



NEW JERSEY

Association of State Colleges and Universities

150 West State Street, Trenton NJ 08608

Phone (609) 989-1100

QuickTakes!

Merodie A. Hancock Selected as President of Thomas Edison State University

December 20, 2017



Merodie A. Hancock, PhD, was unanimously elected the fourth president of Thomas Edison State University (TESU) by the institution's board of trustees at a special board meeting today. She will take office on March 5, 2018.

"Thomas Edison State University is such a respected pillar among adult-serving institutions in the United States and has been at the forefront of offering degree pathways for busy, working adults since its inception in 1972," said Dr. Hancock, who currently serves as president of SUNY Empire State College in New York. "I hold dear this mission, and am

honored to take on the presidency of such a pivotal university."

TESU Board Chair Brian T. Maloney said Hancock's record of accomplishment and commitment to innovation and excellence made her an ideal choice to lead Thomas Edison State University.

"We are honored and excited to have Dr. Hancock as our new president. She has the experience, expertise and vision to lead Thomas Edison in today's challenging marketplace," said Mr. Maloney, who chaired the university's presidential search committee. "Dr. Hancock has dedicated her distinguished career to expanding access to higher education for adults, including active military service members and veterans, and is a national leader in meeting the unique needs of nontraditional students."

Dr. Hancock has served as president of SUNY Empire State College since 2013. She is responsible for the overall operation of the institution's 35 locations throughout New York, the worldwide Center for Distance Learning and eight international sites and oversees the teaching and learning of the college's 20,000 students, as well as the employment of 1,700 faculty and staff and active engagement with 70,000 alumni.

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Prior to joining SUNY Empire State College, Dr. Hancock served as vice president at Central Michigan University Global Campus where she was responsible for delivering academic programs at the university's remote campuses, military and community college locations and online programs. During her tenure at Central Michigan, Dr. Hancock served on several strategic committees and oversaw tuition pricing and discounting strategies, compliance with accreditation and licensure regulations, partnerships with community colleges and increased diversity recruitment. She has also held teaching and administrative leadership positions at the University of Maryland University College and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Dr. George A. Pruitt, who will officially leave office after serving as Thomas Edison's president for 35 years, praised the board's selection for the institution's new president.

"I am delighted that Merodie Hancock will be the next president of our university," said Dr. Pruitt. "She is a tested executive, an experienced educator and a visionary leader who has spent her career in our academic space and understands how technology can remove barriers in higher education to meet the needs of adults. Her passion for serving members of our military and veterans will also serve the Thomas Edison State University community well."

The university's presidential search began shortly after Dr. Pruitt announced his plans to step down from the office in June 2017.

The university formed a presidential search committee and conducted an extensive national search that attracted many qualified candidates. Chaired by Mr. Maloney and assisted by the executive search firm Heidrick and Struggles, the committee included university trustees Frank Clyburn, president, Global Oncology, Merk & Co., Inc.; Eric Lear, managing partner, Lear and Pannepacker, LLP; and Gualberto (Gil) Medina, executive vice president CBRE, Inc.; as well as Amy Mansue, president, Southern Region, RWJBarnabas Health; Judy Persichilli, former president and CEO of Catholic Health East; and Denise Rogers, vice chancellor for Interprofessional Programs at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences.

"On behalf of the board, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our committee members who did a tremendous job conducting this search," said Mr. Maloney. "This work has culminated with an extraordinary new leader for Thomas Edison State University."

Dr. Hancock has been involved in several professional organizations, including the Distance Education Commission Advisory Group, Inside Track Advisory Board, Council of College and Military Educators, League for Innovation, National Association of Institutions for Military Education Services (past president) and the National Commission on Online Learning Benchmarking Study. She has also served as an external reviewer for several universities and participated in numerous self-studies, reports and evaluation visits for regional accreditors, the Department of Defense, state approving agencies and specialized accrediting

organizations, and has made presentations at professional conferences and meetings on topics such as strategic partnerships, pricing models and innovative teaching best practices.

Dr. Hancock holds a PhD in urban services and education administration from Old Dominion University, an MBA from Claremont Graduate University and a Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Scripps College. Additionally, she has a certificate from the Institute of Educational Management from Harvard University, a certificate from the University Professional Continuing Education Association Leadership Academy at New York University, a certificate in Process Design and Implementation: Reengineering and Change Management from Michael Hammer and Company and a certificate in Nonprofit Board Leadership from the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy.

“I offer my thanks to President Pruitt for his years of service and leadership of TESU and to the Board of Trustees, whose passion for the university and its mission is so apparent,” said Hancock. “I look forward to joining the Thomas Edison team as we build on a great foundation, continuing to serve the adult student with innovation and excellence.”

About Thomas Edison State University

Thomas Edison State University provides flexible, high-quality, collegiate learning opportunities for self-directed adults. One of New Jersey's senior public institutions of higher education, the University offers associate, bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees in more than 100 areas of study. Students earn degrees through a wide variety of rigorous and high-quality academic methods that can be customized to meet their individual needs. Identified by the New York Times as "the national leader in the assessment of adult learning and a pioneer in the use of educational technologies. The University is home to The John S. Watson Institute for Public Policy. The New Jersey State Library is an affiliate of Thomas Edison State University. Learn more at www.tesu.edu.