



News Release

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Next SDSU President Decision Narrowed to Four Finalists

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents announced today four candidates who are finalists to become the next president at South Dakota State University.

Regent Kathryn Johnson, who chairs the presidential search process, said the finalists will be on campus in Brookings this week (April 19-21) for scheduled meetings with constituents and regents.

The finalists, by alphabetical order, are:

- **Barry H. Dunn, Brookings, S.D., dean of the College of Agriculture and Biological Sciences, South Dakota State University.** Dunn administers a \$78 million annual budget, which includes more than \$20 million in grant and contract awards, along with fundraising and development. He has been the South Dakota Corn Utilization Council endowed dean since 2010, as well as director of SDSU Extension and professor of animal science. Dunn first worked in Brookings as an Extension livestock specialist and assistant professor in the Department of Animal and Range Science from 1997 to 2004. He returned to SDSU after spending six years at Texas A&M University as executive director of the King Ranch Institute for Range Management. He holds Ph.D. and M.S. degrees in animal science and a B.S. degree in biology, all from South Dakota State University.
- **John M. Mason Jr., Auburn, Ala., vice president for research and economic development, Auburn University.** As Auburn's chief research officer, Mason oversees a \$20 million operating budget, annual research expenditures of \$130 million, and technology transfer revenues of \$1 million. He is also president of the Auburn Research and Technology Research Foundation and a professor of civil engineering. Prior to joining Auburn in 2008, Mason was an associate dean in the College of Engineering at The Pennsylvania State University, where he also served as professor of civil engineering, director of the Pennsylvania Transportation Institute, and executive director for the Mid-Atlantic Universities Transportation Center. His Ph.D. in civil engineering is from Texas A&M University. He also holds a master's degree in transportation engineering from Villanova University and a B.S. degree in transportation from Penn State.

- **James (Jim) Rankin, Fayetteville, Ark., vice provost for research and economic development, University of Arkansas.** In Rankin’s administrative work with the University of Arkansas, where he also holds an appointment as professor of electrical engineering, the university has increased federal funding for research projects by 80 percent over the previous two years. Prior to joining the Fayetteville campus in 2010, Rankin was an associate dean and interim vice president for research, professor of electrical engineering, and director of the Avionics Engineering Center at Ohio University. In his earlier work at St. Cloud State University, he was chair and professor of electrical engineering. His Ph.D. and master’s degrees in electrical engineering were earned at Iowa State University. He also holds a B.S. degree in electrical engineering from South Dakota School of Mines & Technology.
- **Zulma R. Toro, Little Rock, Ark., executive vice chancellor and provost, University of Arkansas at Little Rock.** As chief academic officer of a metropolitan doctoral research university, Toro leads instructional, student success, research, and outreach programs offered across 120 programs of study in five colleges and a school of law. She joined the Little Rock campus in 2013. Prior to that, she was dean of the College of Engineering at Wichita State University, dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science at the University of New Haven, and chancellor at the University of Puerto Rico’s Mayaguez campus. Toro holds a Ph.D. degree in industrial and systems engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology, a master’s degree in industrial and operations engineering from the University of Michigan, and a bachelor’s degree in industrial engineering from the University of Puerto Rico.

Copies of the finalists’ cover letters and professional vitae are posted online at <http://www.sdstate.edu/presidentsearch/candidates.cfm>. The Board of Regents will meet in executive session with the finalists during their campus visits in Brookings. No action will be taken at these meetings.