

Alumni academic

Leaders

By Tammy DiDomenico

Syracuse University

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on numerous

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institutions across

the country

Illustrations By Marty Blake

When Leo Lambert G'84, newly minted president of Elon College in North Carolina, attended the annual symposium for new college presidents at Harvard University earlier this year, he was struck by one characteristic shared by many participants. "I couldn't believe how many people had Syracuse University in common," Lambert says.

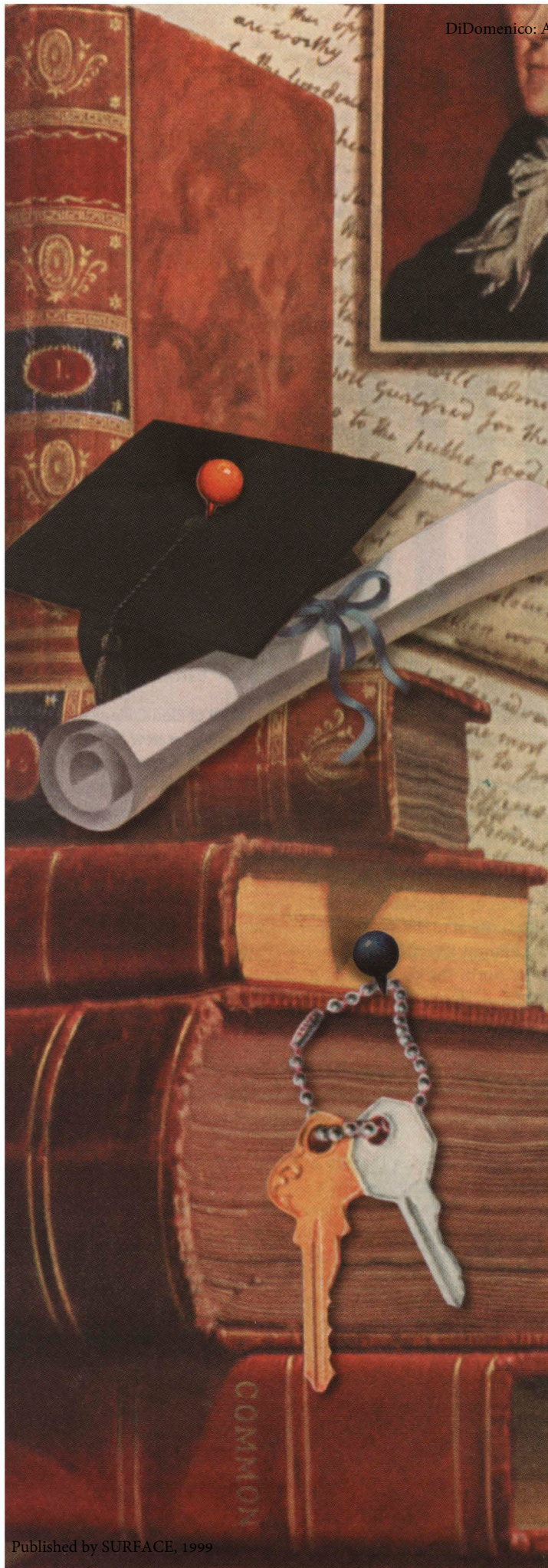
Lambert, who earned a doctoral degree in education from SU, is one of a growing number of academic leaders who have educational ties to the University. Whether they earned degrees in education, management, political science, or public administration, these leaders cite their time on the Hill as critical to the development of their management style.

For some alumni, like Anne Hopkins '63, G'65, G'69, president of the University of North Florida, SU was the driving force behind an early interest in higher education. For others, like John Griffith G'80, president of Presbyterian College in South Carolina, SU was a brief but influential stop on a diverse course of educational and professional development.

Then there are those, like Lambert and the University of North Carolina's Molly Corbett Broad '62, who not only logged time in Syracuse University classrooms, but also launched their administrative careers at Syracuse.

