



# VSU Connection

For the Faculty, Staff and Members of the Valdosta State University Community

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## Presidential Search Committees Named

Dr. Susan Herbst, University System of Georgia executive vice chancellor and chief academic officer announced Tuesday, Jan. 8, the appointment of two committees charged with assisting in the selection of a new president for Valdosta State University.

A national search is underway to replace VSU President Ronald M. Zaccari, who will retire June 30, 2008 after more than five years as the university's president.

The Presidential Search and Screen Committee, composed of 12 System-appointed VSU constituents, has been charged with developing a position description, placing announcements in national media, conducting on-campus interviews and submitting five unranked candidates to the Regents office. Parker Executive Search of Atlanta will assist the committee in the search and recruitment process.

Herbst met with search committee members Jan. 8 to outline the committee's duties, responsibilities and roles in the search for new leadership. Later that day, Herbst moderated a public meeting at the University Center. Community members and VSU employees voiced the qualifications and character traits they desire in a new president.

The campus-based search committee will forward the credentials of five unranked candidates to the Special Regents' Search Committee, which Regent Elridge McMillan will chair. Regents Robert Hatcher, Doreen Stiles Poitevint, Benjamin Tarbutton III and Allan Vigil will serve as members of the committee, which is responsible for recommending finalists to University System Chancellor Erroll Davis. The chancellor will then recommend a single candidate to the full Board of Regents. ■

### Search Committee Timeline

**January/February:** Advertise the position in various higher education outlets.

**January:** Meet with various constituent groups to explain the search process, address questions and concerns about the process and gain input about what skills and characteristics faculty, staff and students desire in the next VSU president.

**January — March:** Identify qualified candidates through responses to advertising, nominations/recommendations and direct recruiting.

**April:** Identify and interview qualified candidates and select applicants for campus visits.

**Last two weeks of April:** Conduct on-campus interviews of most qualified candidates.

**End of April:** Submit five unranked candidates to Regent Elridge McMillan and the Special Regents Selection Committee.



Director of Planned Giving and Major Gifts, Sandra Fletcher, addresses VSU's newly-appointed search committee at a public forum Tuesday, Jan. 8. The forum enabled VSU employees and community members to express the ideals and expertise they hope the Presidential Search and Screen Committee considers when selecting a new president. Fletcher requested the committee look for a candidate who is versed in strategic planning and eager to build relationships necessary to secure private funding.

## Presidential Credentials Discussed at Public Forum

Members of the community and VSU employees gathered for a presidential search public forum Tuesday, Jan. 8, at 1 p.m. in the University Center Magnolia Room.

Presidential Search and Screen Committee Chair, Dr. Cynthia Tori, associate professor of Marketing and Economics, opened the floor for comments after urging attendants to express the characteristics and credentials they expect the next VSU president to possess.

Several people spoke about the need to hire a president committed to shared governance among employees as well as a

dedication to increased diversity, broadened access and improved curriculum.

Dr. Reynaldo Martinez, department head of Adult and Career Education, asked the search committee to seek a candidate with competence as a successful advocate for higher education within the political arena. He also said he hopes the next president will support professional development opportunities for all VSU employees.

Dr. Jane Whitehead, associate professor of Modern and Classical Languages, said VSU's next president must have a deep understanding of the business model, but not be so committed to its doctrine that the

Forum Continued —

### VSU Presidential Search & Screen Committee

- Dr. Cynthia Tori, associate professor of Marketing & Economics, chair of the search committee
- Dr. James Baxter, department head, Chemistry
- Raymond Sable, director, Physical Plant & Facilities Planning
- Russell Mast, dean of students, Division of Student Affairs
- Jonathon Stroble, president, Student Government Association
- Dr. Christine James, associate professor of Philosophy & Religious Studies, chair of Faculty Senate
- Verna Harvey, legal assistant, Legal Affairs
- Dr. Philip Gunter, dean, College of Education
- Dr. John Gaston, dean, College of Arts
- Katisha Mathis, student
- Wayne Rambo, president, VSU Alumni Association
- Tyson McLane, chair, VSU Foundation



COURTESY PHOTO

# PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 3 P.M.**

Parade & Celebration Honoring the Lowndes High School Vikings and the Valdosta State University Blazers

Celebration Ceremony at parade conclusion — Valdosta Mall

**For more information,** e-mail Director of VSU Special Events, Ann Lacey, at [aelacey@valdosta.edu](mailto:aelacey@valdosta.edu); Director of Student Life, Robin Vickery, at [rvickery@valdosta.edu](mailto:rvickery@valdosta.edu); or Assistant to the President for Communication, Thressea Boyd, at [thboyd@valdosta.edu](mailto:thboyd@valdosta.edu).

## Forum Continued —

university risks losing sight of its charge — to shape minds and help students find a place in the world.

