



Press Conference to Announce the Next President of University of The Bahamas
Tuesday 15th March 2022
Mrs. Allyson Maynard-Gibson QC
Chair, Board of Trustees
Remarks

Good morning.

I am pleased to share with you that the Board of Trustees has selected the candidate whom we believe is the most capable, qualified, and suitable to lead the university through an era of bold transformation. This follows a rigorous search and assessment process.

The selection of the next President of UB comes at a seminal moment not only in the life of the institution, but the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. Since its inception – as the College of The Bahamas – this institution has carried the hopes, dreams and aspirations of a nation destined for a brighter future, where our collective intellect and imagination drive us forward. Over the years, the institution has evolved from a two-year degree granting and certificate institution to one where the majority of graduates now earn baccalaureate degrees. Also, the number of graduate degrees in areas of national need is growing. University of The Bahamas is poised to move to the next level of radical growth. International accreditation is that next step as this will raise quality standards in our programmes, operational procedures and services.

Imagine a world-class institution internationally regarded for driving new heights of academic and intellectual excellence and knowledge creation; an epicentre of

knowledge transfer where graduates, produced through stringent systems of quality assurance, seamlessly transfer to any premier university in the world and drive optimal performance in the workplace; UB's centres of excellence serving as bastions of research and thought leadership, solving the problems of small island resiliency and sustainability, and leading robust mechanisms for climate action. This is what lies on the horizon of our national university and it is well within our grasp with courageous, visionary leadership that brings about progressive change. This is fundamental to the evolution that will take shape.

The selection process, as you know, began more than one year ago with the appointment of the Presidential Search Committee under the previous Board of Trustees. That Committee was comprised of representatives of the University community and the wider public to ensure integrity and accountability. The Board was intentional about engaging the internal and external UB community in the search process. The views of faculty, staff, students, alumni and stakeholders were solicited about the kind of qualifications and attributes that the next President of UB should possess and these helped to shape the position profile that was used. All 79 applicants who offered themselves for the position were thoroughly assessed based on that position profile. Those candidates were then narrowed down to a listing of semi-finalists and, subsequently, three finalists who were referred to the Board for review and a decision.

Since its appointment, the recently composed Board has given the matter the utmost priority. This cadre of eminently qualified, competent and passionate individuals has operated with the highest integrity, compelled by a strong commitment to our fiduciary responsibilities under the University of The Bahamas Act, as we embarked upon further intensive scrutiny of the finalists. We deeply

considered the feedback solicited from various constituents and held scrupulous deliberations.

The next President has the qualifications, experience, and skills to meet mission critical objectives, namely:

- the knowledge, insights and experience to achieve international accreditation;
- the vision and competence to implement sustainable financial and operational models for fundraising; and
- the capability to integrate 21st century technology modalities throughout the institution.

To foster sustainability, a succession plan will be implemented to ensure that within a reasonable period of time several individuals would be qualified to succeed the president.

Based on the attributes mentioned, the Board has selected, as the next president, Dr. Erik Rolland, an academic leader with 30 years of experience, who has successfully steered the process of accreditation at another higher education institution. He will be UB's second President. Dr. Rolland's appointment takes effect on 1st August, 2022.

Growing our university also means developing a dynamic and robust engagement strategy. Dr. Rolland has successfully forged collaborations with key economic development partners, particularly those which have fueled venture capital pursuits as a feeder for entrepreneurship and sharing knowledge of best practices.

Leveraging his expertise, and networks will create further opportunities for the exposure and engagement of our students with industry leaders around the world. UB will strengthen centres for entrepreneurship and business incubators, by

quicken the innovative spirit, expand capacity, ultimately increasing social and economic stability.

Currently, President Dr. Rodney D. Smith, who concludes his tenure on the 31st July 2022, remains focused on his mandate and has assured the Board that he will support a seamless transition in leadership.

Our freedom, sovereignty and success, depend on our ability to create educated, conscientious and productive citizens. What happens at the University of The Bahamas impacts each and every Bahamian. We invite your support, your involvement and your enthusiasm as together we transform, UB, The Bahamas and the world.

Thank you.

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