So what are the common threads shared by SU alumni who now lead other academic institutions? Most say the quality of their SU education contributed to their development as leaders. When asked what makes a good academic leader, they cite many of the qualities they observed in the administrators they met here—the ability to listen and work collaboratively, to put the needs of the institution above personal ambition, and to maintain good relationships with various constituencies of an academic community. They now try to incorporate these same characteristics into their own management style.

All believe that academic leaders must be acutely attuned to the institutions they serve, and be willing to diversify their skills and move on when their contributions no longer suit a particular academic setting. "Higher education is a difficult field in this day and age," says A.



Lee Fritschler G'60, G'65, former president of Dickinson College in Pennsylvania, who has been nominated by President Bill Clinton to serve as assistant secretary for post-secondary education. "It is such a vast system, with more than 3,000 colleges, universities, and community colleges. Of all these institutions, no two are alike—which makes it difficult to generalize about educational styles."

In the following series of profiles, alumni who are leaders in higher education reflect on their educational experience at SU and share their thoughts on the principles of good academic leadership.

Anne Hopkins '63, G'65, G'69

Anne Hopkins has made her mark on several academic institutions, but none is as close to her heart as Syracuse University, where she earned bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in political science. "It was wonderful every step of the way," recalls Hopkins, a fourth-generation graduate of SU. "Syracuse runs deep in my soul."



In fact, Hopkins still considers the Oath to Athenian City State, inscribed in the foyer of Maxwell Hall, as a guiding force in her life. The oath is a pledge to the duties of public service and leadership, and she has found it easy to adapt those principles to the academic world.

Hopkins, president of the University of North Florida (UNF) in Jacksonville since last January, says her time at Syracuse influenced every aspect of her life. Although a career in educational administration was not her goal, she became increasingly aware of her love for academia during her graduate work at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

After completing her studies in 1969, she became an assistant professor of political science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York, and later chaired the political science department. In 1974, she joined the faculty at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and later served as assistant provost and vice provost. "In Tennessee I really found out how the academic world works," Hopkins says. "At that point I began to take a strong interest in administration."

In 1990, she became an administrator at the University of Minnesota system, serving as vice provost for arts and sciences and engineering. Five years later she was named provost and executive vice president for academic affairs at Miami University of Ohio, where she later served as acting president.

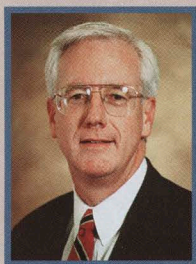
For Hopkins, the key to successful leadership is a willingness to get to know the people she serves. She also recognizes the importance of cultivating a strong relationship with faculty members. "The faculty are the heart and soul of an educational institution," she says. "My time as a provost gave me a good opportunity to see how that relationship works."

A successful administrative tenure, Hopkins believes, contributes to the institution's progress and challenges the individual. "Eventually you reach a point where you have done all you can

do," she says. Which is why, as much as she enjoyed working at Miami of Ohio, she knew the time was right to assume the presidency at UNF. With the benefit of faculty and administrative experience, Hopkins looks forward to building a relationship with the 12-year-old university. "I'm really sure of who I am now," she says. "I am ready to listen to the needs of the university community, and hope to learn a lot for as long as I am here."

John Griffith 6'80

Education has always been a big part of John Griffith's life, and he has built his approach to academic leadership on a personal commitment to spirituality and intellect. His father was an academic dean at Colgate University in Hamilton, New York, and Griffith always suspected he would travel a similar road. "For me, it seemed natural," says Griffith, now in his second year as president of Presbyterian College in Clinton, South Carolina.



He spent the majority of his academic career studying religion at Dickinson College in Pennsylvania and Harvard Divinity School. As a doctoral student at SU, he began considering an administrative career. "I saw my career path as either teaching and research in higher education, or administration," he says.

