



**Robert (Bob) Buhrman** has had a long association with Cornell University, and currently is the John Edson Sweet Memorial Professor of Engineering in the School of Applied and Engineering Physics. He is an elected Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a Fellow of the American Physical Society. Buhrman has been a recipient of the Dorothy and Fred Chau Teaching Award from the College of Engineering, a faculty mentor for two Merrill Presidential Scholars, and has supervised the thesis research of 54 PhD graduates and the post-graduate research of 18 post-doctoral scholars. He served as Director of the School of Applied and Engineering Physics from 1988 to 1998, and again in 2000. Buhrman then served as the founding Director of the Center for Nanoscale Systems in Information Technologies, a National Science Foundation supported multidisciplinary research center at Cornell from 2001-2012, and has benefited from an extended involvement as a faculty member, team leader, and administrator with the Cornell Center for Materials Research and the Cornell Nanoscale Facility. Buhrman recently served as the Senior Vice Provost for Research from August 2007 until July 2017.

Cornell University is a distinctive institution that aspires to play an essential and enduring role in sculpting the future, with its faculty making unique, impactful contributions to advanced education, research and scholarship that are widely recognized and of global importance. It has been my privilege to be a member of Cornell's faculty and your colleague for many years. During my service as Senior Vice Provost for Research and hence as a member of the provost's staff under three provosts and two interim provosts, I obtained a comprehensive understanding of how major decisions are made at the leadership level of the University, of the role that the Board of Trustees fulfills in reviewing and approving such decisions, and of the various methods by which that fundamental oversight responsibility by the Board is executed in practice. I have also come to understand why faculty input can often appear reactive, disparate and after the fact, and hence ineffectual, and to recognize the means by which faculty input on major decisions might be effectively provided, given a strong faculty consensus.

The Cornell Board of Trustees comprises more than 60 members representing multiple stakeholders and constituencies, including the faculty. Thus it is certainly challenging for any one trustee who is not a member of the Board's core leadership to materially influence matters. However, a faculty trustee, in particular, can ask focused questions at critical moments on issues that are outside the direct experience of most Board members and deliver information to other Board members that might better inform decision making,

especially in areas concerning academic and research policies, the efficient support of faculty scholarship and research activities, and the effective pursuit of academic excellence. A faculty trustee can also serve as a direct communication channel between the faculty and the Board, whenever there is a broadly based opinion or concern to convey. Should I be elected as the next Faculty Trustee, I commit to do my very best to systematically obtain faculty input and to convey it to the Board on the important issues that come before it, and, to the extent possible in that role, fully utilize my experience and knowledge of Cornell to help advance the future success of the University.