Rowe ’94
Harry J. Cynkus ’71  Tricia Rutkowski
Frederick C. Degen ’70  Treesa J. Salter ’88
James F. DuRoss Jr.  John H. Snyder ’95
John A. Forte ’73  Tanner C. Stewart ’10
The Honorable Samuel D. Hester  Jeffery S. Whalley ’04
Daniel B. Jones ’97
Presidential Inauguration Committee

Amy Lindner, Chairperson, Vice President for Advancement

Kelly Adams, Vice President for President Affairs and Chief Marketing and Communications Officer

Laura Cook, Director of Operations for the Divisions of Academic and Student Affairs

Shad Crowe, Vice President for Facilities and Emergency Management

Ann Damiano, Senior Associate Provost

Richard Kennedy, Custodial Supervisor

Meredith Lopata, Project Manager and Senior Administrative Assistant for Advancement

Lauryn Moore, Director of Campus Engagement

Michael Roberts, Vice President for Information Technology

Ashlea Schad, Associate Vice President for Advancement

Christopher Specht, Coordinator of Classroom and Event Support

Stacy Thomas, Operations Manager, Sodexo Dining Services

Anthony Villanti, Special Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Board of Trustees

Kenneth White, Associate Director of Campus Safety