

>> Greetings. My name is Dr. Ian Neuhard, and it is my distinct pleasure to submit this video in support of my application to become the fifth president of Polk State College. You know, research on the college presidency tells us that institutional fit is one of the most important components for success as a college president. It is my strong belief that the more you learn about my experience, values, leadership style, and past results, the more you will conclude that I am an excellent fit for the presidency at Polk State College and the communities that it serves. One reason I want to be a college president is that I thrive on challenges. I love to solve complex organizational problems and motivate others towards institutional excellence. A college presidency is also the next logical step in my career. I've been a program director, dean, provost, and campus president all within the Florida College System. I've also worked at the state level in the Division of Florida Colleges on system-wide issues and policy development. At this point in my career, I'm ready to apply all that I have learned as a college president. But more importantly, Polk State College is the organization I want to lead. It is the only college presidency, the only job I am pursuing. When I look at Polk State College, I see opportunities. I believe important opportunities exist for Polk State College to be a driving force for regional economic development, local workforce development, and to help address community issues by convening key stakeholders. I'm sure some of the smartest people in the region are faculty members at the college. This is talent that should be leveraged both inside and outside the classroom. Additionally, as a mid-size institution, Polk State College provides excellent opportunities for student, faculty, and staff interaction, and that is critically important to me. I want opportunities to interact, to engage, and to inspire. Finally, I see opportunities to focus on student retention, completion, and job placement. I have a very successful track record in the areas of student retention and success. At Alfred University, I reduced academic dismissals by 50% in one year. As president of Polk State College, I would focus on accelerating the institution's progress in these important areas. The first adjective that would describe my presidency is caring. My education on managerial philosophies can be expressed in two words: We care. Vincent Tinto's traditional model of student persistence and retention stresses student engagement with the institution, but my belief is that we need to flip that model to stress outreach and institutional engagement with the student. For example, when we care about students, we will use data to monitor grades and attendance so that faculty and advisors can intervene with students who are struggling academically. We will invest in research-based best practices, such as case management, student success coaches, online tutoring, and disability support services. The "we care" philosophy must also extend to professional relationships and our work with colleagues. "We care" means that we always communicate with respect and professionalism. It means that we don't blame other departments or individuals when things don't go as planned. And it means that we invest in professional development so that our faculty will excel as experts in their academic disciplines and our staff will excel in their jobs. An institution of higher education must function as a team, and research shows that the highest-functioning teams respect each other and care deeply about their mission. I can say with confidence that as president of Polk State College, I will relentlessly promote a culture of caring in all of our interactions with students, staff, faculty, and the community. The next adjective that would describe my presidency is collaborative. When you contact my references, they will tell you that I am extremely collaborative in my approach to leadership. At Indian River

State College, I led a college-wide team in the implementation of 20 workforce-oriented baccalaureate degrees. I had to really listen to understand the issues of a very diverse group of stakeholders and then develop win-win solutions so that these degree programs could move forward efficiently and effectively. We were incredibly successful in this approach. Despite being a mid-size college, we had the third largest baccalaureate enrollment in the Florida College System within three years of launching our first bachelor's degree programs. Collaboration is absolutely critical to obtaining buy-in and achieving success in today's complex higher education environment. The third adjective that would describe my presidency is creative. One of my strengths is developing creative solutions to complex organizational problems. Currently, many states, including Florida, are struggling with declining state support for higher education. As your president, I would explore an array of entrepreneurial opportunities to diversify our sources of funding. Is there land that can be leased, conferences that can generate revenue, advertising space to be sold? As president, I would seek to unleash the creativity of the entire organization to address the institution's toughest challenges. I love it that the Polk State College mission statement talks about transforming the lives of students through the power of education. That idea of transforming lives in a positive way exemplifies the reason I chose higher education as a career, and it is at the heart of why I want to lead Polk State College. Because I believe in the mission and the vision of the college, I will work diligently to advance the organization's goals through effective strategic planning and data-driven decision-making. I will be a strong advocate for the college and the community with business partners, economic development agencies, local elected officials, and with the Polk Legislative Delegation in Tallahassee. Internally, I will be a champion for continuous improvement and I will implement an organizational culture that supports achievement and success. I want to note that I have tremendous respect for the current president of Polk State College, Dr. Eileen Holden. It would be a tremendous honor to build upon her work and her legacy at the college. Just as the mission and vision of Polk State College resonate with me, so do the institution's core values. The service orientation and the concept of being a servant leader has been with me my entire life. I chose to attend the U.S. Coast Guard Academy because I wanted to serve my country, and I was drawn to the humanitarian mission of the Coast Guard. Part of creating a culture of caring at Polk State College is orienting all personnel at the college toward service. Integrity is another core value for me as an individual. As the president of Polk State College, I will be diligent about demanding integrity from all employees. Clearly, as a public institution, we must operate with integrity and transparency, and we must be accountable for the tax dollars that support our institution. Knowledge. Knowledge is at the heart of a higher education institution. As president, I would ensure that Polk State College is a learning institution where all actions are intentionally focused on promoting student learning and student success. Additionally, I would ensure that the infrastructure and incentives are in place to reward knowledge acquisition by our faculty and staff. As president, you will have my commitment to advance cultural diversity in hiring and promotion decisions. I will respect diversity of opinion among all stakeholders and diversity of teaching styles among the faculty. You will also have my commitment to work on equity in terms of student outcomes and achievement. Without diversity, critical thinking and the pursuit of knowledge simply cannot flourish. Finally, a college president must exhibit wise and assertive leadership, and that is what I will strive to do as your chief executive officer. However, it is also vitally important to grow

leaders and provide leadership opportunities. This is important for succession planning within the organization and as a developmental competency for students. As president, it will be my priority to grow the next generation of leaders at Polk State College and to ensure that students have many intentional opportunities to hone their leadership skills and abilities through clubs, service learning, internships, and capstone projects. In conclusion, I want to extend my sincere appreciation to the Presidential Search Committee for the opportunity to submit this video as part of the selection process. I know how much time, energy, and effort it takes to carefully review candidates for such an important role. If you believe that my credentials, values, and leadership approach have the potential to meet the needs and goals of Polk State College, then I hope we can talk in more detail during the next phase of the selection process. Thank you once again for considering me as the next president of Polk State College.