

Carleton College President Steven Poskanzer to step down next summer

NORTHFIELD, MINN.—Carleton College President Steven Poskanzer will step down in July 2021, ending an 11-year presidential tenure with the college.

“This is a choice and a change of direction that I have been weighing for almost two years,” Poskanzer told the Carleton community in a written announcement. “I adore this college, and serving as its president has been far and away the best and the most fulfilling experience of my professional career.”

In notifying Carleton’s Board of Trustees today of his decision, Poskanzer said he plans to take a sabbatical and return to Carleton in 2022 as a faculty member in the Department of Political Science.

“Anyone who knows Steve knows how deeply he cares about Carleton,” Board Chair Wally Weitz ’70 said. “He works tirelessly to keep Carleton strong and true to its mission. He will hand over to his successor a college even stronger in its academic quality than its already high level when he arrived in 2010.”

Poskanzer became Carleton’s eleventh president in August 2010. Under his leadership, the College has built a more socioeconomically, racially and geographically diverse student body; maintained the highest standards for faculty hiring and tenure decisions; implemented a comprehensive strategic plan to enhance the college; raised more than \$400 million for the Every Carl for Carleton campaign; placed new emphasis on preparing students for careers and life after Carleton; completed essential new and renovated facilities; and deepened collaborations with neighboring St. Olaf College.

“Helping to shepherd Carleton in conjunction with all of you has been an extraordinary privilege. Only in my boldest dreams did I envision having the opportunity to be president of an institution this distinguished,” Poskanzer wrote in his announcement. “How blessed have I been that Carleton’s Trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends entrusted me with this responsibility, embraced me so warmly, and been such excellent partners in helping us advance. That faith was—and is—humbling. My gratitude and loyalty are unbounded.”

A scholar of higher education law who has made a point of teaching students in the classroom at each institution where he has worked, Poskanzer came to Carleton in 2010 after nine years as president of the State University of New York at New Paltz. He previously served at the SUNY system, the University of Chicago, Princeton University and the University of Pennsylvania, and

practiced law briefly in Washington, D.C. Poskanzer received his undergraduate degree from Princeton University and a law degree from Harvard University.

Weitz and Cathy Paglia '74, vice chair of the Board of Trustees, will co-chair the search committee for Carleton's next president. The board has primary responsibility for bringing a new president to Carleton and will engage the entire Carleton community in the process.