

September 14, 2007

Dr. Terry MacTaggart
Consultant
University of Maine - Augusta

Dear Dr. MacTaggart:

I am writing to express my interest in being considered for the position of:

President – University of Maine Augusta.

Currently, I serve as a Senior Policy Advisor on Postsecondary Economic Development Initiatives, reporting to the President of the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE). As a Senior Policy Advisor and member of the administrative team at the Council on Postsecondary Education, I am involved with the creation of higher education public policy and the implementation of higher education reform as reflected in the Kentucky Public Agenda.

I returned to Kentucky in late 2003 at the invitation of the newly elected Governor to serve as his senior Cabinet administrator within the Governor's Office. The opportunity to be part of the Governor's agenda to dramatically improve Kentucky public policy and programs has been both rewarding and challenging. My expertise in leadership, my educational experience and my skills in working with diverse stakeholders have enabled me to contribute to the improvement of higher education public policy within the Commonwealth. My work in the Governor's Office and at CPE has involved the active and successful engagement of executive branch and legislative branch elected officials to advance access to and funding of postsecondary education for Kentucky's citizens.

My professional experience, knowledge and expertise appear to be well aligned with the expectations described for the president of the University of Maine Augusta. With energy and passion, I have pursued professional experiences that were characterized by innovative educational models and enhanced student access. Having served as president of two small non-profit private colleges, I appreciate the challenges and complexities of providing effective institutional leadership. I am knowledgeable and skilled regarding the fiscal, administrative, fundraising, academic and human resource elements that must be aligned to ensure the current and future success of an institution or a professional organization.

Midway College, where I served in my first presidency, strongly resembles the evolving mission of the University of Maine Augusta. Midway began as the Kentucky Female Orphan School, a residential high school. Later the school became a Junior College and ultimately offered Baccalaureate as well as Associates degrees in liberal arts, science, business, equine studies, nursing, and teacher education. My leadership at Midway included visioning and strategic planning as well as the financial "turn around" of the college to ensure organizational sustainability.

Building upon the historical traditions of the college, I led an intensive scenario planning process that crafted a bold new vision for the institution. That vision included successful fundraising for the first capital campaign in the history of the college. The "Bridge to a Brighter Future" campaign generated \$12 million which included \$6 million to construct

the Anne Hart Raymond Mathematics, Science and Technology classroom building and \$6 million to enhance the Midway College Endowment. As president of Midway College, I created unique and enduring “2 plus 2” partnerships with several community colleges throughout the state of Kentucky to provide baccalaureate degree completion opportunities for students who wished to remain in their local communities.

While president of Cogswell College in Silicon Valley, I had the opportunity to learn more about advanced technology solutions to a variety of societal issues. Teaching and learning paradigms are shifting dramatically as the 21st century emerges. Academic institutions must change and grow as the United States seeks to compete in the global economy. Authors such as Thomas Friedman and Richard Florida are reflecting these dramatic and far reaching economic and societal changes. It appears that the University of Maine Augusta has very effectively positioned itself to serve 21st century learners through enhanced access opportunities including distance education.

Prior to my two college presidencies, I served as a faculty member, department chair, dean and vice president at National University, the second largest private, accredited non-profit higher education institution in California. National University primarily serves adult learners and is a complex, matrix organization with over twenty-five campus locations, a distance learning operation and a number of international educational partners. National University’s organizational structure bears some resemblance to the Maine university system, with multiple academic enterprises and a shared commitment to student access.

During my eight years at National University, the institution underwent dramatic academic and organizational changes focused on enhancing academic culture, strengthening academic rigor and increasing access particularly to minority students. I provided academic and administrative leadership for the School of Education and Human Services and subsequently created the University Advancement department as a vice president.

My administrative and professional career has been characterized by consistent and thoughtful efforts to create organizational growth and positive change through a process of consensus building and engagement. As the first person in my family to graduate from college/university, I have a particular interest in first generation higher education participants. I am passionate about efforts to extend academic access to underserved students.

I believe that my resume reflects my successive administrative accomplishments but I would like to add some comments regarding my perceived qualifications with respect to specific expectations for the president of the University of Maine Augusta.

