

Whittington earns promotion after 18 years with university

Jack Dodson
News Editor

Last week Elon University announced that its vice president of business, finance and technology, Gerald Whittington, has been promoted to senior vice president.

Whittington said he found out two weeks ago about the appointment, which is a recognition of his achievements at Elon and his 18 years of service to the institution. He said his duties will not change under the new title.

He first came to Elon on Jan. 1, 1992, to a campus he could tell was on the edge of big achievements, Whittington said.

"It was a much smaller place," he said of the campus. "It was a place I could tell was going to make some major strides nation wide ... (Elon had) a great, meteoric rise in higher education."

Back then he was the vice president for business and finance. In 2002, "technology" was added to his title.

One of the major accomplishments Whittington said he's had during his time at Elon is in the area of construction.

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- Gerald Whittington
SENIOR VICE
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AND TECHNOLOGY”

responsibility," he said.

Whittington also pointed to the increase in the university's endowment over the last 18 years as one of the focuses of his work.

Looking ahead, Whittington said he plans to focus heavily on the new strategic plan, The Elon Commitment. One of the things he hopes to accomplish under the plan is to "double, maybe triple the size of our endowment."

The Elon Commitment also takes on a lot of issues Whittington said he'd have to work on. Besides the proposed construction projects, he said he'll have to focus on reducing the carbon emissions on campus and sustainability initiatives for the university.



Gerald Whittington was promoted to senior vice president on Feb. 9. The promotion was a way to recognize him for 18 years of service to the university.

Elon investigates alternative servers for campus e-mail

Samantha King
News Editor

Elon University information systems and technologies confirmed they are investigating outside sources for e-mail servers to save costs and provide a more efficient service for the campus.

Tony Rose, assistant director of information systems and technologies, said the real issue with keeping the e-mail servers on location is the hardware for the "high-end" servers must be updated frequently and is extremely expensive.

"It is no longer a good return to put our resources into e-mail when other sources can do it better and cheaper," Rose said.

Rose said if the university eventually chose to outsource e-mail, the department would not suffer budget or employee cuts, though research has not been finalized.

"We are looking into several systems such as Microsoft Live and Google Mail," Rose said. "But we have not yet made an official decision."

Appalachian State University switched systems from the ASU e-mail server for its 15,000 students over the summer, but not its faculty and staff, according to David Hayler, the director of infrastructure and system at ASU. ASU began discussing the switch to save costs and space on its servers.

But Hayler explains the move did not free up much of the space.

"Students account for very little e-mail space," Hayler said. "The faculty and staff probably use the most space but getting enough support to move the faculty and staff is the biggest problem."

Currently, ASU offers inclusive support from the technology consultants on campus for all e-mail users, which includes any issue with e-mail or the Internet. Moving would severely limit the support the university could offer regarding e-mail problems, Hayler said.

"If a professor calls to say 'I deleted an e-mail, how do I get it back?' or if Google is down, they can't call us," Hayler said.

Support is also a source of concern

for Elon, Fred Melchor, director of technology and support, said. "The only way Elon would move would be if we could maintain the same support."

While some ASU faculty may struggle with the change, students do not seem affected by the move. Student calls to the help desk have dropped to almost nothing, but faculty and staff members still frequently use the service, Hayler said.

"Students do not seem to mind the move," Hayler said. "They are much more in tune to the technology."

Hayler said the move was not a huge change for the students.

"ASU is still responsible for provisioning the account mechanism to work with Google."

Each student's e-mail address is still "user.appstate.edu" and all e-mail is simply forwarded to the address on the Google server, Hayler said.

The e-mail domain looks and feels like a Google account with a little black and gold flair, Hayler said. Students can choose between the App State design or the regular Google appearance.

Hayler said the switch did not cost anything for the university.

"It was free as part of an education site for three years," he said.

Advertisements will not be bombarding students either, as Google said it will not run ads while the e-mail reader is still a student. But advertisements will resume after graduation, although the time lapse between graduation and resuming advertising has not yet been established.

Elon currently has 6,000 to 7,000 e-mail accounts taking up space on the server, according to Melchor. Whether the amount of storage space on the campus server would be significant is undetermined, Rose said, but the move would be a better return investment.

"Google Mail for example offers seven gigs of storage. We just can't compete with that," Rose said. "When someone else can do it cheaper and better there really is no competition."

Schools see dips in endowments, Elon's continues to grow steadily

ENDOWMENT from Page 1

the Ever Elon campaign, which seeks to raise \$100 million for the university, \$70 million of which will go toward the endowment.

According to the office of the president, the campaign seeks to expand the number of scholarships available to students and to endow support for the faculty, engaged learning programs and maintenance of Elon's campus.

"Right now, we are at \$73.5 million, just under three-fourths of our goal," Chuck Davis, director of the Ever Elon campaign, said.

Although the university has a specific goal, Jim Piatt, vice president for university advancement, explains no university is ever done building its endowment.

"We have a staff in University Advancement that works individually with alumni, friends and parents, visiting folks and talking to them about opportunities that exist to create an endowed fund," Piatt said. "It is definitely an ongoing process."

In most higher education schools, the majority of endowment funds come from alumni. At Elon, 56 percent of alumni are younger than 40, which are not the age group of people who make major contributions, Piatt said.

"They give support annually, but bigger gifts come from dedicated alums from the 1940s and 1950s," Piatt said. "Another very important factor is the parents who believe so strongly in Elon and support us. They are paying tuition, yet they believe so much in Elon and love

what it does for their children."

The university is currently taking steps to boost alumni giving with the IGNITE challenge, where young alums who have graduated within 10 years can have their gifts of \$20 or more matched 5-to-1 by Kerri Brown Anderson, former CEO of Wendy's International.

According to the IGNITE's Web site, it has already raised \$9,702 from 84 alumni and \$48,510 matching dollars from Anderson.

The majority of the endowment money is currently going towards The Elon Commitment, which is the university's newly-approved strategic plan.

The Elon Commitment is a 10-year plan that takes on eight major goals, including numerous construction projects on campus, bringing more diverse faculty to teach and expanding the Phoenix athletics program.

"If our endowment had lost significantly, it would have meant that our ability to meet some goals would have been slowed, and we would have had to raise more money to replace what was lost," Whittington said. "If we don't have any other source of funds, then tuition would have to go up to meet the needed funds."

According to the Elon Commitment Web site, once the Ever Elon campaign is completed, the next step is to launch a new campaign, which will triple the university's endowment by 2020 and build a solid financial base for future generations.