Dr. Christine James, associate professor of Philosophy & Religious Studies and Faculty Senate chair said she is eager to share faculty views and expectations with the search committee. Faculty may e-mail James at [cjames@valdosta.edu](mailto:cjames@valdosta.edu).

Staff are welcome to present their suggestions at the next COSA meeting, Tuesday, Jan. 15, at 9 a.m. in the UC Rose Room. Students are encouraged to attend the SGA meeting Monday, Jan. 14 at 8 p.m. in the Library Auditorium.

Presidential nominations may be submitted directly to Laurie Wilder, Parker Executive Search at [lwilder@parkersearch.com](mailto:lwilder@parkersearch.com) or to Dr. Cindy Tori at [ctori@valdosta.edu](mailto:ctori@valdosta.edu). The committee is requesting that all nominations and applications be submitted prior to March 18. Confidential review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made.

For more information about the search process, e-mail Dr. Tori or go to the Presidential Search Web site, [www.valdosta.edu/presidentialsearch](http://www.valdosta.edu/presidentialsearch). The site will be updated as the search process moves forward. ■

## Larger-Than-Life Portrait Inspires Sound Policies

James Jenkins's name isn't followed by a laundry list of titles, he's never written a book or climbed Mount Everest. But the 62-year-old grandfather has raised nine kids with his wife of 30 years. He's worked two jobs most of his life and took a Greyhound bus from Georgia to Washington to visit his daughter stationed at a military base in Seattle.

VSU graduate Ben Winslow, '05, who painted a larger-than-life portrait of the custodian in the late 90s may not have known Jenkins's life story; but Winslow captured what Jenkins represents — the personnel who dedicate themselves to keep VSU running.

"It was by far the weirdest thing that has happened to me," said Jenkins, who retired in December after 15 years at VSU. "Mr. Winslow took a picture of me one night and a week later, I saw the giant picture in the hallway of the Fine Arts Building.

He even showed the cell phone bulging out of my right shirt pocket. It was the most amazing sight."

Jim Black, vice president for Finance and Administration, remembers the first time he saw the painting. The portrait struck him as a portrayal of the wonderful men and women who contribute to the support and betterment of campus. When Black returned to campus in 2002 after a brief retirement, he tracked down Winslow and purchased the painting for \$1,200.

"Often, when I am writing and reviewing campus policies or in the process of making decisions that will affect people's lives, I look up at this painting and think, 'What would you think of this Mr. Jenkins?'" said Black, who has worked at VSU for 36 years. "The picture reminds me of the great responsibility I hold to provide the kind of work environment, services and job enhancement opportunities that will be in the best interests of not only Mr. Jenkins, but everyone who contributes to this enterprise and makes up our campus community."

Jenkins's towering portrait hangs to the left of Black's row of moral and professional guides — including statues of Helen, Jesus Christ, Buddha and Rodin's Balzac — which look down on him from atop cabinets behind his desk. Jenkins said he is a bit intimidated but doesn't mind the company. Spend five minutes with the talkative family man and it's not so difficult to imagine his portrait striking up a conversation with Balzac about how Hollywood doesn't make movies the way it used to or share with Buddha his



KATE HEINE

Jim Black, vice president for Finance and Administration, stands next to James Jenkins, who inspired the larger-than-life portrait that hangs in Black's office.

plans to mow the yard. Because after all, it's the conversations with students and jokes shared with faculty that Jenkins misses most.

"I loved working here. I miss waking kids up who fell asleep in the library and sharing lives with co-workers," said Jenkins, who hasn't been to a movie in 37 years. "Everyone treats each other so nice here. I felt a part of something."

But his joints got old and his grandkids need visiting. Jenkins said he decided to quit while he's got "a little life in me." Jenkins said he and his wife, Minnie, plan to take day trips to antique stores in Thomasville, Adel and Jacksonville. They also hope to spend more time with their seven grandkids.

"I'm excited about doing all the things I haven't gotten to over the years like painting my house with my grandson when the weather gets warmer," said Jenkins. "But I know I definitely won't stop. I've heard about so many people who retire, do nothing and then just die. Death is in God's making, but you don't have to help it along. I've got a part-time job, and I plan to watch the grandkids and maybe volunteer.

I might not be working at VSU any longer, but you'll definitely see me around now and again, and not just my picture." ■

## VSUConnection

Editor/Designer | Kate Heine

Contributing Writers | Jennifer Tanner | Thressea Boyd

The *VSU Connection* is a semimonthly newsletter designed to inform VSU personnel and students about the latest campus-wide news. Check out the *Connection* online at [www.valdosta.edu/news/](http://www.valdosta.edu/news/).

For more information about the *Connection* or to submit a story idea, email Kate Heine, Communication Specialist for the Office of the President, Communication Unit, at [kaheine@valdosta.edu](mailto:kaheine@valdosta.edu).