U. APPOINTS 20TH PRESIDENT

Robert L. Barchi, president of Thomas Jefferson University, will succeed President Richard L. McCormick in September

BY AMY ROWE
FEATURES EDITOR

The University’s Board of Governors and Board of Trustees unanimously approved the appointment of Robert L. Barchi as the 20th president of the University.

The outgoing president of Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia, who also served as provost at the University of Pennsylvania, will take office at Old Queens on Sept. 1.

Though he was born in Philadelphia and has lived there for most of his professional life, Barchi lived in Westfield, N.J. as a child.

“What I found, to my surprise, when I came back and started discussions here at Rutgers, [is] this feels like coming home,” he said. “I know these places, I lived here, I traveled by them all. I used to go to the Jersey shore, sometimes with my parents’ permission, sometimes without.”

As a professor and the University’s chief administrative officer, his base salary is set at $650,000, according to University Media Relations.

Barchi, 65, was appointed by the University’s 24-member presidential search committee, which provided the BOG with an unranked list of four candidates, said Greg Brown, chair of the committee.

The president-designate, who spent most of his career at University of Pennsylvania as a clinical neurologist and ran all academic programs there for six years, is concerned with strengthening the University’s education

Robert Barchi, incoming University president, answers questions during a news conference. The University’s Board of Governors and Board of Trustees unanimously approved his appointment yesterday on the Old Queens campus.
PRESIDENT: Barchi is the best candidate, Brown says

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model as a major state research University.

"The business plan for higher education that we have all lived with for the last 50 years simply will not sustain us for the next 50 years," Barchi said at a special meeting held in Winants Hall on the College Avenue campus. "We need a fundamental change in the way we teach and do research."

He said the University is more capable of solving problems facing higher education by paying attention to its financial situation and improving the quality of research.

"It is a remarkable time of challenge and opportunity and opportunity is going to be ped by the schools who are positioned to do so," Barchi said. "It's the right time, it's the right place. It's Rutgers opportunity to do that."

Barchi acknowledged that some faculty and staff are disgruntled about their contracts, but he promised to work with them through those issues as a faculty member himself.

"It's the faculty that make this place great. It's their ideas that are going to sustain us," Barchi said. "There's a lot of tension around contract negotiations and it's easy for individuals to become polarized. You have my commitment that I'll try as hard as I can to avoid that polarization."

Diversity is also a major concern for Barchi at the University, from the freshman class to the administration, he said.

"I have said over and over again ... that our student body must reflect, in its ethnicity and socioeconomic stratification, the diversity of the population that our students will find themselves in after graduation," he said.

The University's reputation for academics is well known abroad, Barchi said, but he wants to work on improving its presence in the media as one of the best research institutions in the nation.

"When somebody calls for a quote, they should be calling Rutgers. When someone calls for an example of excellence, they should be calling Rutgers," he said.

But Barchi does not want the University to lose sight of its primary goal of educating undergraduates while strengthening research.

"We have to be an importer of intellect, not an exporter of intellect," he said. "We have to be the best of the undergraduate education business, not just a player."

Barchi also said he is committed to a long term at the University and the challenging times ahead excite him.

"I'm not here to hit and run. I'm someone who enjoys the challenge of major issues," he said. "I'm not here to hit and run. I'm someone who enjoys the challenge of major issues," he said. "I'm not here to hit and run. I'm not just maintain the status quo."

The incoming president introduced himself to Gov. Chris Christie before taking the position in September, he said.

"I must say that he is very direct, very opinionated and very smart. I must say that I tend to be very direct and opinionated myself," Barchi said. "I'm sure we won't always agree, but I do hope we can reach out to each other to have candid conversations when the time arises."

Ralph Izzo, BOG chair, said the search committee was charged with finding candidates who would be tireless promoters of the University — a fundraiser and friend-maker and a strong, national advocate for a research institution.

"We asked them to identify candidates who were proven leaders and visionaries able to inspire the University community," he said.

Brown, a member of the BOT and CEO of Motorola Solutions, Inc., said Barchi certainly fits Izzo's description of a University president.

"He's a powerhouse, and I think this is one of the most exciting times in the history of Rutgers," he said. "Yes there's a lot of things going on, but ... I think we couldn't have picked a better president."