

Former law dean Frohnmayer takes UO's presidential reins

ADMINISTRATION: The position he entered temporarily became permanent this summer

By Sean M. Smith
Oregon Daily Emerald

The State Board of Higher Education announced the permanent appointment of Dave Frohnmayer as University president June 16, making him the 15th president in the University's 119-year history.

The board approved Frohnmayer's position following the recommendation of OSSHE Chancellor Joe Cox, who met with University students, faculty, alumni and community members before addressing the board.

"There is extremely high confidence in him as a human being and a very reassuring level of comfort with his management style, his relations with employees of all types, and the openness, frankness and candor with which he approaches the presidency," Cox said in a news release.

The board's decision ended speculation about a nationwide search for a permanent replacement for Myles Brand, who vacated the position last year to accept the presidency at Indiana University. Frohnmayer, who had been dean of the University School of Law since 1992, was appointed interim president on May 11, 1994.

University Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs John Moseley applauded the decision.

"[Frohnmayer] is really committed to this University and this state," Moseley said. "He has received very broad support, and well-deserved support, from our external constituents, and his ability to represent this university and his leadership have been outstanding."

Ed Bergeron, former president of the University Alumni Association, agreed.

"I've known four University presidents, and I've never seen anyone with as much support and enthusiasm across the



Dave Frohnmayer, whose history at the University goes back to teaching law here in 1971, was chosen to be the University's interim president in 1994. He was permanently appointed to the position this summer.

WHILE YOU WERE AWAY

University and various outside constituents," Bergeron said. "I've had the opportunity to work with [Frohnmayer] on many occasions and have been extremely impressed with his intelligence, his grasp of issues, his passion for the University, his compassion for the students, the faculty and staff, the alumni, and his dedication to the state of Oregon."

Frohnmayer said in a June 19 phone interview that he is optimistic and realistic about the presidency and the year ahead of him.

"It's a thrill, a challenge and a deep responsibility that I hold very personally,"

Frohnmayer said. "It's a thrill because the University is a great institution. It's a challenge because I've never really done anything like this before, and it's a deep responsibility because I have always cared about this institution in a deep way. I believe in the people, and it's exciting to see us unleash our potential."

"It's the people that make the place. Institutions aren't just bricks and mortar and acreage. They represent an underlying spirit of real greatness and community."

Frohnmayer's appointment came just one year into his expected two-year temporary position — an action Frohnmayer said he could not have foreseen.

"This was an unexpected twist and turn; it was not in my crystal ball 18 months ago," he

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— Jennifer Williamson
ASUO President

said. "What has surprised me is the warmth of the style of leadership and the resilience of people trying to be the best at what they do."

"I want to be in an environment where people have a sense of pride and collective commitment to excellence. That's still part of the Oregon

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It is that dedication to excellence and his respect for students and their needs that excites ASUO President Jennifer Williamson about the 1995-96 academic year.

"[Frohnmayer] is so accessible — more than past presidents have been," Williamson said. "He's honest, straightforward, and has students in mind when he makes his decisions. He's been a great advocate for students, and he's well-known and respected on the state level."

Frohnmayer said he is "gratified and quite astonished" at the level of support and "humbled" by the many compliments he has received. Still, the future will not be without conflict, he said.

"I know there will be issues of disagreement, and I will make mistakes," he said. "I hope we can deal with our differences with mutual respect. Our university has a larger mission, a commitment to something greater, and our goal is make that mission successful."

Frohnmayer, 54, is a native of Medford, Ore., and a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard University. He attended Oxford University as a Rhodes scholar, where he earned a bachelor's and master's degrees. He received his law degree from the University of California at Berkeley in 1967. He was a University law professor from 1971 to 1980, and served as the state's attorney general from 1981 to 1992.

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