

TO: The USC Community

FROM: Edward P. Roski, Jr., Chairman, USC Board of Trustees

Date: March 11, 2010

SUBJECT: C. L. Max Nikias is named 11th president of USC

Last night, by a unanimous vote, the Board of Trustees elected C. L. Max Nikias, USC executive vice president and provost, to serve as the 11th president of the University of Southern California, effective in August 2010.

As you can see from the attached announcement, Max is a remarkable and inspiring leader, a brilliant scholar, and the best possible person to lead our university forward. Because of what he has already accomplished at USC, and his bold and exciting vision for the future, he was the unanimous choice of the search advisory committee, whose members spent hundreds of hours reviewing portfolios and letters of nomination to get to 75 serious candidates, and then interviewing seven finalists – an impressive and diverse group of university presidents and provosts.

The committee's work also benefitted from the thoughtful and insightful comments of the students, faculty, alumni leaders, community representatives, staff, and various university supporters and friends who participated in the 15 constituent group meetings that were held on campus between November and January. They, along with the many other individuals who sent in their ideas and recommendations, provided invaluable advice and ideas to the Trustees and to the advisory committee.

And finally, I want to acknowledge our consultant, Bill Funk, who worked diligently to make this an exhaustive international search, and to the members of our Board of Trustees for their wise counsel in this critical matter.

President Steve Sample will, of course, continue to lead USC until Max Nikias assumes his new duties on August 3, 2010.

The Presidential Advisory Search Committee, which I chaired, included the following members of our university community:

USC Trustees

- Wallis Annenberg, chairman, president, and CEO of the Annenberg Foundation
- Frank Cruz, president of Cruz and Associates, co-founder of Telemundo, former chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting

- Stanley Gold, chairman emeritus of the USC Board of Trustees, president of Shamrock Holdings and Shamrock Capital Advisors
- Ray Irani, chairman and CEO of Occidental Petroleum Corporation
- Ronald Sugar, chairman emeritus of Northrop Grumman Corporation
- Ronald Tutor, chairman and CEO of the Tutor Perini Corporation

USC Faculty

- Warren Bennis, University Professor; Distinguished Professor of Business Administration, USC Marshall School of Business; founding chairman of USC's Leadership Institute; author of 30 books on leadership (a field of study he pioneered), change, and creative collaboration; former president of the University of Cincinnati
- Solomon Golomb, University Professor; Distinguished Professor of Electrical Engineering and Mathematics; holder of the Andrew and Erna Viterbi Chair in Communications, USC Viterbi School of Engineering, with a joint appointment in the USC College of Letters, Arts and Sciences; member of the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences; a Fellow of both the IEEE and the American Association for the Advancement of Science; recipient of the USC Presidential Medallion and the Shannon Award of the IEEE's Information Theory Society
- Velina Hasu Houston, professor, director of the Dramatic Writing Program, associate dean of faculty, USC School of Theatre; internationally acclaimed playwright, published poet, essayist, and screenwriter who has had a significant impact on Pan-Asian American feminist dramatic literature; recipient of the inaugural USC Provost's Mentoring Award
- Michael Nichol, professor of clinical pharmacy and pharmaceutical economics and policy, USC School of Pharmacy, and director of Graduate Programs in Health, USC School of Policy, Planning and Development, with joint appointments in the USC Davis School of Gerontology and the USC School of Policy, Planning, and Development; current member of the USC Academic Senate Executive Board and past president of the USC Faculty
- Vaughn Starnes, M.D., Distinguished Professor and Chairman, Department of Surgery, surgeon-in-chief at the USC University Hospital and the USC Norris Cancer Hospital, H. Russell Smith Foundation Chair for Cardiovascular Thoracic Research, Keck School of Medicine of USC; executive director of the USC CardioVascular Thoracic Institute

- Kevin Starr, University Professor; professor of history, USC College of Letters, Arts and Sciences; California state librarian emeritus; author of multivolume series on the history of California; recipient of the 2006 National Humanities Medal