## Thompson becomes first insider to head OCC

Heeding the advice of administrators and faculty, Oakland Community College trustees looked inside to find a new chancellor — Richard T. Thompson, 65, veteran administrator at three of the five campuses.

"All the good things are in motion. I'm glad you are taking advantage of internal candidates," Thompson told the board prior to its 5-2 vote Thursday.

His top priority: staff development, beginning with the deans.

"The deans have been in a very difficult situation. They've been thrown chore after chore with no support. They're expected to do paperwork and still think great thoughts and show accidemic leadership. They need a great deal of support. We need to invast in employees," said Thompson, who takes over March 19.

To trustee Judith Wiser's question about the turnover of counselors, Thompson said: "We're at a low ebb. We have a lot of partitimers. You're going to see a few positions saked for." In his first budget.

The board split was a familiar one. The five trustees, including board chair Douglas Wakefield, who fired Dr. Patsy Calkins as chancellor voted to hire Thomp-







Richard Thompson first inside chancellor

son and forget about a national search.
Trustees Janice Simmons and Anne Scott, Calkins loyalists, voted no. Simmons objected to Thompson's lack of a doctorate degree, the first criterion on the board's wish list for a \$120,000 chief executive of the 30,000-stu-

dent college. Scott gave no reason.

"I moved along faster than my academic credentiels," ask of degrees in English from Eastern Michigan University. "I'm long past the point in my career where an Ed.D. means anything.

"I have a rich background in management," he added, pointing to service on first the faculty union's and later the administration's collective bargaining teams. The board picked Thompson over George Keith, 53, for two years president of the Orchard Kidga Campus.

Thompson — no kin of the Oakland County prosecutor with the same name — has headed the Highland Lakes, Orchard Ridga and most recently the Auburn Hills campuses, in addition to stints as vice chancellor for academics and acting chancellor for inne month aduring a vacancy.

Trustees also were impressed at this work on the OCC team preparing for an accreditation visit by the North Central Association and his service on 10 North Central teams accrediting other col-

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Richard Thompson OCC chancellor

leges. He got laughs with his dry wit and self-deprecating tales of his early mistakes as a lecturer and test-writer.

The board acted within minutes after interviewing Keith and Thompson for nearly two hours. The interviews were public, as required in the Open Meetlings Act. Three trustees, including 18-year veteran Sandra Ritter, told this newspaper they had no problem with public interviews, although boards at Ookland University and

the University of Michigan are begging the Legislature to change the law to allow closed doors. Thompson and Kelth were the only two internal applicants. A 20-member advisory committee headed by interim Chancellor Anthony Jarson recommended both without qualification. "We support an internal candidate at this point in time. These candidates have very strong support—unprecedented in the history of the college," Jurson said.
Although OCC is 31 years old, Thompson is the first chief execu-

tive to be promoted from within. His selection came less than four months after the discharge of Calkins, a Texan whom the board majority faulted for weak truster eleations and lack of experience in dealing with unions.

A former president of the Oakway (now Livonia) Symphony Society, Thompson predicted that "business and industry will be ever more demanding" for trained technical graduates, "but without losing sight of our core— were an institution of higher education" in the liberal arts.

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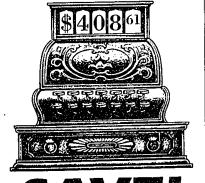




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