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University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff Chancellor Search Committee

Dear Chancellor Search Committee:

Please allow this cover letter, curriculum vita, and references, constitute my application for the position of Chancellor at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff an extraordinary Historically Black College & University (1890 Public Land Grant HBCU). I am honored to have been nominated for this opportunity to serve an institution with a storied legacy and extraordinary future. I have over a quarter century of professional experience including the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (1890 Public Land Grant HBCU), Johnson & Wales University Charlotte Campus (Private), the University of Kentucky (Public Land Grant) and the University of Arkansas Little Rock (Urban University), University of Arkansas-Fayetteville (Land Grant) and Arkansas State University). The wide array of experiences includes: Top-6 U.S. News & World Report HBCU (University of Maryland Eastern Shore within the University System of Maryland 12 higher education institutions), business, government and non-profits has helped me develop outstanding presence, vision and integrity.

Visionary Strategic-Leadership

Currently, my servant leadership experience is working as the Executive Vice President for Strategic Initiatives/Chief of Staff and former Athletic Director (Division I) and former Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Success at a student-centered (U.S. News & World Report 1890 Top 6 Public Land Grant HBCU, among Public HBCUs), the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Additionally, I served Johnson & Wales University (Private) previously a four-campus system, now two campuses, where I served as President of the Charlotte, North Carolina campus. The previous five years as Vice President at the University of Kentucky (2010-2015), a 2012 Leadership Kentucky alum, a 2020 Leadership Maryland alum, coupled with the 15 years I spent as a full-time employee of three universities within the 22 institutions in the University of Arkansas System. I am a consultant to the University of Arkansas System Criminal Justice Institute providing leadership, communication, management, conflict resolution and organizational transformation training (1999-2025). Thus, I am comfortable in being able to inspire and empower transparent communication and work collaboratively with faculty, staff and students, while aligning any University Arkansas System goals with the Board of Trustees strategic planning objectives in concert with the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff (UAPB).

Sustain and Enhance Academic Quality

During my six-year tenure serving the University of Maryland Eastern Shore I have championed the transformational change of elevating our Research Expenditures by more than 51%, moving up the U.S. News & World Report ranking among all HBCU(s) into the top twenty to #19, #17 and now #14. Furthermore, after reorganizing our Office of Institutional Research we expanded our Grants and Contract awards by more than 75% and are currently a Carnegie R2 institution working towards the highest level of Carnegie Research Classification Research 1 (R1) Doctoral University Very High Research Activity. My committee and I are working with the Huron Group to assist with this aspirational goal to move UMES to the Research 1 status.

The UMES vision for R1 designation aligns with the aspiration trajectory of UAPB. Higher education in the future will include flexible and interactive synchronous multi-media interfacing and engaging students aboard, inside and outside the university setting. Placing the needs of an organization above any individual agenda items is a central element of my managerial style and progressive vision. I encourage a culturally rich advanced learning environment that supports students, staff and faculty learning outcomes, teaching, scholarship, service and sound financial discipline. In 2023 we completed a \$94 Million Pharmacy & Health Professions facility as part of phase I. In phase II the building will include the Veterinarian Science program making UMES the only public HBCU with a Veterinarian Medical program, while breaking ground on a \$65 million-dollar Agricultural Research Center. These skills are paramount for strengthening and supporting the Research goals and aspirations of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

Partnership Between UAPB-the Pine Bluff Community, Delta & State of AR

The combined public, private and volunteer sectors of society experiences have prepared me to lead by example and collaborate with local and regional officials, donors, alumni and stakeholders. The bridging of relationships with external groups has been demonstrated by my ability to be actively engaged in the local communities and strengthening the environment, health and economic challenges. The public engagement examples include serving on the following boards: Arkansas State Job Training Coordinating Council (Little Rock, AR), Arkansas Career Development Center, Single Parent Scholarship Fund of Pulaski County, Northwest Arkansas Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Committee and 10-years on the Arkansas state-wide Goodwill Industries board (Vice Chair). State of Maryland Strategic Energy Advisory Board (Maryland Governor appointee), NASA Wallops Regional Partners Board, Somerset County MD Economic Development Commission, Salisbury Area Chamber of Commerce Education Network Committee, Greater Salisbury Committee, United Way of the Lower Eastern Shore (Personnel Chair), Charlotte Regional Partners, Charlotte Center City Board, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority (Legislative appointee), Urban League of Lexington-Fayette County (Finance/Fundraising Chair Lexington, KY). The State of Maryland Strategic Energy Advisory Board has provided leverage for the university's intellectual assets to make inclusive contributions to national and global research regarding sustainable energy and climate control. I am leading efforts to build three wind turbines and expand the

solar farms while reducing the carbon footprint at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Furthermore, engaging alums through the multiple alumni association(s) and serving on the Town & Gown committee locally has been invaluable to building bridges and publicly engage the community.

