

Chancellor

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"The job was very similar to Behrend's," Parente said. "It was a great opportunity for him, because he felt that it was good to be closer to home."

Beehler accepted a unique position with the University of

North Texas (UNT) - starting a new campus.

UNT has launched an effort to create a Dallas campus and announced that they have selected Beehler as the new campus's inaugural provost and vice president for academic excellence and student success.

"That's the opportunity of a lifetime," Parente said. "To be able to start a university and mold it yourself, decide how to start things - that's not some-

thing you pass up."

The positions that those two candidates have taken, Parente says, speaks to the quality of the candidate pool as a whole.

"We have had, and have right now, fantastic candidates for this position," she said. "The fact that two of these candidates ended up taking such high positions elsewhere speaks to the quality of the job at this university. The final four candidates, too, were all on the

same level, so that makes Dr. [Donald] Birx and Dr. [Allen] Soyster, the two remaining candidates, that much more impressive."

Voland, before taking his position with the University of Michigan-Flint, was Dean of the College of Engineering, Technology and Computer Science, director of the Center for Industrial Innovation and Design, and professor of mechanical engineering at Indiana

University-Purdue.

Beehler, prior to accepting his position with North Texas, was the Associate Provost for Economic Initiatives and Dean of the Haile/US Bank College of Business at Northern Kentucky University. His appointment with UNT was announced on Feb. 4.

Parente says that the search committee does not consider the two candidates accepting positions elsewhere any type of

indication that the search is "going badly." Rather, she says, it proves how well the search has gone.

"It's an exciting time," she said. "It's a sad time, too, because we will all miss Jack Burke. But, seeing what our candidates for this position have in mind for the University, it's a very exciting time with all that we have ahead of us."

CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE PROFILE

Dr. Donald Birx

Vice-President of Research, University of Houston

Education:

B.S. in engineering, University of California, Berkeley
MBA and M.S. in bio-physics, Miami University in Ohio
Ph.D. in electrical engineering, University of Dayton

Current Position:

Vice Chancellor / Vice President of Research, University of Houston

Notable Past positions:

1977-1996: Senior Systems Engineer, Vice President and Team Leader of Technology and New Ventures, Systems Research Laboratories, Dayton, Ohio

1996-2006: Director of the Physical Science Laboratory (1996-2005), Interim Vice Provost and then Vice President for Research at New Mexico State University (2004-2006)

2006-Present: Current position

Accolades:

- 2002, New Mexico "Top 25" Tech Leader
- Davidson Memorial Award (2002), Distinguished Service Award (2001) and President's Award for Vision (2000), NMSU

What does he want to do here?

- Expand diversity. Build supported programs, celebrate it, create the environment, incentive and nurture. Citing experience working with diversity programs at the University of Houston, Birx says he had "doubled the number of graduates in science and engineering that are minority female students."
- Birx put a high emphasis on bringing together studies in the liberal arts and humanities with studies in technology and engineering. "That's the way of the future," he said. "Being able to pull all of those elements together is what will make U.S. universities stronger."



University of Houston Communications Department
Dr. Donald Birx, Vice President for Research at the University of Houston.

Birx said that his first priority after coming to Behrend would be to talk and listen. "When I went to the University of Houston, I spent probably the first three months in constant communication. Outside the community, inside each department, meeting with faculty and students; I worked at understanding where the direction should be." Then, he said, he wants to work with faculty and students to begin to lay the framework for five-year goals.

What challenges does he see in the position?

"I think the interaction with University Park is a big issue," he said. "I think the issues there with building a report, allowing Behrend to grow and become what it should be, is going to be tough."

"It's not something which I dislike; I think there's a lot of advantages and opportunities in being part of the Penn State program. I think Jack [Burke] has done a superb job."

Birx drew upon his experience in working as a vice president at a "large central" campus as giving him the viewpoint from the other side.

"One advantage I have is getting to see both sides of the issues - the ideas that sell and work, and the ideas that failed, and why they didn't work."

What does he plan regarding his interaction with students?

"Behrend is a school of a size where a direct connection is possible," he said. "It's only partially possible, to be honest, where I am right now with 37,000 students at the main campus."

Birx said that Jack Burke's model of direct connection with students is something that he will continue.

"I also tend to use multimedia and other approaches, putting them on the Web so that students can see what's going on if they want to," he said.

"If you want to see what's up, you can go to the Web and see it. There's a lot of transparency in what's going on."



Daniel Smith / The Behrend Beacon
During the two open forums held over the last 10 days, many Behrend community members came to hear ideas from the chancellor candidates. Above, in foreground, many employees of the Admissions Office came to watch.

CHANCELLOR CANDIDATE PROFILE

Dr. Allen Soyster

Dean, College of Engineering, Northeastern University

Education:

B.S. in industrial engineering, Pennsylvania State University
M.S. in industrial engineering and operations research, Cornell University
Ph.D. in operations research, Carnegie Mellon University

Current Position:

Professor and Dean, College of Engineering, Northeastern University

Notable Past positions:

1981-1996: Professor, head of Industrial Engineering Department, Pennsylvania State University

1997-Present: Current position

Accolades:

- 1988, Fellow of the Institute of Industrial Engineers (IIE)
- 1992, Technical Innovation Award, IEE
- 1993, Outstanding Faculty Mentoring, Penn State
- 1997, Fellow of the World Confederation of Productivity Science

What does he want to do here?

- Strengthen and expand academic programming. Academia should include more experiential learning, and more globalization elements, he said. "The entire world marketplace is changing dramatically," he said. "It would be nice if Behrend could have a particular niche in which a global experience could be made."
- Have Behrend ranked in U.S. News - America's Best Colleges. A five-year goal, he said, is to expect a #3 ranking in the North/Masters category of U.S. News.
- Develop MS/MA programs in all schools. "You have one notable deficiency," he said. "People who are [stimulating local economies] have graduate students. I can't imagine that most faculty wouldn't want to have graduate students as part of the work they do."
- Develop a Fine Arts Center, the idea for which is already under consideration and on Penn State Behrend's strategic plan. "You have to have something on the table. Something you can show people when you go out on the road to try to generate enthusiasm."

What challenges does he see in the position?

The biggest challenge, Soyster said in the open forum on Tuesday, is the relation between Penn State Behrend and University Park.

"The one point I'm mostly concerned about is the first threat in the strategic plan," he said. "The greatest advantage at Behrend is having the Penn State moniker. But this is always the joke, is that the biggest problem at Behrend is the Penn State moniker."

Soyster says that his experience at University Park, including 15 years as the head of the Industrial Engineering Department, will help him in figuring it out.

"Being a product of University Park, I can deal with that," he said. "There's no one at University Park with more experience in my field than I do, so there's not going to be anyone intimidating me and telling me I don't know what the business is."

What does he plan regarding his interaction with students?

Soyster draws upon his experience as a dean, during which time he "religiously brought students together" in an engineering student council. He said that he took notes and assembled a monthly meeting where students could voice concerns about their curricula.

However, in the chancellor position, he sees a different role.

"If I were here, all the [School] directors would be meeting with the students on a regular basis, and maybe I would be on some kind of selective basis," he said. "My role would not be as visible as the directors, but some contact shows students that the highest levels are concerned."



Daniel Smith / The Behrend Beacon
Dr. Allen Soyster, Dean of the College of Engineering at Northeastern University in Boston, Mass.