



23 August 2023

Members of the NIU Team,

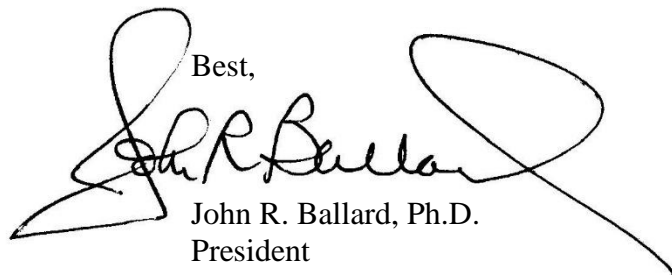
I was pleased to meet with NIU's Chief Diversity Officer, Lawrence Pace two weeks ago to discuss what NIU has done and how we can further Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) as integral parts of our institutional values. Lawrence shared that NIU continues to make progress on important DEIA initiatives to include work that we will collectively undertake by developing: 1) our understanding of and fluency about equity in higher education; 2) DEIA values as an institutional priority essential to our mission to develop future IC leaders; 3) strategic communications focused on those values for both internal and external audiences; 4) policies that enrich DEIA on our campus; and, 5) accountability and metrics guiding progress.

My current priorities focus on: Student Success, Talented and Diverse Team, and Service to the Nation. Number two clearly aligns with Goal 2 outlined in the 2023 National Intelligence Strategy (NIS). That goal in the 2023 NIS mentions efforts to recruit, develop, and retain a Talented and Diverse Workforce in the IC that operates as a United Community.

I fully support the DEIA steering committee's efforts and the initiative everyone is demonstrating to ensure NIU models DEIA efforts in all our activities. I expect everyone to foster an environment where individuals can learn from each other and ensure mutual respect. In particular I ask that our students can discuss issues in a manner that promotes positive change and advances inclusion. I encourage every member of the NIU team to talk with me and each other to ensure we continually learn and improve as a university.

My challenge to each of you is to set the example for others; please do not rely on campus-wide initiatives or formal activities alone to reinforce these values. As we grow as a university, we should also do so as individuals, as student organizations, and as departments across our campus, learning from one another and together, thus becoming a stronger institution for the American people we serve.

Best regards,

Best,

John R. Ballard, Ph.D.
President