

Laurence B. Alexander  
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November 22, 2012

Ms. Marion Frenche  
Greenwood/Asher & Associates, Inc.  
UAPB Chancellor  
42 Business Center Drive, Suite 206  
Miramar Beach, FL 32550

Dear Ms Frenche,

Thank you for contacting me about the outstanding leadership opportunity available as Chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. As a parent of two students at Historically Black Institutions and as an educator with more than 25 years of experience at highly ranked institutions, I am aware of the great prestige of UAPB and I am encouraged by the dynamic promise and prospect for its future. I am acquainted with UAPB's reputation in the state and region, its renowned faculty and excellent academic programs across the institution. I am attracted by the institution's its location, the significant engagement and partnerships, and the great opportunities that they present for development and fundraising. The breadth of my university administration experience over the last 25 years has prepared me to lead an institution like UAPB. After previous tenures at large metropolitan universities in New Orleans and Philadelphia, I've developed a significant academic administrative portfolio in Gainesville, Florida, that spans undergraduate, graduate and professional education. I would welcome the opportunity to leverage the prior success of UAPB to build on the outstanding past of the university.

I believe that my strengths and experience in higher education are aligned with the qualifications for the position. I have served successfully as a Department Chair in a major top-ranked program, a Provost Administrative Fellow in the Academic Affairs Office of a top-tiered 50,000-student AAU (Association of American Universities) land-grant institution with a major Health Sciences Center and healthcare network, and a senior-level academic administrator in university-wide academic roles akin to an Associate Provost, through working as Associate Dean of a 12,000-student Graduate School and as Director of the Office of Graduate Minority Programs. Currently, I am a Fellow for the 2012-2013 Southeastern Conference Academic Consortium Academic Leadership Development Program.

Given the breadth of my experience at major institutions, I would be honored to serve on behalf of the University of Arkansas President and Board of Trustees, and to join with the faculty, staff and other administrators in working collaboratively to fulfill the responsibilities of the Chancellor to "build upon the current foundation of learning, collegial relationships and shared governance to provide leadership in continuing development and implementation of UAPB's Strategic Plan." As the Chancellor, I would also "seek to recognize and foster the mission of UAPB based upon its history as a land-grant institution, its HBCU character and promote its 'Flagship of the Delta' values of justice, fairness, ethics, leadership and service."

I have enclosed for your consideration my curriculum vitae and I have attached an explanation of how my experience matches the position requirements. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss this position with you.

Sincerely,

Laurence B. Alexander, J.D., Ph.D.  
Associate Dean, UF Graduate School  
Professor, UF College of Journalism and Communications  
12th Distinguished Alumni Professor  
Distinguished Teaching Scholar  
Research Foundation Professor

**LAURENCE B. ALEXANDER, J.D., PH.D.**

**QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE**

**ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS SUFFICIENT TO ENGENDER COOPERATION AND RESPECT FROM THE STATE LEGISLATURE, LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE-WIDE BUSINESS COMMUNITIES, AND AM&N/UAPB ALUMNI, FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS**

I have had a long and distinguished record in higher education involving teaching, research, service and administration. Thanks to the past commitment at University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff to the city, region and state, the university has been successful in securing partnerships that promoted economic development. The next Chancellor will need to leverage that success to enhance the university's development and academic engagement profile. If I am selected as the next Chancellor, I would look forward to leading the university's efforts to through engagement, partnerships, collaborative educational efforts, fostering grants that will leverage the community ties to bring in research funds.

My prior engagement experiences have contributed greatly to my commitment to champion the role of higher education in advancing economic development. At a department chair at UF, I led the Journalism Department External Advisory Council, a group of alumni, donors and friends. I also worked with schools in Florida through the Florida Scholastic Press Association, which was headquartered in our department and the Summer Journalism Institute, a weeklong residency program to train and recruit high school students. Later, I successfully engaged external constituents through the UF foundation, alumni association and athletic association as a Distinguished Alumni Professor, an Alumni Association Board member and as an Athletic Association Board member. I also engaged the campus students and the local community as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Independent Florida Alligator. As Graduate School Associate Dean, I have helped broaden and deepen partnerships with the Florida Education Fund and with other higher education institutions through NSF-funded alliances.

While a faculty member and administrator at Temple University, I reached out to corporate leaders at The Philadelphia Inquirer to assist the department with guest speakers, student resume critiques, one-on-one meetings with editors, and student internships and shorter term work opportunities. Also, I represented the university in reaching out to The Philadelphia Daily News as a partner in the Dow Jones Summer Institute for high school students. The partnership aided the newspaper with student workshops on ethical and legal issues, and the university gained access to the students for recruitment purposes.

Moreover, my role in community engagement and my perspectives on fundraising were greatly enhanced through my selection as UF's Distinguished Alumni Professor. As a result of my ambassadorial role as the alumni professor, my commitment to major-gift fundraising, and my depth of knowledge of development gained through various courses and workshops, I would arrive in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, ready and willing to work with the development team to hit the ground running to begin stewarding gifts already received by the university, cultivating previously identified prospects, and identifying new potential donors for cultivation.

