

# Nicholson resigns; OCC seeks chancellor

By Pat Murphy  
staff writer

Oakland Community College is launching a nationwide search for a chancellor to replace R. Stephen Nicholson who is resigning to take an administrative job with a system of technological colleges in the Middle East.

During a special meeting of the OCC Board of Trustees Tuesday, Nicholson announced he is resigning to become vice chancellor of the High-

er Colleges of Technology of the United Arab Emirates, an oil-rich confederation on the Arabian Peninsula on the Persian Gulf.

Nicholson's last day will be June 1, after which he will take 30 of the 42 days of unused vacation he has accrued.

Trustee Edward H. Pappas called Nicholson's resignation a "major loss" to OCC because of his "excellent job" as the school's chief executive.

But OCC's loss is the Arabian

school's gain, said Pappas and other board members.

The special meeting was scheduled to raise the chancellor's salary to include the 6 percent increase already granted to other administrators. Trustees approved that increase — bringing the chancellor's annual salary \$114,327, retroactive to last Nov. 1.

TRUSTEES SAID they regret losing Nicholson. "He has done a world-class job," said board president Sandy L. Ritter.

But they took immediate steps to begin finding a replacement to avoid what Ritter described as a possible "loss of leadership."

"Finding a new chancellor is a very important step," she said. "So is finding a temporary replacement," she said.

By unanimous vote, the board appointed Richard T. Thompson, vice chancellor for academic services, as "interim chancellor."

The board acted quickly to give the interim chancellor as much time as possible as understood to Nicholson and thus assure a smooth transition.



R. Stephen Nicholson

Nicholson recommended Thompson, saying he was interested in the job and had agreed not seek the job on a permanent basis.

Trustees voted to enlist the services of the Association of Community College (ACCT) trustees to help find a permanent replacement.

Part of their enthusiasm for ACCT

is attributable to its helping to get Nicholson as chancellor five years ago. Presumably the association can help find equally qualified candidates to consider as the new chancellor.

NICHOLSON, 64, was named OCC's chief executive officer — then called "president" — in November, 1985. He replaced Anthony D. Jarson, who was interim replacement for Robert F. Roelofs, whose contract was not renewed the previous spring.

Trustee Douglas H. Wakefield said they would consider Jarson as an interim chancellor this time because of administrative qualities he demonstrated in 1985.

But trustees decided against offering it to Jarson since they had not discussed the matter with him. They also wanted him to be free to seek the job on a permanent basis — an option they ruled out for the interim chancellor.

Nicholson is OCC's fourth executive officer. He became the school's first chancellor when the job title was changed from president to chancellor in his first year.

He has a master's degree in cultural anthropology from Syracuse University and a doctorate degree in sociology from Michigan State University.

He was an educator in Japan in the late 1940s and early 1950s and has held positions with community colleges in Reno, Chicago and Lansing. He was president of Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon prior to coming to OCC.

He and his wife Carol live in West Bloomfield Township.

NICHOLSON WENT to the Middle East last November to get a first-hand look at Palestinian-Israeli problems.

That trip deepened his appreciation for that part of the world, Nicholson told trustees Tuesday.

It also led to his being recruited by his new boss, Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarek al Nahyan, he said.

In his new position, Nicholson said he will be part of a growing community college system that puts heavy emphasis on technology. "Entrance requirements for technological school are higher than they are for the university," he said.

## Headlee refutes political threats

By Pat Murphy  
staff writer

Tax crusader Richard Headlee has apologized for a political threat against Oakland County commissioners who disagree about the need for a vote of the people before going ahead with three projects valued at nearly \$600 million.

"I am most apologetic," Headlee said in a letter dated Tuesday. "I have neither pledged to, nor intend (sic), to work to defeat any county commissioner based on the difference of opinion regarding voter approval bonds."

The letter was addressed to commissioner Roy Rewold, R-Rochester, chairman of the Oakland County Board of Commissioners.

The letter also asks Rewold to, "Please share with your fellow commissioners my feeling of support for them and the outstanding job that the leaders of this county have done in running the best county in the state."

Headlee has a running dispute with commissioners, demanding that they seek a vote of the people before selling bonds to finance Oakland's proposed \$470 million solid waste program, the proposed \$60 million courthouse addition and the \$10 million computer center already under construction.

But his letter contradicts a threat sent last week saying Taxpayers United would recruit candidates to run against commissioners who did not agree with Headlee's position.

That letter was mailed Friday by William D. McMaster, head of a Birmingham public relations firm. He is vice president of Taxpayers United and Headlee is chairman.