Strengthen Enrollment Management Recruitment & Retention

As the Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Experience at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (HBCU) from 2018-2019 our team was successful in improving the enrollment, retention and graduation rate, which has continued to grow and prosper beyond my time in the role. I experienced similar results with my experience serving an Urban University as the Student Services Division Chief & Director of Recruitment and Retention at the University of Arkansas Little Rock, in Little Rock, Arkansas (2004~2007) with 12,000 students at the time. The experience I bring encompasses functions ranging from academic advising to online course registration and graduation verification. I work closely with campus leadership teams to address the institution's opportunities and challenges in these unique post pandemic environmental conditions. At UMES, we have transformed the enrollment processes and recommended a portfolio of technological updates to improve workflow and application processing, while offering financial recruitment packages to the newly accepted (Graduate and Undergraduate) student pools early in the spring terms. Working collaboratively with external student success organizations has clearly improved the recruitment and increased enrollment (13%), retention rates (11% increase) 4 years of consecutive growth of undergraduate students. The collaborations with organizations for state level performance funding, understanding matrices related to access, completion, "increased student success" and closing the achievement gaps for underrepresented populations are successful. The examples of partner enrollment strategies include the following: Ruffalo Noel Levitz, Blue Meridian Partners, Education Advisory Board, Partnership for Educational Advancement (Transformation Officer), Blue Stone, Social Media Platforms, Universal Common Application, Black Common Application and more.

Student Centered Familial Life Experiences

My student-centered vision includes serving as Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Experience at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (1890 Public Land Grant HBCU) and Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Kentucky (SEC) while placing students first and creating a learning culture that encourages academic achievement inside the classroom and student engagement external to the classroom through cocurricular educational activities. As a former Associate Dean in the College of Professional Studies and Division Chief of Student Services/Director of Recruitment & Retention at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock (UALR Public Regional Comprehensive Urban University enrollment approximately 12,000 students previously), my experiences mirror the need to develop strategic initiatives that positively impact faculty, staff and student engagement. These attributes are key elements to achieve academic success, retention and graduation rate aspirations at UAPB.

The following examples from my experiences validate my commitment to diversity in all forms of research, scholarly values and collaborating with key campus constituents and

managing programs designed to meet the needs of: First Generation, Adult Learners, English Second Language Programs, Veteran college students, underrepresented minorities from lower socio-economic origins, Latinx Student Initiatives, Student African-American Brotherhood (SAAB), Asian Student Alliance, LGBTQIA Association, First Year Experience Programs (Orientation, Summer Bridge Program, Welcome Week, Family Weekend, Academic Convocation, ROCK Camp); Title III Programs, Pre-College TRIO Programs (College Project Talent Search, Upward Bound/Talent Search, Veterans' Upward Bound, Math/Science Academy, and Gifted and Talented Programs); Student Support Services; Enhanced Learning Center (Tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, Academic Warning); International Students & Scholars and Off-Campus Connection.

Recruit, Retain & Develop Talented Faculty & Staff

Recognized as an excellent employee (faculty, staff) recruiter and developer of human capital, I was appointed to Co-Chair the University of Kentucky's Performance Evaluation Project. This collaborative honor demonstrated my ability to judicially, use quantitative and qualitative analysis, to develop a campus wide process to evaluate job performance for executive staff members. This skill is transferable to the responsibilities of Chancellor at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

After over 25-years serving as a faculty member while simultaneously serving in various full-time equivalent administrative roles across six different universities and four states, I feel confident in my record as a builder of people, leaders, relationships and partnership with key internal campus constituents. Consistently, teaching as I moved up the administrative ranks has kept me focused on the needs of faculty, staff and students. Serving simultaneously as an administrator and faculty member allowed me to collaborate with all staff, faculty and students in multiple venues throughout the campus environment. Serving on the following campus partnership teams are examples of my ability to strengthen campus culture and professional development: Chancellor's Leadership Group at the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville, Academic Affairs Executive Group (UALR), Academic Deans Council (UALR), North Central Association of the Higher Learning Commission (NCA) Self-Study Steering Committee (UALR) and Educational & Student Services Division Chiefs Council, Southern Association of College and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC) leadership team at the University of Kentucky, President's Cabinet (UMES), President's Council, Provost Leadership Team and Recruitment & Retention Taskforce at the University of Kentucky.

The philosophical framework, which establishes the foundation for my servant leadership style with shared governance, allows me to approach the task of working with all employees, through a student-centered lens grounded in academic success.

Shared Governance

Currently, I am working with the University Senate to adjust the by-laws and constitution at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. During my tenure at the University of Kentucky, I prepared a strategy for each budget cycle and biennial legislative cycle, by assembling faculty representatives, staff senate representatives and student government association members as part of the Student Fee Sub-committee to make proposals

regarding all student fee requests. This process allows all parties to participate in a shared governance model. Furthermore, the inclusion of faculty, staff and students on the University Appeals Board demonstrates my commitment to multiple models of strategic planning and shared governance, consistent with institutional and university policies. My use of strategic planning: metrics, dashboards, qualitative and quantitative analysis have proven to be beneficial tools for shared governance at multiple institutions of higher education.

