

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BURGHER NAMED PRESIDENT OF UM-PRESQUE ISLE

PRESQUE ISLE – University of Maine System Chancellor Joseph W. Westphal today named Karl E. Burgher as the ninth president of the University of Maine at Presque Isle (UMPI).

“Dr. Burgher will be a great asset,” Westphal explained. “He brings great experience in building partnerships and in working with a diverse group of stakeholders. He brings a passionate interest in both the issues and potential of the university and of northern Maine.

“One of the most important functions of a university president is to be committed to educational, economic, and community engagement,” Westphal continued. “Dr. Burgher’s success in this area stood out to us during the presidential search process. He clearly understands and relishes the role UMPI’s president must play in addressing the broad range of concerns and opportunities facing Aroostook County.”

The University System’s Board of Trustees is expected to approve Westphal’s nomination of Burgher during its next business meeting, to be held June 6 in Fort Kent.

Burgher has served since July 2004 as vice president of research and contracts and interim chief technology officer at Fairmont State University (FSU) and Fairmont State Community & Technical College (FSC&TC) in Fairmont, W.V. Burgher drew on his diverse educational and professional background to serve the dual roles, overseeing the Office of Sponsored Programs and assuming responsibility for Online Learning and Information Technology.

Burgher replaces William A. Shields, who has been serving as Acting President at UMPI since the departure of Nancy Hensel, who resigned in July 2004 to serve as Executive Director of the Council for Undergraduate Research in Washington, D.C.

Burgher is a mining engineer and economist who received a B.S. in Mining Engineering in 1980 and an M.S. in Mining Engineering with an emphasis in Costing in 1982 from Michigan Technological University. He subsequently received a B.S. in Economics in 1984 and a Ph.D. in Mining Engineering with an emphasis in Natural Resource Economics in 1985 from the University of Missouri-Rolla (UMR), where he also received an Honorary Professional Degree in Economics in 2003.

Prior to his current positions at FSU and FSC&TC, Burgher served as interim chair of the Department of Economics & Finance at UMR, and Project Manager for the Mine Waste Technology Programs and Professor of Mining Engineering at Montana Tech of the University of Montana, a position he held for 10 years. He is a Professional Engineer and a licensed blaster/explosives engineer in four states.

In addition to his administrative and faculty work, Burgher has been committed to community development. He has worked across the U.S. in communities faced with hazardous waste, Superfund, and Brownfields issues, facilitating socio-economic development in areas faced with sometimes very technical environmental challenges and often environmental injustices. Burgher was nominated by the community of Newburg, Missouri last year for a Ford Foundation Leadership Award for his work with a Brownfields Redevelopment.

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Page 2

Burgher states, "Our family is very anxious to get engaged with UMPI, the surrounding communities and Aroostook County. We all enjoy multiple sports and look forward to all of the outdoor activities of Northern Maine. We are all grateful for this wonderful opportunity."

UMPI, which currently enrolls 1,652 students, offers bachelor's degree programs as well as a small number of associate degree programs. The University's mission serves the special needs of Aroostook County, focusing on a curriculum that integrates adventurous learning with the natural and cultural elements of Northern Maine. It participates in the Maine State Consortium, a newly established collaborative involving UMPI, the University of Maine at Machias, and the University of Maine at Fort Kent.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Burgher's resume may be accessed online at <http://www.maine.edu/umpifinalists/KarlBurgher.pdf>