After several years as a pastor, lecturer, and college chaplain, Griffith made a smooth transition to academic administration at small, church-affiliated schools. "These institutions are quality liberal arts colleges," he says. "In the South there seems to be a close affiliation with church values and commitment to academic quality. At these traditionally Presbyterian institutions, I find that reason and faith can be in partnership."

Griffith's leadership style is based on his early influences and shaped by professional experiences. "I don't think you can come to an institution with a rigid set of ideas," he says. "There are things you learn along the way. I certainly see parts of my administrative style that reflect the traits of people who influenced me, but I also know you develop your own ways of doing things through your own experiences."

Griffith believes it's important for a college president to stay connected with student needs. And he readily admits it's not easy to balance the demands of an institution's various constituencies. "In the final analysis, we are here for one reason—to facilitate interaction between faculty and students," he says.

At Presbyterian College, Griffith recently completed a year-long strategic planning initiative that required him to interact with every part of the college community. "I operate from a consensus-building standpoint, so this was a great way to get started," he says.

Griffith says his leadership style is best suited to traditional liberal arts colleges with low faculty-student ratios, and believes he has found his niche in southern schools like Pres-

byterian College. "It's what I know well, and this is an exciting time for this area of the country—the economy is exploding and there are many new opportunities," he says. "This institution's star is on the rise. It's a very attractive opportunity."

Antonette Cleveland 6'79

Whenever she can, Antonette Cleveland, president of Niagara County Community College in Sanborn, New York, goes to lunch with an engaging, ever-changing group of consultants. She looks forward to these casual meetings that are peppered with lively conversations. Sometimes she even gets a few tips to take back to the office.



Cleveland's lunches are not with top business executives or community leaders. They are with students at the campus dining center. "You have to find ways to maintain contact with students," Cleveland says. "It is important, especially at a community college, for the president to be as visible as possible."

As secure as she is today in her role as an academic leader, Cleveland didn't exactly plan for a career in educational administration. She earned a master's degree in health education from the State University of New York College at Cortland, and planned to pursue a career in health administration.

But when she came to SU to finish work on a doctoral degree, everything changed. Cleveland interned as an assistant to Harold Rankin, then-interim president at Utica College, and was surprised to find herself so comfortable in the academic environment. "I literally researched his management style," Cleveland says. "When I finished that experience, I said to myself, 'Someday I'd like to be president of a small college.'"

Cleveland launched her educational administration career with a seven-year stint at the State University of New York College of Agriculture and Technology at Morrisville, where she held various positions, including director of international programs and associate dean of academic affairs. From there she went to Herkimer Community College and Rockland Community College in Suffern, New York, where she served as interim president. Last January Cleveland was appointed president of Niagara County Community College. "I am thoroughly enjoying it," she says.

Cleveland has tailored her leadership skills to suit the unique needs of small community colleges. "We have a lot of nontraditional students," she says. "These people overcome so much to get their degrees. I can't tell you how meaningful it is to be a part of that."

Niagara, Cleveland believes, can benefit from her progressive ideas and strengthen its role in the community by addressing such issues as the needs of nontraditional students. "For example, I'd love to be able to offer campus housing for students who are single parents," she says. "There is enormous potential at an institution like this. That's the nature of the job."

Like other academic leaders, Cleveland knows the importance of listening to those around her—especially the faculty. “Some faculty members have a deep commitment to the institution,” she says. “As an administrator, you’re seen as the new kid on the block. You have to expect some proving time. For an academic leader, it can take six months to two years to build momentum. And sometimes, the fit isn’t right.”

While she has faced her share of institutional problems over the years, Cleveland has enjoyed her career choices. “Every place I’ve been, I’ve felt comfortable,” she says. “I have been lucky to have good people around me. And I have learned by asking questions and seeking help when I needed it. That’s not just applicable in the academic world—it’s a lesson for all of us.”

Molly Corbett Broad ’62

As a sophomore at Syracuse University, Molly Corbett Broad decided to major in mathematics, with the goal of becoming a teacher. That fall, she took an economics course with a professor named Melvin A. Eggers. After her first exam, Eggers offered some life-altering advice: major in economics instead.



