

Stockton's Saatkamp accelerates resignation to immediately

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GALLOWAY – Stockton University President Herman Saatkamp resigned his position immediately Tuesday, April 28, according to a message from the school's Board of Trustees posted on the Stockton website early Tuesday.

"The Board of Trustees was notified by President Herman Saatkamp today that he will be taking medical leave effective immediately," the announcement read. "The board has accepted his letter and extends its best wishes to him."

Last week, Saatkamp announced his resignation, with the intent to leave in four months.

Harvey Kesselman, provost and executive vice president of the university has assumed the position of acting president.

"Dr. Harvey Kesselman has been named to succeed Dr. Saatkamp with all the authority, powers, duties and responsibilities associated with the executive management of the University," the website statement read. "Dr. Kesselman will serve in that capacity until July 1, 2015 when he will depart to become president of the University of Southern Maine."

In his resignation letter submitted April 22, Saatkamp said reasons included "past and present health considerations."

Saatkamp said Tuesday, "It has become increasingly evident recently that I need to deal with these health issues more immediately."

"My original plan was to remain until at least August 31, thereby giving Stockton time to initiate a plan for situating an interim president while a search for the next president was underway," Saatkamp said. "It saddens me to have to leave this abruptly."

Board of Trustees Chairman Dean Pappas said, "President Saatkamp's health is paramount. He has provided us vision and leadership for 12 years. We need to respect his health issues and concentrate on Stockton University's future."

The board said it is committed to working with Kesselman and the entire Stockton

community in the search for an interim president.

"Dr. Kesselman will be establishing three task forces that will include representation fr

Saatkamp's leaving comes as he faces mounting criticism over the handling of the purchase of Showboat Hotel Casino, which the college bought for \$18 million in December to use as an Atlantic City campus and hospitality training center.

A Stockton faculty vote last week showed more than 80

He led the growth of divisions of Stockton into full schools and the establishment of an honors program; made community service, a basic tenet that was expanded with the creation of a Martin Luther King Day of Service that has approximately 600 volunteers – most of them students – on an annual basis.

In 2003, Stockton leased the Carnegie Library Building in Atlantic City for educational programs and centers. In 2007, the building was purchased and continues to flourish.

In 2004, a master's in criminal justice and doctoral degree in physical therapy were started.

There's been a 5 percent growth in combined SAT scores.

The school went from being unranked by U.S. News and World Report to one that is consistently in the top tier of masters universities.

The full time faculty has grown by 39 percent from 219 to 304 during this period and the university boasts the highest percentage of tenure and tenure track faculty of any of New Jersey's public colleges and universities.

Stockton has been cited for its green emphases and veterans programs.

Ambassador William J. Hughes, a former Congressman from this district and the namesake for the University's Public Policy Center, said, "Herman Saatkamp has taken Stockton to new plateaus. He has coupled all the benefits of an academic institution with an entrepreneurial spirit and the region has been the beneficiary. We're going to miss this forward-looking leadership."

"Stockton has had more than the good fortune of President's Saatkamp's leadership all these years," Deininger said. "We have been equally gifted with the efforts of the first lady, Dot Saatkamp. She has worked tirelessly for the university and for area community and social organizations. She will be sorely missed."

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