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Saliba Steps Down as Dean of Engineering

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Tony Saliba will step down as dean of the University of Dayton's School of Engineering on June 30, after completing his term. He will return to teaching in the chemical and materials engineering department where he's served on the faculty for 28 years. The University of Dayton will conduct a national search for a new dean.

"It has been a great privilege for me to serve as dean and build on the legacy of many legendary deans for my alma mater. With the hard work of the faculty and staff and the support of our president and provost, we were able to build the national and international reputation of our school and serve our students with a world-class transformative engineering education," said Saliba, the University's Charles R. Wilke Distinguished Professor of Chemical and Materials Engineering who has served as dean since 2009. "I take this opportunity to thank the faculty and staff, the leadership of the school, the advisory council, and countless alumni and friends who provided tremendous support and allowed us to reach great heights," he said.

During Saliba's tenure, the School of Engineering enrolled the four largest, most academically prepared and diverse first-year classes in history. The school graduated more than 75 percent of its students, more than twice the national average.

Undergraduate enrollment increased 27 percent, but the school saw the most growth at the graduate level, with a 59 percent increase in enrollment in master's degree programs and a 60 percent jump at the doctoral level, resulting in an 88 percent increase in the number of credit hours delivered, according to the University of Dayton's institutional studies office. The University of Dayton, which leads all Catholic universities in sponsored engineering research, enrolls 2,600 engineering students.

As the school celebrated its 100th anniversary, engineering faculty renewed their focus on innovation and conducted greater research in the surge of fields of aerospace, materials, sensors and alternative energy. At the same time, the graduate engineering programs achieved their highest national ranking, according to U.S. News & World Report. The University tied Notre Dame as first among Catholic universities and ranked 52nd nationally.

Many of those students are attracted to the School of Engineering by a curriculum that stresses hands-on entrepreneurial learning and research opportunities alongside the world's top researchers.

Curricular innovations during Saliba's tenure include Ohio's first renewable and clean energy master's degree program, which has attracted three Fulbright scholars; a multidisciplinary master's degree program in bioengineering; concentrations in energy systems, robotics, and automation and control; and a global manufacturing systems engineering technology program that prepares engineers to be successful in international settings.

The School of Engineering's Innovation Center has been held up as a model for graduating engineers equipped with an entrepreneurial mindset. This month, the Kern Entrepreneurship Education Network (KEEN) will present the School of Engineering with its Best in Class Award. The new University of Dayton China Institute in Suzhou Industrial Park is modeled after the school's Innovation Center, where students have worked on more than 900 projects for industry and entrepreneurs.

Last month, GE Aviation opened its new, $53 million EPISCenter (Electrical Power Integrated Systems Center) on campus. Graduate engineering students will work on design teams and conduct leading-edge research on aircraft electrical power systems.

In addition, GE named the University of Dayton one of its 45 executive schools and Boeing named it one of its preferred universities. Nearly 100 new companies visited campus last year to recruit engineering students, resulting in a 97 percent placement rate.

In the research arena, the School of Engineering recently established a Center of Excellence in Thin-Film Research and Surface Engineering to make advances in solar cells and batteries, electronics, optics, communication and sensor devices. Last summer, the school established a Center of Excellence in Computer Vision and is constructing a Center of Excellence in

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Distributed Sensing with a unique outdoor radar facility and anechoic chamber. The school also boasts two other Ohio Centers of Excellence - the von Ohain Fuels and Combustion Center and Strategic Energy and Environmental Informatics Center.

During Saliba’s tenure, the School of Engineering hired six endowed chairs to provide technical leadership in lidar and optical communication, bio-nano materials, multifunctional materials, wide-area surveillance, and sensor exploitation and fusion.

The school champions the Catholic, Marianist philosophy that students work best in collaboration with and in service of others. Through the ETHOS (Engineers in Technical Humanitarian Opportunities of Service Learning) program, engineering students travel the world to solve problems and improve lives. They've brought drinking water to African villages and developed solar cookers in Bolivia and solar sterilizing medical equipment in Nicaragua.

Saliba is a three-time University of Dayton graduate with bachelor's and master's degrees in chemical engineering and a Ph.D. in materials engineering. At the end of this academic year, he will have completed 20 years of service in leadership roles, five as dean and 15 as chair of the chemical and materials engineering department.

A fellow of the Society for the Advancement of Materials and Process Engineering, Saliba has won a number of awards, including the Michael Bobal Award of Excellence in Teaching from the University of Dayton student chapter of the American Institute of Chemical Engineers; the Alumni Award of Excellence in Teaching from the University of Dayton; and the Award of Outstanding Professional Achievement from the Affiliate Societies Council of Engineering and Science Foundation of Dayton.

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