University Advancement Initiatives & Improved Infrastructure & Facilities

As the Executive Vice President for Strategic Initiatives & Chief of Staff at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), I co-chaired the UMES taskforce for the awarding of a \$577 Million dollar Historically Black College & University settlement as well as the \$20 Million MacKenzie Scott Gift increasing the UMES endowment by forty-three percent. During my tenure as President of Johnson & Wales University Charlotte Campus, I led all of the three Regional System Campuses in fundraising. I proudly served on the Financial Advisory Group approving the option to use a Public Private Partnership at the University of Kentucky. We selected Educational Realty Trust (EDR) a publicly traded company to invest up to \$600 Million in a new and renovated campus infrastructure at the University of Kentucky (Carnegie R1) and a \$350 Million Student Center as well as a multi-million-dollar academic research facility. I served on the Development Advisory Council at the University of Kentucky and the Athletic Association Board (Division I), which generated \$66.5 Million in revenue in an average year. This role included making “the ask.” As a financial donor to five universities, I have directed contributions to foundation accounts for unrestricted funds to assist students in fiscal distress. Training through Advancement Resources provided me the insight to be able to “friend-raise”, “make the-ask” and lead philanthropic activities for a university. Collaborating with the Advancement Office to expand the Parent Association and creating the first fundraising board for a non-academic unit outside of athletics was groundbreaking at the University of Kentucky. My corporate background (Illinois Tools Works Inc., Augusta, Arkansas & Pepsi-Cola Company, St. Louis, Missouri) has been beneficial to my financial understanding and knowledge when searching for creative methods to fund capital projects and generate revenue. My business acumen flourished during my time managing profit and loss during quarterly close in two fortune fifty corporations.

Manage University Resources-Financial Viability-Fiscal Acumen

In my current Executive Vice President for Strategic Initiatives/Chief of Staff role and recent positions Athletic Director (MEAC Division 1) and Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Success, I have been responsible for growing and managing the financial resources of various units and over \$80 million dollars, including state, auxiliary, restricted, un-restricted, endowment, donor and grant funds. As the Executive Vice President & Chief of Staff at UMES, I am responsible for the entire \$130 million budget in partnership with the President. In 2015-16, the Johnson & Wales University Charlotte Campus where I served as President, completed the fiscal year with over \$11 Million in surplus and completed 2016-2017 with approximately \$8.8 Million in surplus. While serving as the Associate Vice Provost for Student Affairs at the University of

Arkansas-Fayetteville, my annual budget was around \$47 million dollars, serving approximately 25,000 students. While serving as the Vice President for Student Affairs at the University of Kentucky my budget was approximately \$70 million dollars, serving approximately 29,000 students. In both instances, my state budget allocation was only 8%-10% while my auxiliary and fee revenues were approximately 90%-92% providing me the flexibility to encourage the scholarship and development of students with financial support.

Posture of Accessibility-Open Dialogue-Strategic Collaborator-Government Leaders

The experiences I have working within multiple university systems include the following: University of Arkansas System 70,000 students 22 campuses, Johnson & Wales University previously 4-campus (currently 2-campus system), where I served as Regional President of the Charlotte, North Carolina Urban campus. I currently, work in the University of System of Maryland 12 universities, 23 regional centers 170,000 students, serving as Executive Vice President of Strategic Initiatives & Chief of Staff at the 1890 Public Land Grant (Historically Black) University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Currently, I serve on the University System of Maryland COVID Response Team, which meets weekly to provide input and guidance to Chancellor Perman. I am confident in being able to inspire and empower transparent communication and work collaboratively with the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas System (UA System), while aligning any University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff strategic planning objectives in concert with the UAPB strategic vision.

My involvement with Boards of Trustees has always been professional, appropriate and transparent. I have testified before multiple state legislatures and authored or contributed to reports to the following: Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE) and the state of Kentucky Council on Post-Secondary Education (CPE) and the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). These experiences have prepared me to work with the Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas System, State legislators and multiple UA System structures.

Military Servant Leader

After, 9/11 I felt called to serve our country. I joined the Arkansas Army National Guard and served honorably for 8-years living the 7-Army values of: Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage. Those values are still a part of my approach to work, life and my servant leadership philosophy. Thus, I am confident in my ability to represent UAPB with honor, vision and integrity.

All of my background has prepared me for this opportunity. I am confident that my leadership experiences and long-term commitment to students will have a major impact on the continued academic success of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. The attached curriculum vitae and references document my professional experiences that closely match the qualities, attributes, skills, characteristics of the Chancellor role at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. I look forward to the possibility of discussing future employment with the search committee, Board of Trustees of the University of Arkansas System, faculty, staff and students at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff pending my candidacy moves to the next level of consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Mock Jr.

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