The suggestion surprised Broad, but she was impressed by Eggers’s interest in her talent and willingness to advise her. Today, when she hears about Syracuse University’s efforts to provide a student-centered education, she remembers her own experiences with Eggers and other faculty members. “Frankly, that’s exactly the kind of university I knew—student

centered,” says Broad, president of the University of North Carolina. “I benefited greatly from the quality of education I received.”

After earning a master’s degree in economics from Ohio State University, Broad returned to Syracuse in 1971 to work in the Office of Budget and Planning and later served as director of institutional research. She left to become deputy director of the New York State Commission on the Future of Post-Secondary Education, but returned again to SU in 1977. This time, she was named vice president for government and corporate relations, a post she held for eight years. “I quickly realized the University was a place where I could engage in my life’s work,” Broad says. “I came to understand the University from the inside out, having had such a range of experiences. It was a great place to learn about being an administrator.”

By the time Broad became a staff member, Eggers was Chancellor. When she speaks of her years working as a member of his administrative team, Broad’s respect for her former professor is unmistakable. She admired his knack for diplomacy, and calls upon his lessons frequently in her own work. “Mel Eggers was a wonderful role model,” Broad says. “He never confused the man with the office he served. He had so much respect for the Office of the Chancellor.”

In 1985, Broad moved on again to become executive director and chief executive officer of the Arizona Board of Re-

gents. In 1992, Broad took her talents to the California State University system, where she served as executive vice chancellor and chief operating officer.

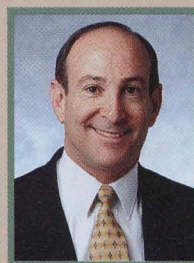
Because Eggers was so progressive, Broad, a 1999 Arents Award recipient, still applies many of his leadership qualities to her own work. Eggers’s collaborative approach was quite different from the corporate style followed by most academic leaders of the day. It was an approach Broad emulated—and later refined into her own. “My views of leadership are probably shaped by the views of today,” Broad says. “They are a culmination of experiences.”

Broad, who gave this fall’s Ganders Lecture in the School of Education, is now in her second year as president of the University of North Carolina (UNC) system, the oldest public university in the United States. She also is the university’s first woman president. Like Eggers, she realizes the importance of having a deep sense of respect for the office, knowing her leadership is only one factor in UNC’s success. “There is a great link with the past and with tradition,” she says. “The contributions of a good president can only enhance a sense of balance. It is the faculty who are the heart of an institution. Our job, as leaders, is to create an environment that permits academic growth.”

Robert Miller ’74

During the early seventies, Robert Miller taught political science at Le Moyne College in Syracuse and was quite certain the classroom was his place in the academic world. “I never planned to become an administrator,” says the president of Nazareth College in Rochester, New York.

When Miller was asked to chair Le Moyne’s political science department, he discovered a different arena in which to apply his talents. “I enjoyed being chair and was effective,” he recalls. “Because of my time at SU, I was well trained in political science and public administration and that was important.”



Miller credits his days as a Maxwell School doctoral student with enhancing his understanding of disciplined thinking and organizational theory. While doctoral studies gave him academic depth, his time on the Le Moyne faculty provided teaching and management skills. These experiences play a prominent role in his work today as president of Nazareth College. “That credibility comes through in the way I relate to the faculty,” he says.

Miller also crafted his leadership style through a variety of faculty and administrative roles at Northern Kentucky University, Rollins College in Florida, Antioch University in California, and Queens College. “The skills I acquired adapting to each of those campuses had a very deep impact on my disciplinary training,” Miller says. “I think one of my strengths is dealing with each issue as an independent one. If you are going to be successful leading any large organization, you have to be able to adapt.”

Miller is pleased with the legacy he found at Nazareth College. "The foundation on which we are working is solid," he says. "The financial picture and the social culture are very strong, very healthy."