McMaster's letter was sent on "Headlee Tax Out Initiative" stationery. It demanded that commis-

sioners go on record on bonding for the projects.

It further stipulated failing to respond would be considered support for selling the bonds without voter approval.

Headlee's letter does not mention McMaster by name. It does, however, say Headlee intends to continue discussions to resolve the "voter approval question."

It does however have a pointed postscript. "No one is a spokesperson for Dick Headlee on this issue."

Neither Headlee nor McMaster could be reached Wednesday for comment.

Rewold, however, was outspoken Wednesday about his opinion of the threat and the person who sent it, McMaster.

"I wasn't going to respond anyway," Rewold said. "I know Taxpayers United doesn't operate that way. . . and I think McMaster is nonsense. . . and you can quote me on that."

Other commissioners expressed mixed feelings.

"I won't be intimidated by Taxpayers United or any other special interest group," said Lawrence R. Pernick, D-Southfield.

Marilynn E. Gosling, R-Bloomfield Hills, said she hadn't seen McMaster's letter Tuesday. "But I think it's based on several false assumptions."

John G. Pappageorge, R-Troy, said he resented the threat, and its demand for an answer by Friday.

Donn L. Wolf, R-Farmington Hills, said he might respond to McMaster's letter the same as he does to all letters of inquiry. "But not within the time frame demanded. I'm a supporter of Dick Headlee and I know he doesn't operate that way."

Nancy McConnell, R-Bloomfield Hills, said she "would not be intimidated by a publicist (McMaster)."

## Peace Elie Wiesel inspires large local audience

By Carolyn Barnett-Goldstein  
special writer

Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, writer and teacher, Elie Wiesel, began his lecture, "Celebrating Peace," Tuesday evening by saying, "nothing is more beautiful than to see so many people come together to celebrate peace. . . If only we could celebrate and glorify peace as we have war. . ."

Appearing before a full house at Dondero High School in Royal Oak for the Cranbrook Peace Foundation's third annual peace lecture, he posed questions, shared his observations and moral and ethical concerns about the world today, and discussed how to celebrate peace.

Known for his questions that force humankind to look at itself, he asks, "Why is war such an easy option and peace such an elusive topic? What is the price to pay for peace. . . and what is the morality behind all this? Does war ever have any place in truth? Do leaders think of human beings? Are morality and politics compatible? Is there such a thing as a just war?" He, himself, does not claim to know all the answers.

He wants to "alert the public to the dangers of anti-Semitism in Eastern Europe" and the U.S.S.R. He relates that on his trip to the U.S.S.R. last January he "discovered the Jews in panic," admitting that "even to him, the degree (of anti-Semitism) is shocking. How does one speak up? Teachers must speak out in the classrooms, and journalists through their outlets. Education is the answer."

HE WARNS, "Whatever is gained at the expense of memory cannot be good, or positive." The date of November 9, he reminds us, first entered history in 1939, with Kristallnacht, and, then, in 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell.

The ending of a century is "always a turbulent time," he explains. "We do not know what is happening, but something is, and I'm afraid if we don't look and know what is happening. . . global war will happen, and it will be the end of the planet."

"As the century closes, it affects the next." The question is, "How to move society from anguish to hope?"

"Peace would require imagination on the part of leaders."

Paradoxically, he observes, the communists want capitalism and capitalists are looking at socialism.

He holds great concerns about hunger. "Every minute a child dies of hunger-related diseases. Of all natural diseases the only one that can be cured is hunger." Sorrowfully, he adds, "For the 50 minutes I have been talking, 50 children have died."

"How does one celebrate peace?" He answers, ". . . with words and peace and by unmasking war. . . To denounce war is to show its ugliness."

HIS ANSWER as to how to solve the nuclear threat is given in a story in which physicist Robert Oppenheimer, when asked this question, replied, "Make peace."

Members of the audience said they felt inspired.

Roman Catholic Bishop Thomas Cumbleton felt Wiesel's message is one in which "Almost every sentence is one you would like to put on a poster. . . It's an experience to hear him. It's an experience and sharing of his person."

John Jickling of Birmingham said, "He's absolutely magnificent and an inspiration. He's a man full of thought-provoking ideas."

To use his phrase, it was beautiful," said Margaret Prier from Bloomfield Hills. "He makes you feel there is hope even if he doesn't have the answers."

West Bloomfield resident, Richard Madden, hopes ". . . people understand Jewish scholars teach people to ask questions. It's up to the foundations provided through our upbringing that help lead us to the right answers."

Yetta Shubow of Southfield felt, "His message was a plea for peace and understanding that the world from the beginning of time participated in war and death. The aged have always been willing to sacrifice its youth."

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