Wayne State University board elects Dr. M. Roy Wilson as 12th president

Wayne State University’s Board of Governors voted unanimously today to elect M. Roy Wilson, M.D., M.S., as the University’s 12th President, effective August 1, 2013. Debbie Dingell, chair of the Board of Governors, made the announcement.

Wilson will succeed Allan Gilmour, who has agreed to serve as president until Wilson takes office. Gilmour joined the university as interim president in August 2010 and was elected president by the Board in January 2011.

“We looked at a number of outstanding candidates from around the nation,” said Dingell. “The board concluded that Roy’s extensive leadership experience—particularly in academia and medicine — will be crucial as both the state of Michigan and Wayne State grapple with changes in higher education and health care. His understanding and appreciation of the importance of a major research university is yet another reason Roy the right person at the right time for Wayne State. We are delighted that he has joined this great university.”

Wilson’s appointment follows an extensive search that began in the late fall of 2012. “The Presidential Search Committee conducted a national search that produced excellent candidates in higher education, government and the corporate world. There was a lot of interest in Wayne State University,” said Gary Pollard, vice chair of the Board of Governors and chair of the Presidential Search Committee.

Dr. Wilson currently serves as deputy director for strategic scientific planning and program coordination at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

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As deputy director, Dr. Wilson oversees the development and implementation of an integrated system for planning, coordinating and evaluating the NIH health disparities research portfolio, in collaboration with the NIH institutes and centers. He also co-chairs the recently announced NIH Common Fund programs: the Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity Initiative and the National Research Mentoring Network.

Previously, Dr. Wilson served as dean of the School of Medicine and vice president for health sciences at Creighton University, president of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and, concurrently, chancellor of the University of Colorado Denver and chair of the Board of Directors of University of Colorado Hospital.

Dr. Wilson’s research has focused on glaucoma and blindness in populations from the Caribbean to West Africa. He holds elected memberships in the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, the International Glaucoma Research Society and the American Ophthalmological Society.

Dr. Wilson received his undergraduate degree from Allegheny College, an M.D. from Harvard Medical School, and an M.S. in epidemiology from the University of California, Los Angeles. He was selected for the list of Best Doctors in America for 14 consecutive years by Best Doctors Inc. and was a finalist for the Los Angeles Business Journal's Healthcare CEO of the Year in 2011. His additional honors include the American Academy of Ophthalmology's Senior Achievement Award, the Distinguished Physician Award from the Minority Health Institute, the Herbert W. Nickens Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the NIH Director's Award.

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“I am grateful the board has asked me to serve as President, and I am honored to accept this great responsibility,” said Wilson. “Higher education is evolving rapidly, with many changes and challenges, both now and into the future. Wayne State University has a history of excellence and opportunity, and we must lead the way. I see my job as bringing us all together to build upon a rich legacy, and to position us for a successful future for the sake of our students, faculty, staff and friends, and the community and State we serve.”

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Wayne State University is a premier urban research institution offering more than 370 academic programs through 13 schools and colleges to nearly 29,000 students.
M. Roy Wilson, M.D., M.S., was unanimously elected President of Wayne State University by the Board of Governors on June 5, 2013. He will assume the presidency on August 1, 2013.

Dr. Wilson currently serves as deputy director for strategic scientific planning and program coordination at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

As deputy director, Dr. Wilson leads the development and implementation of an integrated system for planning, coordinating, and evaluating the NIH health disparities research portfolio, in collaboration with the NIH institutes and centers. He also co-chaired the recently announced NIH Common Fund programs: the Building Infrastructure Leading to Diversity Initiative and the National Research Mentoring Network.

Previously, Dr. Wilson was dean of the School of Medicine and vice president for health sciences at Creighton University, president of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, and, concurrently, chancellor of the University of Colorado Denver and chair of the Board of Directors of University of Colorado Hospital. Immediately prior to joining NIH, Dr. Wilson chaired the Board of Directors of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science and was acting president during part of that time. Under Dr. Wilson's leadership, the university regained full institutional accreditation and stabilized its finances.

Dr. Wilson's research has focused on glaucoma and blindness in populations from the Caribbean to West Africa. He holds elected memberships in the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences, the International Glaucoma Research Society and the American Ophthalmological Society. He has served on the executive committee of the NIH-funded Ocular Hypertension Treatment Study and currently chairs the Data Monitoring and Oversight Committee of the NIH-funded Los Angeles Latino Eye Study. Dr. Wilson was a member of the advisory councils of both NIMHD and the former National Center for Research Resources, as well as the NIH Director's Working Group on Diversity in the Biomedical Research Workforce.

Dr. Wilson received his undergraduate degree from Allegheny College, an M.S. in epidemiology from the University of California, Los Angeles, and an M.D. from Harvard Medical School. He was selected for the list of Best Doctors in America for a consecutive 14 years by Best Doctors Inc. and was a finalist for the Los Angeles Business Journal's Healthcare CEO of the Year in 2011. His additional honors include the American Academy of Ophthalmology's Senior Achievement Award, the Distinguished Physician Award from the Minority Health Institute, the Herbert W. Nickens Award from the Association of American Medical Colleges, and the NIH Director's Award.