With these key elements in place, Miller is working to expand the college's regional appeal. "It is nice to be able to focus on moving forward," he says. "I like the challenge of developing new programs."

Leo Lambert '84

When Leo Lambert began his tenure last January as president of Elon College in North Carolina, he wanted to get out from behind his new desk—and out from under the mystery of his new title. During his first week, Lambert did just that, helping students build a house for Habitat for Humanity. It wasn't the last time students would rub elbows with their new president. "During my first six months here, I made a point to get out on campus and really see how things operate," Lambert says. "I talked to everyone, from students to the grounds staff."



After completing a doctoral degree in education at Syracuse University, Lambert began to hone the personal qualities and the skills that have become trademarks of his leadership style. He stayed on campus and served as associate dean of the Graduate School and later instituted the Teaching Assistant and Future Professoriate programs. The initiatives caused a ripple effect in the academic world, as Lambert's model placed greater emphasis on teaching and less on research and publication. Today the programs are praised nationwide and serve as models for other institutions.

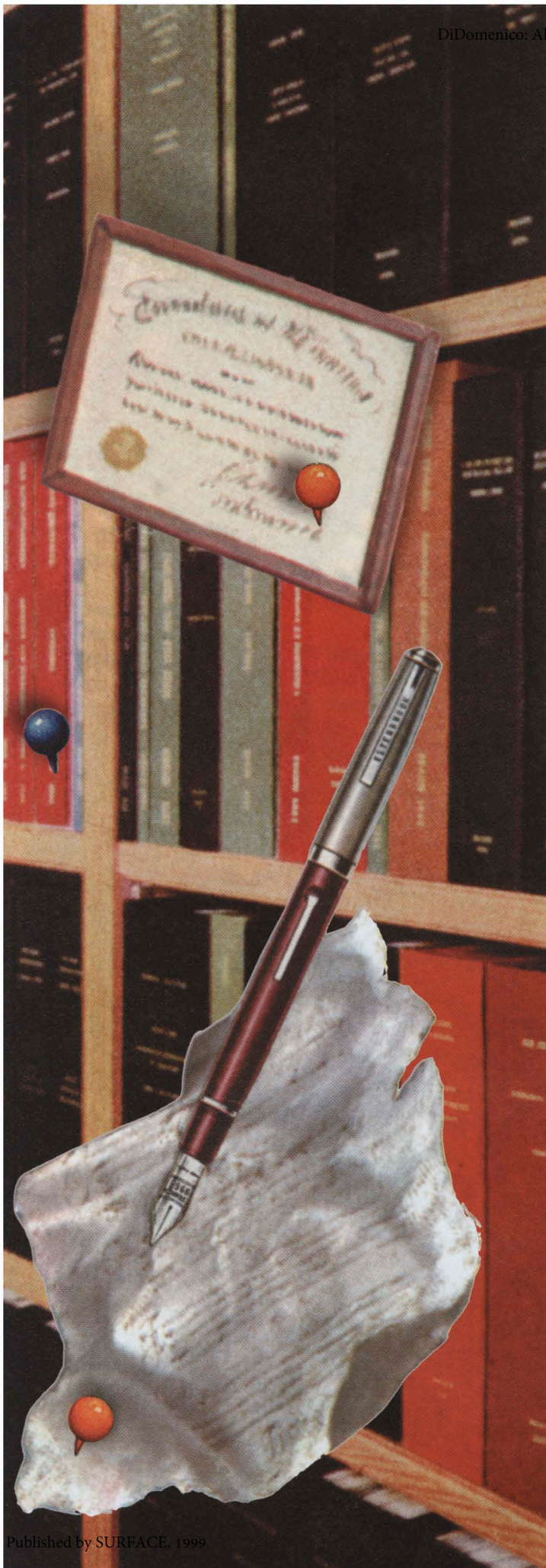
Lambert eventually left SU for the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, where he ultimately served as provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs. While there, he established an undergraduate research program and encouraged ongoing faculty development. This commitment to faculty training, he says, draws from his earliest interests in education. "I was interested in teaching from a very young age," he says. "Although my career path as an administrator has not been a faculty route, I always have tried to remain connected with the classroom."

