

OCC board rejects Auburn Hills president candidate

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Chancellor Richard Thompson will hang out a bigger "Help Wanted" sign after the Oakland Community College board on Monday rejected, 4-3, his choice for president of the Auburn Hills Campus.

"I've been in the employment business for 25 years," said trustee Anne V. Scott of Royal Oak, "and I have this gut feeling Dr. (J. Michael) Meade isn't the person for this job. We have to have a real spark. It's very important there are players in economic development."

Scott, Jeanne Towar of Royal Oak, Janice Simmons of Pontiac and board chair Judith Wiser of West Bloomfield appeared to agree that someone with more experience dealing with business would be suitable to lead Auburn Hills, the campus with the most vocational-technical programs surrounded by Chrysler, General Motors and Comerica.

Meade, vice president and dean of student services at Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, had been interviewed by OCC trustees a week

earlier and repeatedly quizzed on his business and technology background. He said that as acting president of HFCC, he had helped develop a cross-training program with Ford Motor Co.

"This does not reflect on you as an administrator," Wiser told Thompson after the vote. "We haven't had our retreat (scheduled for Sept. 7). Open up notices to larger publications. You have some pretty sophisticated people on this board. If you give us six candidates out of 50 (applicants), we can go through them in a hurry."

Although losing his first major appointment since he was picked as chancellor in March, Thompson seemed to take the loss in stride.

"They want strong depth of experience in working with business and industry," Thompson said after the meeting. He said he would begin a new search with ads in the Wall Street Journal and New York Times in addition to the "usual" professional publications — the Chronicle of Higher Education (trade publication for all colleges), Michigan Chronicle (black weekly in Detroit), Black Issues in Higher

Education, Affirmative Action Register and AAC Careerline (American Association of Community Colleges).

He promised the board a new president "by the end of the year."

"I know the board's interest in business background, but we are not a business; we're an educational institution," Thompson said as he presented Meade's name. "The reason this campus has grown is teamwork. It's my professional opinion Dr. Meade has more than adequate qualifications."

The Auburn Hills Campus hasn't had a permanent president since Dr. Richard Saunders retired in July of 1995. Saunders had started his teaching career as a clarinetist and high school band director but became an administrative generalist as he rose through the ranks of Schoolcraft, Northwestern Michigan and Oakland community colleges.

Continuing as acting president will be Barbara Einhardt, who had been scheduled to return to counseling on the Southfield-Royal Oak Campus.

Thompson's first choice for the post rejected it because the \$94,115 salary was too low.

Thompson said a college committee reviewed a pool of at least 35 applicants and winnowed it down to three finalists.

Voting for Meade were trustees Pamela Davis of Madison Heights, Sandra Ritter and Carol Crew of Waterford.

"I have a lot of faith in the search committee and chancellor," said Crew.

"The search committee was a tribute to Dr. Fulton," said Ritter, referring to former Chancellor Patsy Fulton Calkins, whose termination Ritter had engineered.

Auburn Hills Campus is located near I-75 and M-59 adjacent to the Oakland Technology Park. Besides liberal arts programs, it

offers a long list of career programs from accounting to auto service, computer aided design, criminal justice, electronics, emergency medical technology, welding and management.

The campus houses the Oakland Police Academy, college placement office and a downlink for teleconferences. It contracts with many major industrial firms to train employees.

In other personnel matters, the board of trustees:

- Approved the promotion of Clarence Brantley to vice chancellor for administrative services (from chief business officer and treasurer), effective Aug. 20. Brantley will continue to make \$93,313. Trustees earlier had prodded Thompson to give Brantley the same title as his predecessors.
- Approved a new three-year contract with Local 647 of the International Union of Operating Engineers, AFL-CIO. Its 10 members at OCC include mechanical systems, plant operations, maintenance systems and buildings and grounds supervisory personnel. It's retroactive to July 1.

The contract calls for wage increases of 3 percent a year each year, amounting to an average hike of 3.17 percent with social security and retirement. Pay range on a two-week basis is \$1,423.44 to \$1,909. The local also will get a tuition reimbursement program, one to two additional vacation days and a larger dental benefit.

Emergency aid to needy is offered at Lighthouse

Lighthouse of Oakland County, Inc. and over 50 churches in central Oakland County have united to form an alliance to assist low-income families and seniors with emergency needs. Emergency services will be coordinated to disperse food, housing and medical needs in a joint efficient manner by Jan. 15, 1997.

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Marty Lynch, Christian Service Coordinator at Prince of

Peace Catholic Church in West Bloomfield said, "Referring the need to Lighthouse is not only providing a higher quality of service but more efficient for the church."

Lighthouse is a nonprofit human services agency based in Pontiac. A partner organization of United Way of Oakland County, its service centers in Pontiac and Clarkston provide emergency food and medical services, housing assistance and volunteer assistance to senior and persons with disabilities.

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