**AN EARNED DOCTORATE OR EQUIVALENT TERMINAL DEGREE**

I earned a Ph.D. at Florida State University and I also earned a J.D. at Tulane University. I rose through the ranks to earn tenure and promotion from assistant to associate professor and from associate to full professor at UF, an AAU institution.

**A PROVEN TRACK RECORD FOR BUILDING AN ACCOMPLISHED, TALENTED, AND DIVERSE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM AND UNDERSTANDS THEIR ROLE AS LEADER, IN A CORPORATE MODEL OF AN HISTORIC ACADEMIC INSTITUTION**

My involvement in hiring various high-level university employees has been extensive. I am pleased to report that I have been entrusted with the shared responsibility of hiring senior academic and non-academic leaders at UF. As such, I have gained experience on more than a dozen search committees, including one for the Provost and Senior VP for Academic Affairs and various other leaders. Currently, I am the chair of a search committee for a Senior Associate Dean in the College of Journalism and Communications.

**DEMONSTRATE PROGRESSIVELY RESPONSIBLE ADMINISTRATIVE/MANAGERIAL EXPERIENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

At the University of Florida, I have had increasingly significant academic administrative and budgetary responsibility. In fact, I have served more than two decades as a faculty member and administrator at one of the largest and most complex research universities in the nation, the University of Florida. My experience with a diversified broad-based academic portfolio containing all 16 colleges at UF has prepared me to be an outstanding Chancellor at UAPB. I would bring to the position more than 12 successful years of progressive academic leadership experience in large, dynamic universities. My administrative experience includes service as the Director of the Journalism Program in the English Department at the University of New Orleans, Director of the News-Editorial Sequence in the Journalism Department at Temple University, Chair of the UF Department of Journalism, Associate Dean of the UF Graduate School and Director of the UF Office of Graduate Minority Programs. The role of Associate Dean and Director required me to serve in a capacity akin to an Associate Provost. In addition, I served as a Provost Administrative Fellow in the UF Academic Affairs Office and as an advisor to the Provost as a member of the prestigious UF Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars. Currently, I am a Fellow for the 2012-2013 Southeastern Conference Academic Consortium Academic Leadership Development Program.

**UNDERSTANDS CHANGING TRENDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION AND THEIR IMPACT ON STUDENT FINANCIAL AID, RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND GRADUATION RATES**

As a long-time administrator with a Ph.D. in Higher Education, I am aware of the major trends and issues in higher education. I would welcome the opportunity to demonstrate my knowledge and understanding through the interview process.

**HAS EXPERIENCE WITH STRATEGIC PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT IN PERSONNEL AND PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS, ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC RECRUITING**

My experience in strategic planning and program development is extensive. As Graduate School associate dean, I have contributed most significantly in the areas of student development, financial assistance, curriculum, diversity, federal grants, external development, communication, support for interdisciplinary students, and student teaching assistant training and professional development. Specifically, I have secured funding from the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation for educational programs, managed a substantial minority programs office, directed the Graduate School's development and fundraising efforts, and developed strategic plans for increasing the enrollment, retention and graduation of underrepresented minority students. As a department chair, I led the faculty in charting the future of the Magazine Sequence, developing journalism students for success in the national Hearst Writing Competitions and other student development activities, and increasing faculty research productivity.

**ON-LINE AND DISTANCE LEARNING INITIATIVES**

For the last seven years, I have served as chair of the UF Graduate Curriculum Committee, reviewing 30-40 course proposals monthly for mostly online courses.

**ACCREDITATION**

I initiated and participated in a Shadowing Experience (2010-2011) with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) in Decatur, Georgia. The experience involved all aspects of institutional accreditation, including orientation, participation in two SACS accreditation annual meetings, an off-site review meeting, and joining an on-site review team. During the experience, I was under the instruction of Dr. Belle S. Wheelan, President, and Dr. Tom E. Benberg, Senior Vice President and Chief of Staff. This experience has directed me to resources for building effective world-class academic programs at UAPB through connecting assessment to planning and budgeting.

## **PROGRAM AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **Demonstrated Commitment to Serving Faculty and Staff**

I believe in advancing faculty enhancement activities toward the goal of achieving excellence in performance in instruction, research and service. At UAPB, I would work as an enabler, supporting faculty development efforts that are tied to the university's goals. Traditional development support that we have provided at UF included sabbaticals, funding for summer research and creative activities, seed grants, and professional exchanges. Through our NSF-funded I<sup>3</sup> Program at UF, we have fostered and supported doctoral student research and teaching development that is helping to transform doctoral student preparation for academic and non-academic careers.

