Dear Carnegie Mellon University and University of Pittsburgh communities:

Research libraries are undergoing a dramatic transformation. New technologies, expanding digital collections, demand for new services, and changes in the publication industry continue to alter the landscape for academic libraries. Yet, in the face of these changes, the demand for library services has never been greater. Today, librarians are immersed in education, data management, creating hands-on experiences for students, research and professional practice. They are fully engaged in the creation and curation of educational and scholarly resources not only for the campus community, but also the global alumni community of the university and beyond. It has never been more difficult for any single library system to cover the areas of expertise required to meet current and emerging needs. We must begin seeking ways to meet the needs of students and faculty through creative collaboration.

With this in mind, CMU and Pitt are exploring how we can leverage our history of close collaboration and partnership to enhance library services for both campuses. The new leadership at both universities and the end-of-year retirement of Rush G. Miller, Director of the University Library System at Pitt, make this the right time to explore ways to take advantage of the concentration of library expertise and resources across both universities.

We have asked Dean Ronald Larsen, School of Information Sciences at Pitt, and Dean Keith Webster, University Libraries at CMU, to conduct a thorough review of options for collaboration across our institutions in this important area. As libraries touch every aspect of university life, their review will seek input from faculty, staff, students, and other stakeholders from our two universities, the city and the region. The review will also explore ways in which we can create new pathways for collaboration between CMU and Pitt that serve as models for institutions of higher learning to accelerate their national and global impact through information technology. We have asked Deans Webster and Larsen for an interim report to be submitted to us at the end of March 2015, and anticipate delivery of a final report during June 2015. The recommendations of their review will form an integral component of the strategic plans for both universities, currently in preparation. The search process to identify Dr. Miller’s successor at Pitt will be temporarily suspended to allow for this review to be conducted. CMU has also suspended its search for a Director of Collections and Information Access Services in the University Libraries.

We are confident that our libraries, through effective collaboration and leadership, can flourish, and enhance scholarship and research at both universities.

Patrick D. Gallagher
Chancellor
The University of Pittsburgh

Subra Suresh
President
Carnegie Mellon University