Leadership & Management

- At Midway College and Cogswell College, I created visioning and strategic planning processes utilizing Baldrige-style and Scenario to Strategy (S2S) procedures. Both approaches involved the active engagement of all institutional stakeholders in the realization of the commonly held vision. In fact, Midway College continues to successfully follow the plan that I developed while president.

- My personal leadership style features open and collaborative communication to ensure that all constituents are respected for their unique individual contribution to the success of the institution or organization.
- In my personal and professional life, I am committed to a “continuous quality improvement” philosophy. As educators, we expect quality from our students and we should demonstrate this philosophy regarding our own “life long learning” pursuits and behavior.
- My pursuit of quality is characterized by a “problem solving” mentality that embraces creative thinking and innovative implementation to ensure success.

Excellence in Education

- Both of my previous presidencies were at regionally accredited undergraduate institutions that featured a liberal arts curriculum as the foundation for specialized academic programs (engineering) and/or professional preparation (nursing, education, business and equine) degrees.
- My faculty experience has given me an appreciation for the challenges inherent in pursuing excellence in teaching. I have taught undergraduate, graduate and doctoral students. These immensely enjoyable teaching experiences have kept me personally aware of the vital mission of higher education institutions.
- While president of Midway College, I instituted the “President’s Commission on Academic Quality”, chaired by the Faculty Senate President. The Commission created faculty development workshops and release time to enhance the academic culture at Midway College.
- Academic excellence depends upon a skilled, dedicated faculty who are actively involved in governance as well as the creation of a rich scholarly campus environment. Faculty welfare must be acknowledged, supported and sustained to ensure academic excellence.
- My teaching experiences with graduate and undergraduate courses at Johns Hopkins, McGill University, University of San Diego, National University, Midway College and Spalding University provide the foundation for my administrative leadership experiences.

Financial and Fundraising Expertise

- My administrative experiences at National University, Midway College and Cogswell College involved financial “turn around” challenges. Through a variety of strategic initiatives to enhance revenue, increase fundraising and control expenses, each institution was set on a path of financial stability.
- My professional fundraising roles began at National University where I created the first fully functioning development initiative in the history of the institution.
- I have extensive experience in all aspects of fundraising including Capital Campaigns, Annual Campaigns, Major Gifts, Deferred Giving, Alumni Cultivation and Appreciation, Donor Tracking and Appreciation, Corporate Giving, Foundation & Governmental Support Programs and the creation of campus revenue centers.

- One of the highlights of my fundraising career was securing the \$2 million dollar naming gift for Midway College's Anne Hart Raymond Center for Mathematics Science and Technology. This was and continues to be the largest cash gift in the history of the 155 year old institution.
- At National University and Midway College, I successfully moved each institution to a new level of fundraising/institutional advancement through the creation of new programs, the strategic development of enhanced "giving" vehicles and the progressive engagement of alumni, philanthropists, corporate sponsors and external foundations.

External Relationships and Partnerships

- I am experienced and skilled in communications and leadership which would enable me to enthusiastically represent the University of Maine Augusta to all external groups.
- While at National University, Midway College and Cogswell College, I successfully created institutional partnerships with local businesses, non-profit organizations, other educational organizations, federal and state governmental entities and Fortune 500 companies on behalf of the academic institutions that I served.
- My current assignment involves the creation of strategic partnerships between and among a diverse group of agencies and stakeholders to advance the commercialization of intellectual property within Kentucky.
- Recently I created a 110 member STEM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics) Task Force comprised of leaders from the government, higher education, K-12 and business sectors. Chaired by the president of the University of Kentucky, the Task Force is charged with creating a strategic action plan to dramatically enhance Kentucky's performance in the STEM disciplines.

I appreciate the opportunity to share some of my qualifications with you. Throughout my life, I have pursued professional opportunities that have been characterized by the potential to have some personal impact on the lives of individuals, departments, organizations, and the community. The impressive impact of the University of Maine Augusta is inspiring and substantial. Once again, I would like to convey my enthusiastic interest in this rare opportunity to lead such an outstanding organization. I would welcome the invitation to further discuss my relevant academic, administrative and professional background with the Search Committee.

Sincere regards,

Allyson Hughes Handley Ed. D.