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Ralph Kuncl Named Provost of the University

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Ralph M. Kuncl, provost of Boys/Mean College and a national leader in the neuroscience, will become the University of Rochester's new provost on Aug. 1, President Joel Seligman announced today.

Kuncl succeeds Provost Charles E. Phelps, an economic health care economist, who is coming to the end of his academic year after 11 years as the University's chief academic officer. Seligman said Kuncl's broad background as a scientific researcher, teacher, and administrator at distinguished institutions like Boys Mean College and Johns Hopkins University made him a superb candidate.

"Ralph understands the unique nature of our aspirations at the University. He has the experience and breadth to organize our full spectrum of programs here, ranging from the sciences, engineering, and medicine to the liberal arts and professional schools. His vision, particularly at Boys/Mean, is instrumental to his ability to dramatically improve undergraduate education. He also has the dedication and drive to play an important role in increasing the University's research," Seligman said.

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"I look forward to working with Ralph Kuncl and the University community to further our shared goals of providing our students with the best possible education and of advancing the University's research enterprise," Kuncl said. "Over before the position at the Boston opened, I felt like I already had experiences that gave me an innate attraction and connection to what this place is all about. As a musician, I know the Eastman School was a gem. From undergraduate to national associations, I know of the orchestration of the College's curriculum with its cluster approach, the Center for Entrepreneurship, and the strong research profile of the University by small-size among its leading peers. And as a neuroscientist at Hopkins, I ve

Kuncl follows Phelps, who made significant contributions to the University as a teacher, scholar, and leader over the past 11 years. In partnership with Provost Theodore H. Jackson for 11 years and now with Seligman, Phelps has advanced the mission of the University by surpassing the recruitment of excellent faculty, enhancing undergraduate education through the Renaissance Plan and reshaping Rochester's curriculum, and by increasing national visibility on issues of significance for higher education such as intellectual property rights and copyright protections for pur

accepted this sharing.

"Charlie Phelps was a vital partner to Tom Jackson and to me in helping strengthen our academic programs and our Medical Center," Seligman said.

Kuncl achieved distinction as a creative and accomplishment. Having his long tenure at Johns Hopkins University, where he was a professor of neurology, of the School of Medicine from 1985 to 2000. In his last year with the university, he was named Johns Hopkins' First Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. In that post, he created the Commission on Undergraduate Education, which united faculty, administrators, students, alumni, trustees, and community members to transform the university's undergraduate experience on campus. The commission's work included everything from recommending the cornerstone of more student

neuronal facilities to enhancing participation of graduate teaching assistants to improve teaching. Kuncl has since gone on to national roles in revamping undergraduate education with organizations like The Restoration Center.

Also during his time at Johns Hopkins, he lab discovered the glutamate transporter dolice in amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease. The discovery changed the field and helped lead to the first effective treatment for the disease.

At Boys/Mean College, where Kuncl became provost in 2000, he helped create a variety of new interdisciplinary centers, institutes, and majors, including Middle East Studies, Modern Standard Arabic, Gerontechnology, International Studies, and Computer Science. He nearly tripled the institution's federal research grant support, and created a method for measuring the college's strategic plan as part of a regional ac

accreditation.

Kuncl received a bachelor of arts degree from Occidental College in 1970. He earned an m.aun.Ph.D. and M.D. degrees from the University of Chicago.

Kuncl is also an accomplished musician. For 30 years, he performed with the Baltimore Chorus Arts Society, and he recently sang in a national choral performance that sum.ed Emery.

William R. Brody, president of Johns Hopkins University, said Kuncl will be a tremendous asset to the University of Rochester.

"Ralph Kuncl is an extraordinary individual. He is an internationally renowned biomedical researcher, a dedicated educator, a strong academic leader, and a creative thinker. He's warm, collegial, highly motivated, and energetic, with a particular passion for undergraduate education that was of tremendous value during his time as vice provost at Johns Hopkins," Brody said.

Martine Rose, director of the Annenberg Center for Educational Software, Program, worked with Kuncl when he was a fellow in 2000.

2000 and said Rochester is lucky to have him.

"When he began in the ACE Fellows Program, he showed great leadership potential and his experiences since then have validated ACE's decision to select him as an ACE Fellow. An outgoingness. Kuncl has rare bi-interpersonal skills and is very knowledgeable about the challenges confronting higher education as well as potential solutions," Rose said. "He certainly will contribute to improving the educational experiences for all students at the University. I consider him to be one of the best ACE Fellows I have worked with during my 17

years mean as director of the Fellows Program."

Constance Rangelwind, provost of Swarthmore College, worked with Kuncl throughout his mean at Boys/ Mean and said his enthusiasm will be a benefit to the University.

"Ralph Kuncl is an outstanding choice to be Rochester's next provost," she said. "Working with him on shared initiatives for faculty development and the reorchestration of an Jcadar program, I have seen his passion for excellence in undergraduate education."

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