

Diné College announces new president

Written by Staff Reports

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TSAILE, Ariz. – After an exhaustive search, Diné College has announced its next president Dec. 15. “I am pleased to inform you that the board of regents has named Dr. Charles “Monty” Roessel as the next president of Diné College,” reported Greg Bigman, president of the college’s board of regents.

According to Greg Bigman, “The decision by the board was a very tough one with three uniquely outstanding candidates. The selection of Dr. Roessel marks a significant milestone in the history of Diné College by having a President with deeply rooted ties to the founding and legacy of the institution. Dr. Roessel has a vested interest, compassion, and leadership to take Diné College to the next level.”

Dr. Roessel is the former Director of the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) where he oversaw 183 K-12 schools and two Tribal Colleges and Universities. As the Director, Dr. Roessel spearheaded a \$1 billion reform and reorganization effort that focused on tribal sovereignty, self-determination and self-governance as a cornerstone of school improvement. During his tenure, the bureau increased its budget by \$143 million.

Prior to his work at the BIE, Dr. Roessel served as the Superintendent of Rough Rock Community School where he implemented a Navajo Language Immersion program, improved the financial operations, and secured \$56 million in funding that resulted in the construction of a new elementary school, dormitories and renovation of the high school. He is a former Adjunct Instructor at Diné College, an award-winning author and an appointed member for editorial board of the *Journal of American Indian Education*.

“I thank the Board of Regents for this opportunity to lead such a distinguished institution and I

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look forward to working with the faculty and staff of Diné College to further its reputation as the preeminent tribal college in the country,” Roessel said.

Diné College’s Interim President, Dr. Martín Miguel Ahumada, applauded the selection of Dr.

Roessel to serve as the institution’s next President. As he stated, “I am delighted that the Diné College Board of Regents has embraced a true pioneer in Indian education—as well as a seasoned and strong leader who possesses a national-level perspective on tribal schools and colleges—to steward our institution into a very bright future.”

The board’s selection of Dr. Roessel marks the culmination of an extensive two-month nationwide search. A 7-member Presidential Search Committee, chaired by Dr. Tommy Lewis, was instrumental in the process of reviewing applications and interviewing semi-finalists for the position. The committee consisted of representatives from the Diné College Board of Regents, faculty, staff, students, community, and our institution.

Dr. Roessel will officially start his role as President on January 3, 2017. He will become the seventeenth president in the College’s 49-year history.

Dr. Ahumada has served as Interim President of Diné College for a year and originally joined Diné College two years ago as its Provost. After January 3, 2017, Dr. Ahumada will continue pursuing on his long-held interests in creating and overseeing an independent Diné College Philanthropic Foundation.

ACCT supported Diné College through their extensive network in the search process and guidance in selecting a candidate. ACCT serves 1,200 colleges and the ACCT is a non-profit educational organization whose mission is to assist community colleges with recruitment, selection and retention of Presidents with the highest caliber.

The Board of Regents would like to thank the ACCT, each member of the Presidential Search Committee, and applicants for their contributions. “The selection process brought about a lively discussion among the College’s stakeholders regarding their individual and collective goals,

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needs, and dreams for the institution,” said Regent Bigman.