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BELCHER NAMED WESTERN CAROLINA CHANCELLOR; NEWMAN RETIRES AT SHORTER

DAVID O. BELCHER, a 1979 Furman graduate who had been provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Arkansas-Little Rock, became chancellor of Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, N.C., on July 1. He succeeded John W. Bardo, who retired after 16 years at WCU.

In announcing the appointment, Tom Ross, president of the University of North Carolina system, said that Belcher “brings to the task more than two decades of academic and leadership experience at highly respected public universities. He has proven to be an energetic and effective leader who encourages strategic thinking, promotes collaboration and inclusiveness, and makes student success a university-wide responsibility.”

A native of Barnwell, S.C., Belcher earned his Furman degree in piano performance. He went on to attain a master’s degree at the University of Michigan and a doctorate at the University of Rochester’s Eastman School of Music.

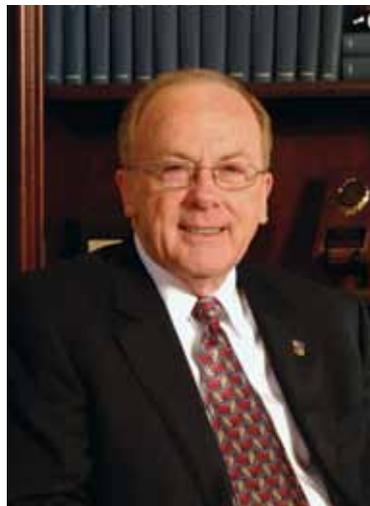
He began his academic career in 1988 at Missouri State University, where he was coordinator of keyboard studies and dean of the College of Arts and Letters. He moved to Arkansas-Little Rock in 2003.

Belcher’s wife, Susan, is a talented vocalist who taught at UALR.

In a meeting with Western Carolina faculty and staff in April, Belcher credited the chancellor at UALR, Joel Anderson, with providing him “leadership opportunities that most provosts don’t get to have” — including fundraising, chairing the institution’s NCAA recertification effort, and responsibility for campus-wide strategic planning.

He also pointed to his upbringing as the son of a minister and a teacher as key factors in his career choices. “My parents made me as a kid get up in front of people and speak in public,” he said. “They have a passion for education. They have a passion for high standards. They have a passion for a fundamental commitment to other people. Those things undergirded my childhood and teenage years.”

Belcher comes from a loyal Furman family. His parents, Posey and Jean Orr Belcher, graduated in 1954 and 1953, respectively, and his siblings are Philip ‘82, Elizabeth Belcher Mixon ‘87 and Miriam Belcher Ponder ‘91. The Belcher children have endowed an organ recital series at Furman in honor of their parents.



David Belcher (left) and Harold Newman were both music majors at Furman.

WHEN HAROLD NEWMAN retired as president of Shorter University May 31, he left a legacy of service and accomplishment.

Newman, a 1965 Furman graduate, was known for his vision and commitment on the campus in Rome, Ga., where he was a teacher and administrator for 26 years, the last six as president. Under his leadership, the Southern Baptist institution achieved university status, created a number of new programs, weathered the recent economic upheaval and stabilized its finances, and boosted enrollment.

Nelson Price, chair of Shorter’s board, said Newman “peerlessly served Shorter through a new ‘golden age’ of academic, spiritual, physical and athletic advancement . . . while serving the total communities of Rome and Floyd County in many community enterprises.”

After earning his Furman degree in music, Newman completed a Master of Church Music degree in piano performance at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Education degree at the University of Tennessee. He taught at North

Greenville College (now University) and at Andrew College before moving to Shorter as provost in 1985.

In an interview with the *Rome News-Tribune*, Newman cited a number of highlights from his years at the school, including:

- Transition to university status, completed in 2010.
- Creation of a program for adult students, which now has 2,000 enrolled, and a nursing program.
- Development of an international studies program which today takes students to six continents, and expansion of the athletics program to 21 teams.
- Recognition among top college guides as a “best value” and leading Southeastern baccalaureate college.
- Launch of an 18,000-square-foot library expansion.
- Growth of the student body from 900 to 1,500 students.

Newman told the newspaper, “I hope [Shorter] will be remembered as a strong academic school that also celebrates a strong program of athletics and is poised for a bright future. I hope they think of me as someone who has integrity personally and professionally . . . [who is] committed to the university and making it the best I can.”

Donald Dowless, former vice president for academics at North Greenville University, succeeds Newman as president.