As an inaugural member of the UF Academy of Distinguished Teaching Scholars, I meet monthly with the other scholars and serve in an advisory role to the provost on matters involving faculty development. As a department chair, I encouraged and supported faculty in their pursuit of grants and contracts. Faculty responded by winning major externally funded grants from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. As chair, I also have mentored several faculty members through the tenure and promotion process. Since leaving the chair, I have continued to mentor two of our faculty members through the tenure and promotion, one achieving full professorship. I've also had the privilege of leading faculty within the Journalism Department on a Strategic Plan for numerous projects and innovations that directly improved student performance and the department's national prominence. I have aided and supported university-wide faculty and administrators through my leadership on the Graduate Curriculum Committee, Graduate Coordinators and Staff meetings, and occasionally through the Graduate Council.

As Chancellor, I would use my experience in faculty development and human resources development to provide faculty and staff with enriching and stimulating opportunities to promote excellence in instruction, research and service at UAPB.

### **Demonstrated Commitment to Serving Students**

My leadership in developing students to their fullest potential is evident—both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Specific examples include:

#### **Undergraduate Activities:**

- Principal Investigator and Director of the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, which has produced Beinecke and Truman Scholars, among others.
- Director of the UF Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences Undergraduate Scholars Program, bringing students to presentations at 3 consecutive meetings of the National Conference on Undergraduate Research: University of Montana, Missoula, Montana, 2010; Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York, 2011; Weber State University, Ogden, Utah, 2012
- Co-Director of the UF Summer Research for Rising Seniors Program, 2010-2011, which recruited 32 minority students to UF from HBCUs and HACUs for research experiences supported by the UF Howard Hughes Medical Institute Program.
- Sponsorship of 5 departmental student professional organizations: Florida Magazine Student Association, Kappa Tau Alpha, National Press Photographers Association, Society of Professional Journalists, and Student Society for News Design.
- Chaired the William Randolph Hearst Writing UF Competition "The Pulitzer Prizes of College Journalism, placing in the top 5 in the nation in writing three consecutive years.
- Chair of the Independent Florida Alligator Board of Directors and Publisher of the Journalism Department's Orange & Blue Magazine, 1994-1998

#### **Graduate Activities:**

- Development of a campus-wide multidisciplinary collaborative Graduate Student Grants and Fellowships Conference--the largest and most successful event of its kind at any university.
- Development of monthly Professional Development Workshops for Graduate Students.
- Moderating and assisting with development of a university-wide orientation and training for new graduate student teaching assistants.

As Chancellor at UAPB, I would foster impactful educational growth experiences geared toward student success through first-year seminars and experiences, common intellectual experiences, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, and capstone courses and projects. I would work on promoting student success externally and internally through working across the university in key partnerships that foster student achievement, experiential learning, international programs, leadership development and service learning.

## FUNDRAISING

One of the key indicators of the College's advancement will be its ability to generate external funding. Thanks to the fundraising commitment at UAPB and the generosity of its alumni and friends, the university has been successful in securing external resources. The next Chancellor will need to leverage that success to enhance the university's development and fundraising profile. My experience and background in resource development would build on the previous Chancellor's efforts to raise funds on behalf of UAPB's academic programs. While serving as associate dean of the Graduate School, I have taken a leadership role in fundraising and development. In addition to building a foundation for gift-based fundraising, I have successfully raised additional funding for the unit from external and internal sources.

- Principal Investigator for a U.S. Department of Education Grant for \$900,000 to fund the training of more than 100 low-income and underrepresented undergraduate students in the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program.
- Co-author for a \$1 million National Science Foundation Bridge-to-the-Doctorate Grant that funded two years of graduate studies for a cohort of minority students in the sciences. The grant was leveraged internally with the Office of Research for an additional \$300,000 for student support.
- Co-Principal Investigator of a second NSF Bridge-to-the-Doctorate grant to support minority students in the sciences that was leveraged to receive additional institutional support for a total of \$1.3 million for students in the 2010-2012.
- Co-Principal Investigator of a third NSF Bridge-to-the-Doctorate grant to support minority students in the sciences that was leveraged to receive additional institutional support for a total of \$1.3 million for students in the 2012-2014.
- A Co-Principal Investigator for a \$1 million National Science Foundation Innovation Through Institutional Integration Grant to fund new synergies and professional development programs for STEM graduate students.
- As UF's representative to the Florida Education Fund, I was able to increase from five to 16 the annual number of students from all disciplines who receive full funding through the McKnight Doctoral Fellowships. With each fellowship valued at more than \$150,000 over five years, the additional fellowship awards are worth more than \$6 million.
- We were successful internally in leveraging the McNair grant to acquire up to \$150,000 annually in university funding for creation of the McNair Graduate Assistantship Program.
- I have the responsibility of directing the UF portion of an NSF Alliance Grant with four other institutions that to support undergraduate and graduate minority students in the social, behavioral and economic sciences.

Moreover, my role in community engagement and my perspectives on fundraising were greatly enhanced through my selection as UF's Distinguished Alumni Professor. As a result of my ambassadorial role as the alumni professor, my commitment to major-gift fundraising, and my depth of knowledge of development gained through various courses and workshops, I would arrive in Pine Bluff ready and willing to work with the development team to hit the ground running to begin stewarding gifts already received by the university, cultivating previously identified prospects, and identifying new potential donors for cultivation.