

News Release

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Board of Governors for Higher Education
Department of Higher Education
State of Connecticut



For Immediate Release

Michael Meotti Named Commissioner of Higher Education

HARTFORD, January 7, 2008 — Michael P. Meotti, president of the United Way of Connecticut, has been named Connecticut Commissioner of Higher Education by the state Board of Governors for Higher Education.

Frank W. Ridley, chairman of the Board of Governors, announced the appointment today. Meotti will succeed Valerie F. Lewis who is retiring next month. The appointment becomes effective March 1.

Meotti is extensively familiar with Connecticut higher education, having chaired the Board of Governors' Tuition Policy Review Committee from 2002-05 and before that, served on the Board of Governors' Public Agenda Advisory Council from 1997-98. Recently he has been a visiting lecturer in public policy at Trinity College and was president of the Manchester Community College Foundation from 1998-2002.

His work in higher education is part of a distinguished record of public service and policy-making, including eight years in the State Senate during which he was Assistant Majority Leader and vice chair of the Education Committee. After that, he led the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council for nine years before joining the United Way three years ago.

"Mike Meotti is the ideal person for this job," stated Ridley. "His passion for policy-making, knowledge of the state economy and leadership at all levels of Connecticut education are the perfect blend of experience for this position. Throughout his career, he has advocated for making lives better, for broadening opportunity and for building partnerships to get things done. He represents the best in public service and we are indeed fortunate to have him working on behalf of us all."

"I am honored and excited about this opportunity to work with academic leaders, faculty, students and state government policy-makers to advance Connecticut higher education," stated Meotti. "Higher education provides a strong foundation for both personal success and the economic competitiveness of our state. Like many families throughout Connecticut, members of my family have been fortunate to pursue college degrees that my grandparents would never have imagined to be possible. The availability of quality public colleges and universities and student financial aid made that possible."

He currently leads the professional staff support for the Youth Futures Committee established by the General Assembly to create a comprehensive state strategy for youth development, and served in a similar role last year for the state's Early Childhood Research and Policy Council. His involvement in

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secondary education began in 1979 on the Glastonbury Board of Education where he served four years. He was later appointed in 1993 to the state Commission on Excellence in Education, a blue ribbon group of corporate and education leaders which worked to improve the quality of public education across the state.

Meotti has held leadership positions outside of education as well. From 1998-2005, he chaired the Connecticut Economic Conference Board and was a member of the Governor's Council on Economic Competitiveness and Technology. From 2001-05 he served on the Connecticut Transportation Strategy Board and currently is a member of the Statewide Advisory Board of the Local Initiative Support Corporation which promotes innovative responses to problems in housing and economic development.

As a State Senator from 1986-94 from the 4th District representing Manchester, Glastonbury, Hebron, Bolton and Columbia, Meotti chaired the legislature's Transportation and Environment Committees and various subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee in addition to his work on the Education Committee and in leadership.

Meotti is a cum laude graduate of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and the Georgetown University Law Center. He began his career as an attorney with Updike, Kelly & Spellacy, P.C. and moved on to become counsel for the Insurance Association of Connecticut, The Travelers Insurance Companies and then a partner with Shipman & Goodwin where he founded its Government Affairs Practice Group.

A native of New Britain, Meotti is married to Pamela S. Meotti, an attorney with the Office of the Reporter of Judicial Decisions in the Connecticut Supreme Court. They reside in West Hartford with their two daughters, Sara (age 12) and Laura (age 10).

As Commissioner, Meotti will head the Department of Higher Education which carries out Board policies and conducts research and policy studies in addition to overseeing state student financial aid programs, Connecticut's private occupational schools, and the Alternate Route to Certification. With the Department as its staff, Board of Governors serves as the state's coordinating agency for higher education. Among its responsibilities, the Board is responsible for licensure and accreditation of all academic programs and institutions and the review of public system operating and capital budgets.

Members of the Board of Governors are: Frank W. Ridley, chairman; Brian J. Flaherty, vice-chairman; William A. Aniskovich; Dorothea E. Brennan; James H. Gatling; Ross H. Hollander; Harry H. Penner, Jr.; Jean E. Reynolds; Robert Robins; Albert B. Vertefeuille; and Margaret J. Villani.

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A photograph of Michael P. Meotti appears below.