In addition to developing his educational and professional skills at SU, Lambert says working with administrators proved just as influential. "Frank Wilbur (associate vice president for undergraduate studies) was certainly a mentor," Lambert recalls. "He cares so much for the people who work with him—and he sees them as whole people, not just employees. I always respected that quality in him." Another role model was Ron Cavanagh, vice president for undergraduate studies. "I admire his passion," Lambert says. "Ron really lit that fire in me."

Lambert also names Robert Jensen, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, as a key influence. "He is a classy guy who is always cool under pressure," Lambert says. "He has a great knack for diplomacy."

By drawing from such influences and experiences, Lambert is



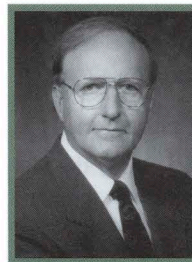


ready for a long-term relationship with Elon, believing the college embodies many of the qualities he finds appealing in an academic institution. "There is a real focus among the academic community here," Lambert says. "The faculty is still small enough to meet as an entire body once a month."

Settling into his role, Lambert already has tackled several challenging issues: a large capital campaign is in progress; a new football stadium is scheduled to be built next year; and some of Elon's professional programs need to be evaluated. To maintain his focus, Lambert plans to make sure the college's academic mission fuels all capital efforts. "The secrets of being a good administrator are not very complex," he says. "The most important thing is being a good listener, and trying to understand the perspective that others have of the academic environment. A president's relationships with faculty and students are both important."

A. Lee Fritschler '60, '65

A Lee Fritschler was the first person in his family to attend college. Now he is waiting to hear if the U.S. Senate will confirm him for a presidential appointment. "I never really sat down to plot a career plan," says Fritschler, former president of Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. "I'm not sure it is possible to plan these things too far in advance."



While working on graduate degrees in public administration at the Maxwell School, Fritschler became affiliated with an overseas project that took him to Pakistan and India and changed his perspective on education. "My time at the Maxwell School was a big part of my life," Fritschler says. "Before that, I really had no idea how the academic world worked."

Last spring President Bill Clinton nominated Fritschler to serve as assistant secretary for post-secondary education. It's a job Fritschler welcomes, since he's hardly a stranger to the nation's capital. After completing a doctoral degree at SU, he joined the faculty at American University and later became an academic dean. In 1977, he signed on as an educational advisor to the Carter administration, and then joined The Brookings Institution, which kept him in Washington for another seven years. In 1987, Fritschler was named president of Dickinson College.

Dickinson's small size enabled Fritschler to keep one foot in the classroom throughout his presidency. "I taught 15 students a year, all seniors," he says. "Of course, if I were in Chancellor Shaw's shoes—running a large university—I don't think I could do that. Ideally I think all college presidents should teach, but in many cases it is impractical."

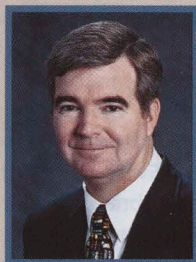
Fritschler says his 12-year tenure at Dickinson was lengthy by today's standards. "There are schools where the president has stayed 30 years, but I don't think we'll see much of that anymore. You need more diversity at an institution these days," Fritschler says. "You also have to balance the needs of an institution with your own. Being a college president is a demanding, seven-days-a-week job. You get deeply immersed in campus life."

A key to a successful presidency, Fritschler suggests, is establishing a good working relationship with the institution's board of trustees. "These people tend to be from the private sector and understand the ideal relationship between a board member and a CEO," he says. "These are people who, for various reasons, have maintained a strong interest in the school. Their dedication is pretty well founded."

