

Unveiling a List of Possible Chancellor Contenders

CHANCELLOR

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announced he was a candidate in December.

A Changing Field

With the move away from home-grown administrators, universities are increasingly turning to executive search firms to help them identify academia's rising stars with a knack for administrative duties. UNC's Chancellor Search Committee consults with Heidrick and Struggles, a Chicago-based executive search firm.

"For a university like Chapel Hill, we would launch a national search and consult with our contact network as to who is ready for this sort of major leadership position," Whitcomb said.

"It would have to be someone who could handle the complexity of this sort of university, including dealing with the legislature. But above all, we try to find someone who will fit the university and speak its language."

The real change in the past four years has been the move away from administrators coming out of a strict academic mode, Whitcomb said.

Trendy picks for top administrative positions include company chief executive officers, foundation heads, lawyers and politicians, she added. Erskine Bowles, President Clinton's former chief of staff and formerly one of the search committee's top candidates, fits into this category.

"We no longer just tap the administrative pipeline because the role of the university president is changing, and search committees are realizing they

need to find candidates who are proven fund-raisers," Whitcomb said. "The definition of appropriate experience is becoming broader. We go out there and recruit people who had no idea they wanted to be a college president."

Public vs. Private

Some degree of political savvy is a must at most public universities, where provosts and chancellors must serve as university lobbyists for funding.

It's this quality, as well as a considerable cut in pay, that divides the group of revolving administrators into two groups, those who work at public universities and those who work at private ones.

"We're just in different markets," Stevens said. "I wish my search committee could match the kind of money private schools offer, but it's just not in the cards. Folks who thrive on the complexity and openness of higher education might get frustrated at a private school, while some private school administrators might not like answering to the legislature."

Public university administrators travel in an almost visible network between major public research universities, sometimes called the public ivies. The natural choice for a public university president is another public university's provost, Whitcomb said, but with confidentiality, some public university presidents might be convinced to switch jobs.

Richard McCormick, reportedly a candidate in both the 1995 and the 1999 UNC chancellor searches, is now president of the University of Washington, a public university arguably just as prestigious as UNC. Ties to UNC, where he

was provost for three years, might persuade him to move back to the East Coast.

University of Iowa President Mary Sue Coleman is also a public university president with UNC ties who was a top choice on the search committee's list, but she has told reporters she is not interested in the job. Her predecessor at the University of Iowa, Hunter Rawlings, now president of Cornell University, was UNC's top choice in the 1995 chancellor search.

Top Secret

When former UNC Chancellor Paul Hardin was being considered for the position, he was interviewed on campus along with the three other finalists, he said.

There was no release of finalists' names before the late Chancellor Michael Hooker was named to the post, however.

Stevens said the search committee planned to have a closed search process even at the finalist level, but would change to a more open plan for interviews if candidates did not object.

Leaders must tread warily on their home campuses while shopping for a new position, lest rumors of imminent departure provoke mistrust and resentment. December's events, when most of the candidates whose names were published in the paper withdrew from the search, proved this true.

"The last thing a candidate wants to do is let the board of trustees know that he or she is interested in other universities; that's the kiss of death," said David Partlett, chief of staff for the chancellor search office at Vanderbilt University.

Nevertheless, word often inadvertently leaks out, especially at public universities.

Hardin was president of Drew University in New Jersey when UNC was searching for a chancellor in 1986, and he said it took three requests from the University's search firm before he

sent a résumé to the search committee.

"I didn't think the search committee would ever take a Duke graduate, and I didn't want to jeopardize my position with my board of trustees, so I didn't apply," Hardin said. "Finally, the chief headhunter called me from Bermuda or somewhere, and I finally sent in my résumé."

Hardin was interviewed confidentially in New York before the four finalists were brought to campus.

UNC chancellor search committees have often traveled to large East Coast cities to interview candidates in a more neutral and less public location than Chapel Hill.

Both Charlotte and Washington, D.C., were the sites of the 1995 search committee's off-campus interviews, said journalism Professor Chuck Stone.

