

Regents Recap

Highlights of the Activities and Official Actions of the Louisiana Board of Regents

February 2007



Stelly Sworn In As Regent

Newest Board of Regents member Victor T. Stelly (left) confers with Regent Richard D'Aquin between committee meetings. Stelly, a retired businessman and former state representative from Moss Bluff, was sworn in on February 21.

Regents, LRA Hold Public Hearing on Research Competitiveness Plan

The Louisiana Board of Regents and the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) hosted a public hearing in New Orleans on February 9 to solicit input on a draft strategic plan for the first phase of the Research Competitiveness and Educational Enhancement Program (RC/EEP). The plan suggests an approach for spending the \$28.5 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding, provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, for investment in research institutions impacted by the hurricanes.

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Regents Approve New Associate Degree Programs in Teaching

The Louisiana Board of Regent approved two new Associate of Science in Teaching (AST) degree programs for community college students interested in teaching grades one through five. The programs, which are the first of their kind for Louisiana, will be offered at Delgado Community College and Nunez Community College. Graduates of these two-year programs will ultimately be able to transfer all their AST credits to bachelor's degree programs in elementary education at Louisiana colleges of education.

The new programs are part of Louisiana's TeachNext initiative, an effort aimed at recruiting and training larger numbers of highly-qualified, effective teachers for Louisiana's classrooms. More AST programs are expected to be developed and approved in the future.

"With the AST programs, students not only graduate with a viable credential as a teaching paraprofessional, but they also qualify to enter a four-year teacher education program with half of their degree credit requirements already completed," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "This initiative promises to be a very effective means of increasing the number of appropriately-certified, effective teachers available to Louisiana's deserving students."

Louisiana TeachNext is currently accepting applications from both newly-accepted entering students at Delgado Community College and Nunez Community College, as well as current students interested in changing their program of study. The priority application deadline is March 12, 2007, and the regular application deadline is April 30, 2007. For more information, interested students should view the program website: www.LouisianaTeachNext.org.

**The next Board of Regents meeting will be held
March 21-22, 2007**



Pat A. Strong
Chair

Scott Brame
Vice Chair

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Secretary

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Robert W. Levy
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Mary Ellen Roy
William Clifford Smith

Victor T. Stelly
Harold M. Stokes
Terry Landry
Student Member

E. Joseph Savoie
Commissioner of
Higher Education

Board Action - February 21-22, 2007

Program Approvals

The Board of Regents approved the following proposed new academic program, letter of intent, research unit, proposed new academic unit, and progress reports on conditionally-approved programs/centers:

Proposed Academic Program

LTC Shreveport - A.A.S. in Office Systems Technology

Proposed Letter of Intent

Northwestern State University - B.A. in Professional Communications

Reauthorization of Previously Approved Research Units

LSU A&M - Center for Geoinformatics
University of New Orleans - Hospitality Research Center

Proposed New Academic Unit

LSU A&M/LSU Agricultural Center - School of Plant, Environmental, and Soil Sciences

Progress Report on Conditionally Approved Programs/Centers

Louisiana Tech University - Doctor of Audiology

Regents Approve Phase I Strategic Plan, RFP for RC/EEP

The Board of Regents approved both the Phase I Strategic Plan and the Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Research Commercialization and Educational Enhancement Program (RC/EEP).

Dr. Kerry Davidson, Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs, reminded Board that of the \$10.4 billion granted to the State in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies, \$28.5 million has been dedicated to scientific research and education initiatives closely tied to commercialization efforts. Davidson noted that the RC/EEP Action Plan, which established guidelines for the expenditure of these funds, was previously approved by the Board of Regents, the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA), the Legislature, the governor, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Dr. Davidson also pointed out that HUD regulations restricted funding to campuses in the eight parishes most severely impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Regents Approve Nursing Board Plan

The Board of Regents unanimously approved a study committee plan to help alleviate the shortage of nurses in the state.

Dr. Larry Tremblay, Acting Deputy Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs, reminded the Board that Senate Concurrent Resolution 134 of 2006 requested the Board of Regents and the state's nursing licensure boards to work together to study the feasibility of expanding nursing programs in order to alleviate the nursing shortage crisis that exists in Louisiana. Representatives of the Board of Regents, the Louisiana State Board of Nursing and the Louisiana State Board of Practical Nurse Examiners met during November and December to discuss the issues identified in SCR 134, review appropriate data, and develop a formal response for consideration by their appropriate boards and the Legislature. Dr. Tremblay introduced Ellienne Tate and Claire Glaviano, representing the RN and LPN boards respectively.

The study committee determined that the purpose of SCR 134 was to prompt actions which would result in the increased production of both LPNs and RNs through a variety of measures, not necessarily restricted to the

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**For more information
about these and
other
Board of Regents
actions,
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Public Hearing (from page 1)

The funds are intended to help rebuild the storm-damaged university campuses in ways that help Louisiana develop and grow a technology- and innovation-driven economy. Funds may be used to support research, facilitate commercialization of university-developed products and processes in Louisiana, and support educational activities that will build a trained workforce for technology-based companies. Public and private colleges and universities in the eight parishes hardest hit by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita will be eligible to apply for these funds.

“In terms of the education and training they provide *and* the potential economic impact of the research they conduct, colleges and universities have a significant impact on their local communities,” said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. “With the strong support and assistance of the Louisiana Recovery Authority, we have been able to secure federal funding to maximize that impact, and we look forward to this opportunity to share our strategy with the community and hear what they have to say about the plan.”

According to Dr. Kerry Davidson, Board of Regents Deputy Commissioner for Sponsored Programs, the public hearing has both immediate and longer-range purposes. “The first purpose is to inform completion of a regional Phase I Strategic Plan; second, to have the Phase I Plan inform development of a request for proposals leading to college and university grants of approximately \$28 million by May 2007; and finally, to have the regional Phase I Plan and the RFP process lead to a statewide Phase II Strategic Plan for economic development by October 2007,” Davidson said.

Nursing (from page 2)

development of new programs (although new programs are an integral part of the solution to the nursing shortage). Discussion focused on recent and current initiatives to address the nurse shortage, initiatives that could be put into place, and recommending others for consideration for future implementation.

The boards determined that there were a number of initiatives currently underway or planned in the near term to address the continuing shortage of nurses in Louisiana. There are several new LPN and RN programs currently being developed or which have been recently implemented, and a plan is under development to improve the production of nursing graduates at programs offered by campuses of the Louisiana Technical College (LTC). These efforts are all projected to increase the annual number of LPN and RN graduates. In addition, the capitation program funded through the Health Works Commission has increased the number of RN graduates by approximately 250 annually.

Accelerated programs, articulation agreements, and programs which allow RN students to become LPNs are designed to increase the number of nurse graduates. Planned initiatives to decrease the dropout rates from LPN programs, increase professional development for faculty, and realign LPN education by region will also increase the number of LPN graduates in Louisiana.



Toups Honored

Outgoing Board of Regents Chairman Roland Toups (right) was honored by his fellow Regents at the February board meeting with a resolution thanking him for his leadership and service during his extended term as chairman during the recovery from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Current Board Chairman Pat Strong presented a copy of the resolution to Toups.