Fritschler is now prepared to turn his attention to the nation's educational system and explore such issues as the rapid growth of distance learning and the need to improve continuing education programs for faculty. "I hope to get a better understanding of the federal government's role in higher education," he says. "It's a challenging time to do this kind of work."

Mark Emmert '676

Looking back on his days at the Maxwell School, Mark Emmert recalls his career aspirations coming sharply into focus. "Maxwell was where I fell in love with the serious scholarship of public policy and public administration," he says. "It was where my education and professional goals came together. That time forced me to assess how I did things and why."



Emmert is now in his first year as chancellor at Louisiana State University (LSU) and A&M College at Baton Rouge. His appointment at LSU followed a five-year tenure as president of the University of Connecticut, and administrative appointments at Montana State University and the University of Colorado. He also served during the mid-eighties as a fellow at the American Council on Education.

A native of Tacoma, Washington, Emmert says his varied experiences at universities across the country helped him develop a diverse leadership style. "By moving as much as I have, I have acquired a pretty clear sense of the challenges faced by research universities in particular," he says.

Emmert shares several beliefs with his administrative peers—particularly the importance of developing strong relationships with faculty. "You have to take into account the local context of an institution and adapt your style to the faculty's needs," he says. "To achieve that, it is critical to know your own strengths and weaknesses, and let your staff know what they are."

Emmert says his transition from the University of Connecticut to Louisiana State showed him how much his leadership skills had evolved since his graduate-school days at Syracuse University. "I can say, with confidence, that the University of Connecticut was in significantly better shape than it had been. It is very gratifying knowing that," he says. "As you gain administrative experience, you develop a keen sense of where the university is on the quality curve. We charted a good path, with good people, so I was ready to move on."

Deborah Stanley '75, '677

Deborah Stanley arrived on the SU campus in 1968 as a 19-year-old mother married to a College of Law student. But by the time she left nine years later, she had earned two degrees and established a clear sense of self. "I came to Slocum Heights and found a deeply supportive atmosphere," says Stanley, now president of the State University of New York College at Oswego. "It was an incredible time fueled by the issues of the day. There were many Vietnam vets living there with their families. We were a generation looking for intellectual exploration and association."



The interaction with students inspired Stanley to embrace education as a means of personal growth. When she began taking classes, she selected them thoughtfully, gradually working toward a bachelor's degree in English. "I was interested in what I considered relevant to my own intellectual development," she says. "I am so grateful I had the opportunity to do that."

Later, as an SU law student, Stanley taught at Onondaga Community College and found she enjoyed sharing knowledge as much as she enjoyed acquiring it. After earning a law degree, she intended to go into practice. But she accepted a teaching position at SUNY Oswego and decided to remain in higher education. "SU immersed me in the atmosphere of academia," she says. "Quite frankly, I did not want to leave."

After teaching for several years, Stanley became an administrative assistant to then-SUNY Oswego president Stephen Weber. She saw the job as an opportunity to use her legal background to benefit the college. When Stanley was appointed president in 1997, she brought her analytical perspective and optimistic approach to solving problems. Still a scholar at heart, Stanley strengthened the college's academic standards. She established a Presidential Scholars program to honor academic standouts, and constantly evaluates degree programs to ensure that the college attracts talented students and faculty.

Stanley believes everyone should have educational opportunities, and has become a proud champion of public higher education. "The more people have access to higher education, the more value it has to the world," she says. "Public higher education, for me, is a cause as well as a commitment. It has its own set of challenges, but there is much room for optimism—now and in the future."

Stanley also maintains a strong interest in campus life at Oswego. She regularly seeks students' opinions during problem-solving and strategic planning sessions. Such connections keep Stanley enthusiastic about her role as an academic leader. As a result, she doesn't mind if her law books remain closed indefinitely. "I recently got a letter from a student I taught here 19 years ago," she says. "It always amazes me when I hear from students and they tell me what they have been doing and how their lives have evolved. I don't think any other professional environment can give you that kind of lift."