A secretary in South Building would make travel arrangements and hotel reservations under her name rather than the committee's for additional secrecy, Stone said.

The 1999 Chancellor Search Committee has been under a particularly tight veil of secrecy, but with good reason. The search that led to Hooker's hiring took nearly 18 months because a media leak of two finalists' names, Iowa's Rawlings and the University of Georgia's Charles Knapp, resulted in both candidates' withdrawal from the race.

N.C. state law, unlike laws in Florida, Minnesota and Texas, permit almost all of the committee's business to take place behind closed doors. Stevens is the committee's sole media spokesman.

Despite similar precautions, however, UNC-system President Molly Broad's, N.C. State Chancellor Marye Anne Fox's and Hooker's appointments were all reported in the media before an official university announcement was made.

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Elson Floyd



President, Western Michigan University

By CHERI MELFI
Assistant State & National Editor

In the wake of conflicting news coverage regarding UNC chancellor candidate Elson Floyd's intentions to remain president of Western Michigan University, Floyd would neither confirm nor deny his withdrawal from UNC's chancellor search.

In December, The News & Observer and The Chapel Hill Herald ran stories naming Floyd as a potential candidate.

Several days later, the newspapers printed a statement Floyd issued Dec. 10 regarding his contention for the chancellorship.

"I am flattered to know that my name has been mentioned as a potential candidate for the chancellorship at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill," Floyd said in the statement. "It is my alma mater, and I hold a deep affection for that university community."

"However, I have every intention of remaining at Western Michigan University to continue the exciting work that we have begun here," he said. "My 16 months at this great university has been a period of growth and tremendous support from the board of trustees and from the entire university community."

"I intend to honor my commitment to WMU and look forward to being here for a very long time," Floyd said. Despite conflicting stories in the

N&O and Herald, regarding whether or not Floyd was still in contention for chancellorship, when a Daily Tar Heel reporter asked him to comment on his intentions to run, Floyd said, "I need to let my statement stand."

Floyd, a Henderson native, has three UNC degrees and 13 years of administrative experience at the University.

After graduating from UNC with a bachelor of arts degree in political science and speech, a master's degree in adult education and a doctorate of philosophy in higher and adult education, Floyd became the University's assistant dean of student life and judicial programs officer in 1978.

From 1978 until 1987, he served in the following positions at UNC: assistant dean for the General College and the College of Arts and Sciences and the assistant dean for academic services.

He also served the UNC system from 1988 until 1990 as assistant vice president, helping develop policy in student and academic affairs for the 16 UNC campuses.

He worked in several other higher education posts before returning to Chapel Hill in 1995 as executive vice chancellor.

During his tenure, the University often depended on Floyd to serve as a representative, dealing with controversial issues that faced the University.

He implemented the Employee Forum to give faculty and staff a stronger voice on campus.

He also led the effort to clean up the campus after Hurricane Fran in 1996 and helped develop the plan for the Carolina Computing Initiative.

Because of his ties to UNC, Floyd's name almost immediately surfaced in University circles as a strong and obvious contender for the post.

Roy Carroll, senior vice president for academic affairs, who worked closely with Floyd in the University's General Administration, said Floyd had a deep commitment to student welfare.

Carroll said, "He is a bright, hard-working individual who is committed to higher education and the students."

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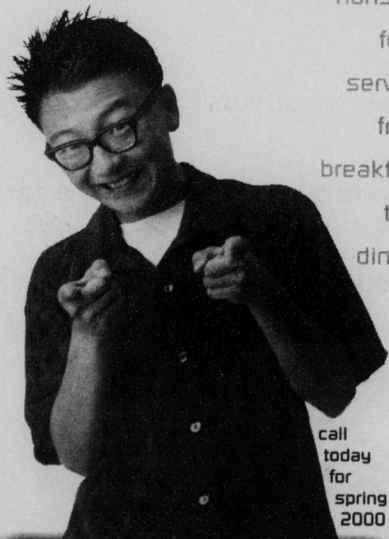
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