

6-24-2009

06/24/2009 - VP for External Relations Announces Plans to Retire from EIU

University Marketing and Communications

Follow this and additional works at: https://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_2009

Recommended Citation

University Marketing and Communications, "06/24/2009 - VP for External Relations Announces Plans to Retire from EIU" (2009).
2009. 67.

https://thekeep.eiu.edu/press_releases_2009/67

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Press Releases at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in 2009 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.

VP for External Relations Announces Plans to Retire from EIU

Jun-24-2009

Jill Nilsen, vice president for external relations at Eastern Illinois University, has announced her retirement, effective Dec. 31, 2009.

"Dr. Nilsen's retirement represents a great loss to EIU," said EIU President Bill Perry. "She has brought us to a stage of development in fundraising, marketing and governmental relations that allows us to continue to advance EIU from an extremely strong foundation. Our future effectiveness in advancing EIU has been strongly influenced by her dedicated work.

"Dr. Nilsen has been of great assistance to me in my first two years at EIU. I am extremely grateful for her initiative, energy, ideas, advice and excellent service."

In announcing her plans to retire, Nilsen said she "will forever be grateful to this university for the opportunities it has provided me during my professional career.

"I leave with great affection for the faculty, students and staff with whom I have had the pleasure of working during my 33-plus years here."

Perry said the search for Nilsen's successor will begin immediately. Blair Lord, provost and vice president for academic affairs, has agreed to chair the search advisory committee. Julie Nimmons will serve on the committee as the Board of Trustees representative, and will be joined by representatives of other constituencies, including the Alumni Association Board, the EIU Foundation Board, deans, faculty, students, staff, reporting departments, department chairs and athletics.

According to Perry, the search's timeline calls for the search advisory committee to meet during the first week of July and have ads out for the position by the end of that month. The committee will be operating under a tight schedule as it is anticipated that the first day of employment for Nilsen's successor will be Dec. 1, 2009, to enable some time for consultative transition, Perry added.

The president also announced his intentions of changing the name of the position from vice president for external relations to vice president for university advancement, effective with the hiring of Nilsen's successor.

"This signals internally and externally -- and certainly for the search process -- that the primary emphasis for this position is on fundraising, development and allied activities," Perry said. "The change in emphasis in the position not only represents the growing importance of philanthropy in EIU's future, but narrows the portfolio to enable more time and effort focused on fundraising."

Nilsen assumed the role of acting vice president for external relations in 1998 and was permanently named to that position in 2001. She came to Eastern in 1976 as a faculty member in speech pathology and served as chairperson of that department from 1984 to 1990. She served as associate dean of the Graduate School from 1990 to 1993, before moving to central administration.

Nilsen earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees in speech pathology and audiology from Eastern. She was awarded her doctorate in speech and hearing science from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

She also has been heavily involved in the Coles County community, having served on the Charleston Chamber of Commerce, the Charleston Strategic Planning Committee, the Charleston Unified Development Committee, the Coles County Alliance Committee, the Coles County Strategic Planning Committee and the Coles County Comprehensive Planning Committee.

She has served on the Charleston Excellence in Education Board, the Coalition Against Domestic Violence Board, the Sexual Assault and Counseling Information System Board, the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center Board, and various committees in her church and in the schools.



Jill Nilsen