

1-18-2005

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Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "01/18/2005 - Charleston Businessman Appointed to EIU Board of Trustees" (2005). 2005. 5.

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Charleston Businessman Appointed to EIU Board of Trustees

Jan-18-2005

Less than a year ago, Donald W. Yost received his bachelor's degree from Eastern Illinois University.

This week, Gov. Rod Blagojevich's office sent official word that the 61-year-old Charleston businessman had, as of Jan. 17, been temporarily appointed to the university's Board of Trustees. The six-year appointment will become permanent upon confirmation by the Illinois Senate.

"I'm extremely appreciative for the opportunity, and offer my sincere thanks to Governor Blagojevich," Yost said. "I'm humbled and I'm excited. I look forward to working with my fellow board members, including my dear friend, Chairman Nathaniel Anderson; the administration and the university faculty and staff.

"I have loved this university for many, many years, and I will work my heart out to help move this great institution of higher education forward," he added.

EIU President Lou Hencken shares Yost's excitement.

"I'm thrilled to have Mr. Yost join our board of trustees," Hencken said. "His strong background in business and education, as well as his many years as a state employee, will immeasurably benefit the board and the university as a whole. We are once again very pleased with the governor's selection."

Remaining trustees are Dr. Roger Dettro of Mattoon, Julie Nimmons of Litchfield, Roger L. Kratochvil of Mt. Olive, Robert D. Webb of Mattoon, Leo Welch of O'Fallon and Adam Howell of Decatur, who is the university's student member. Anderson is from Belleville.

Yost, who currently serves as the managing member and part owner of Cougill Senior Apartments in Charleston, is no stranger to education. He was employed as business manager/treasurer for Carbondale Community High School District 165 for nine years, and has served on numerous boards and committees, including a stint as president of the EIU Panther Club (of which he is still a member); president and charter member, Excellence in Education Foundations, Charleston High School; and board of directors, Lake Land Junior College Foundation.

In 2004, Yost realized his life-time goal of becoming a college graduate when he fulfilled his requirements for the EIU Board of Trustees Degree Program. He has also received the EIU Glen Hesler Award for Outstanding Contribution to Athletics and was named to the EIU Athletic Hall of Fame in 1999.

Since coming to Charleston in 1990, Yost has also owned/operated the Stix Restaurant & Banquet Facility; served as general partner for Country View Estate Apartments; and recently announced plans for the building of Lincoln Trails Place, a 52-unit supportive living facility for the elderly, which will be located north of Cougill Senior Apartments.

He has, over the years, also served on the Illinois Prisoner Review Board and was employed with the Illinois Department of Corrections in numerous roles. He is a current member of both the Charleston Chamber of Commerce and the Coles Together Economic Development Board, having previously served in leadership roles in both organizations.

As the newest member of Eastern's Board of Trustees, Yost said he just plans to make himself available to help in any way he can.

"It's just beginning to sink in," he said, "and right now, I'm just appreciating the opportunity to work in meaningful public service."

His first meeting as a trustee will take place at 1 p.m. Monday, Jan. 24, in Eastern's Grand Ballroom, located in the Martin Luther King Jr. University Union.

Yost and his wife, Louise Yost, are the parents of four children. He replaces Jeffery Lezotte of Chicago, whose six-year term on Eastern's Board of Trustees ended Monday.