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Jim Stewart
Furman University

Vince Moore
Furman University

John Roberts
Furman University

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A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW

With David Shi planning to step down next spring, Furman launches the quest for its 11th president.

Shortly after David Shi announced May 13 that he would retire as president of Furman at the close of the 2009-10 academic year, university trustees formed a committee that will play a leading role in selecting the next president.

The university's new leader, they acknowledge, will have large shoes to fill, as during the 15 years of the Shi administration Furman has solidified its stature as one of the nation's finest liberal arts colleges.

Under Shi's direction the university has moved to the national forefront in such areas as engaged learning, energy conservation and environmental stewardship. Since he assumed the presidency in 1994, applications to the university have increased 75 percent, faculty salaries have improved dramatically, the endowment has quadrupled, the academic profile of the student body has risen, and the 50-year-old campus has been transformed by more than \$210 million in new construction and renovation. Shi, a 1973 Furman graduate, and his wife, Susan Thomson Shi '71, have also strengthened ties between Furman and the Greenville community.

Kathleen Crum McKinney, chair of the Furman board of trustees, says, "No amount of praise can accurately convey what an incredible leader David Shi has been on campus, in the Greenville community, and in prominent national higher education organizations. We will miss him tremendously, but we also know that he and Susan have worked tirelessly on behalf of the university these past 15 years. He has earned his retirement — and the opportunity to simplify his life."

The 16-member committee, which includes

representatives from all Furman constituencies, will provide direction for the presidential search.

Trustee Richard Cullen '71 chairs the committee. He is joined by six other trustees — McKinney, David G. Ellison '72, Angela Walker Franklin '81, Carl F. Kohrt '65, Richard W. Riley '54, and Baxter M. Wynn — and former board member William B. Howes '59. Ellison, Kohrt and Howes are past chairs of the board.

Professors Brian Goess (chemistry), Kailash Khandke (economics/Asian Studies and assistant dean for study away and international education) and faculty chair Suzanne Summers (business and accounting) are also on the committee. Other members are Connie Carson, vice president for student life; Clare Folio Morris '83, president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors; and student liaisons Chadé Franklin '11 and Patrick Wallace '11. Susan Zeiger, the university's internship program director, is the staff liaison.

The committee began meeting in early June and held campus forums during the summer to seek input from faculty, staff and students. "Our thought is that we would do the really hard screening of candidates in August and September and begin interviewing soon thereafter," McKinney says, adding that a decision could come by the end of the calendar year.

McKinney says that Furman is following search guidelines established by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, a Washington, D.C.-based association that serves academic governing boards and senior level administrators. Susan Resneck Pierce of Academic Search, Inc., president emerita of the

University of Puget Sound, is a consultant to the search committee.

Shi, who turned 58 August 19, joined the Furman administration in 1993 as vice president for academic affairs and dean. He had spent the previous 17 years at Davidson College, where he was the Frontis W. Johnston Professor of History. He holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Virginia.

A widely read newspaper columnist and essayist, he is the author of several books, including *The Simple Life: Plain Living and High Thinking in American Culture* (1985) and *Facing Facts: Realism in American Thought and Culture* (1996). He is co-author of the best-selling textbook *America: A Narrative History*.

In 2006-07 he chaired the board for the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. He is currently a member of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*/*New York Times* Higher Education Cabinet and is on the board of the Association of American Colleges and Universities. He is also a board member of Second Nature, the non-profit organization responsible for administering the Presidents' Climate Commitment. He received a Presidential Leadership Award from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in 2003.

For a list of highlights of David Shi's tenure at Furman, visit www.furman.edu/president. For additional information about the presidential search and how you can provide nominations, visit www.furman.edu/newpresident.

Compiled by Jim Stewart from reports by Vince Moore and John Roberts.