

Penn State Trustees' Ag-Interest Newsletter

(Continued from Page A1)

President Joab Thomas announced his intention to retire on August 31, 1995, after a very productive five year term. The most important job of the 32-member Board of Trustees is to select the President of the University. The Board established a search and screen committee of 16 administrators, faculty and students to collect names of potential presidential candidates. They received 190 nominations of potential candidates that they reduced to ten names based on the candidates' experience, recommendations and references. These individuals were contacted and invited for an interview by a ten member committee of the Board. Trustees Brosius, Morrow and Snider were members of the selection committee.

At a special Board meeting on March 16, Dr. Graham B. Spanier, 46, Chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln since 1991 was elected the sixteenth president of Penn State. Dr. Spanier has degrees from Iowa State and Northwestern Universities. He was a former faculty member and administrator at Penn State, State University of New York at Stony Brook, and Oregon State University. Dr. Spanier, a leader in higher education, is a strong advocate for the land grant mission of teaching, research and service. He considers Penn State an elite land grant university and wants to use his talents to maintain and enhance our status. Dr. Spanier has had experience working with 4-H groups.

One of the greatest challenges facing the new president is in the

financial area. Governor Ridge has proposed the same 1995-96 appropriation as 1994-95 with \$100 per student increase. The increase last year was \$210 per student. In the Big Ten, Penn State receives the smallest support from the state and has the highest tuition of the ten public universities.

A previous newsletter reported that Penn State has formed a Legislator Advocacy Network of locally based teams at each of the university's 23 locations. The network's objectives are to educate legislators about Penn State's mission and activities, seek legislator support for additional financial resources and to communicate the university's position on policy issues. This group, plus the strong support of the agricultural organizations, will be essential to maintain adequate state support. For information about supporting the College of Agricultural Sciences, contact Tony Wagner at (814) 865-2717.

Penn State has been cited by the media as one of the leading public universities in the nation. *US News and World Report* again ranked Penn State near the top on its lists of "best national university values" and "most efficient institutions." For the third straight year, Penn State was selected for inclusion in "The Guide to 101 of the Best Values in American Colleges and Universities." This book reported "Penn State is renown for its strengths in academic areas such as agriculture, business, communications, engineering and virtually all the sciences. It is one of the nation's most distinguished universities, public or private, and

a tremendous educational value." The College of Agricultural Sciences at Penn State was ranked among the top ten in agricultural sciences, 1981-93, by "Science Watch." Seven of the top ten universities were in the Big Ten.

Acquiring land for agricultural use to replace property used for the research park and other developments are a high priority for the Board. Recently, 225 acres of excellent land was purchased with private donations. It is adjacent to current property at the Russell E. Larson Research Center, site of Ag Progress Days. The new poultry facility was dedicated and additions and renovations to the dairy barns were completed in 1994.

The awards won by faculty attest to the excellent educational programs and fine teaching in the college. Dr. Willits, professor of rural sociology, won the prestigious Alumni Fellow Teaching Award. Dr. Willits will spend part of the 1995-96 academic year conducting teaching improvement workshops.

Student enrollment in the College of Agricultural Sciences has increased 60% since 1989 and 11% since 1993. Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, with 3000+ students, is the largest among Big Ten universities and ranks sixth nationally. Approximately 100 alumni volunteers contact prospective students to encourage them to attend Penn State and to answer questions they may have. For information about programs and admission to the College of Agricultural Sciences, contact Dr. Marianne Houser at

(814) 865-7521.

Scholarships are an important part of attracting and retaining outstanding students. The college awarded \$612,000 to 375 students in 1994. This represents an increase of 170% since 1989 and is a direct reflection of the strong support provided to the college by alumni and agribusiness.

The quality and diversity of the college student population have also been improving. There are currently 49 students in the University Scholars Program and 24 minority scholars. These and other undergraduate students are pursuing research projects with faculty members and presenting their results at local and national conferences. In 1994, internships provided 84 students enrolled for academic credit the opportunity to "earn while they learn" with practical, on-the-job training to make themselves more marketable to future employers after graduation.

The Board of Trustees' current officers are William Schreyer, president, and Jesse Arnelle, vice president. Trustees Donaldson, Morrow and Snider are members of the Executive Committee. The standing committees of the Board and some of their members are as follows: Finance (Snider) and Physical Plant (Morrow, chair; Madigan, vice-chair; and Brosius). The special advisory com-

mittees and some of their members are as follows: Milton S. Hershey Medical Center (Brosius, chair; Madigan, vice-chair; and Donaldson) and Affirmative Action (Hiller). Trustee Snider serves on the National Development Council for the University and is on the board of the Research Park Management Corp (RPM Co). Trustee Madigan is a member of the nominating committee. Trustee Morrow serves on the boards for RPM Co and the Corporation for Penn State. Trustee Brosius is a member of Great Valley Graduate Center Advisory Board and the Penn State Medical Center Board of Visitors. Trustees Brosius, Morrow and Snider were members of the Distinguished Alumni Selection Committee. Many trustees have represented the Board at graduations and at alumni activities.

The trustees representing agriculture want to thank President Thomas for being our 15th president. He is a gentleman and scholar who has provided strong visionary leadership with emphasis on excellence in education, research and public service. Dr. Thomas has been a strong advocate for public support to improve facilities and educational programs during a period of financial restraint.



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