December 13, 2018

To the Campus Community,  
  
Heidelberg University is proud to announce the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has awarded a $36.5 million low-interest Rural Development loan to support a variety of campus initiatives directed at improving the student experience. The loan is designed to refinance existing debt to better position Heidelberg for long-term economic expansion and improve student housing, student learning facilities and student recruitment operations. Construction will begin soon on the restoration and renovation of historic France Residence Hall to integrate a living and learning community for approximately 70 female students and faculty. Several classroom spaces will also be improved to support new and existing academic programs.  
   
President Rob Huntington states the USDA award is critical for success, “This loan assists our effort to make Heidelberg more financially stable, address student learning needs and greatly enhance student living and engaging spaces.” He adds, “Nearly $20 million dollars will be invested to drive our Academic Strategic Plan, support a living and learning community and create a unique greeting for the Office of Admission that will set the tone for an exceptional and persuasive visit experience for prospective students and their families. We are tremendously grateful to all elected officials in the city of Tiffin and Seneca County who continue to help us process this USDA loan. The loan helps us to restructure our debt and to renovate living and learning spaces on campus to better position Heidelberg in the very competitive higher education marketplace.”  
   
The addition and upgrades to over 300 residential units is a major element in Heidelberg’s Residential Living Plan Vision. Chris Abrams, Dean of Student Affairs, states, “New student townhouse apartments will offer housing options and lifestyle flexibility for upper-class students. The improvements to France Hall and Miller Hall will provide students with modern amenities to help integrate living and learning opportunities.”  
   
The Student & Community Welcome Center will create a “front door” at the East Market Street entrance to the campus. This 10,000-square-foot, two-story facility will house the Office of Admission and become home for the new Town Gown Bookstore. As part of Heidelberg’s Strategic Action Plan, which focuses on transformation, improvement and growth, the University aspires to not only maintain the current undergraduate population but to grow beyond it. The new bookstore will be open and inviting to the entire Tiffin community. Simultaneously, Heidelberg will move the Owen Academic and Career Support Center to the location of the current bookstore to create a larger and more accessible space to support student success.  
   
Kathy Geier, Heidelberg University’s Board Chair agrees, “As Heidelberg University continues to grow, this loan positions us to provide quality facilities and programs for students and faculty. Refinancing, with a better interest rate on our debt, will result in savings. President Huntington and his team did an outstanding job over the course of the last 18 months to secure this loan and Heidelberg’s future.”

Sincerely,

Rob Huntington

President