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U. of I. picks president

By Jodi S. Cohen, Tribune reporter

9:19 PM CDT, May 11, 2010

University of Illinois officials have chosen Michael Hogan, the University of Connecticut president, as the school's next president, picking a historian who has long ties to the Midwest and public education.

Hogan, 66, will be on the UIC campus Wednesday morning for the announcement and in Urbana-Champaign in the afternoon. He will take a pay cut from his salary at UConn, which was \$577,500 in 2008-09, a source close to the selection process told the Tribune.

Hogan will take over July 1 pending confirmation at next week's U. of I. board meeting.

"He is very strong, very experienced. It is a stroke of good luck for the University of Illinois, and it will be a good coming out party tomorrow," said U. of I. Interim President Stanley Ikenberry.

As the university's 18th president, Hogan will oversee campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. He succeeds B. Joseph White, who resigned last year amid a scandal over preferential admissions policies for well-connected students.

Hogan, an expert in the history of American diplomacy, has been the UConn president since September 2007, and previously held senior positions at the University of Iowa and Ohio State University.

He is described as a personable leader, someone who can fit in just as easily at a neighborhood barbecue as at the state Capitol or at a board table. He writes a blog about university news called PresRelease, which he describes as his "own little page where I can share items of interest, celebration, or concern with my University colleagues."

Hogan will need those public relations skills as the university works on state funding issues with Springfield, and on repairing dealings with alumni, donors and the general public following last year's admissions scandal. Hogan will take over in the middle of the university's \$2.25 billion fundraising campaign.

"He is going to be just what we need at this point in our history," said Dr. Joseph Flaherty, dean of the UIC College of Medicine and member of the presidential search committee. "We certainly never excluded anyone from a private background, but his wealth of public university experience will be good."



Hogan will have a long list of challenges to tackle. The university faces growing budget concerns, as it is currently owed \$376 million in promised payments from the state. What's more, state funding next year is expected to decline. As UConn's president, Hogan grappled with similar problems, but also worked with the Legislature to secure a capital spending plan and construction of a new hospital building.

One of his first orders of business will be filling top administrative jobs, including the chancellor positions at the Urbana-Champaign and Springfield campuses. He also will step in as the university is looking at ways to cut administrative costs.

Hogan said in a U. of I. news release that he is looking forward to returning to the Midwest. "I couldn't be more pleased to return to my roots as president of this world-class university," he said.

There were 208 candidates for the job, according to the release.

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