



## **UMPI PRESIDENT STEPPING DOWN**

PRESQUE ISLE – Karl E. Burgher, the president of the University of Maine at Presque Isle, today announced that he is stepping down from his position, effective August 31, 2006.

“We have accomplished a great deal here this year,” Burgher said. “It is time to step away and allow another to carry the university forward. My family is moving back to the Missouri Ozarks to be with friends and church. I will engage with several consulting responsibilities in the near term while deciding on longer term commitments and plans.”

Burgher was appointed president in July 2005. Prior to joining UMPI, he served as vice president of research and contracts and interim chief technology officer at Fairmont State University and Fairmont State Community & Technical College in Fairmont, W.V.

Burgher earned a B.S. and M.S. in Mining Engineering from Michigan Technological University. He subsequently received a B.S. in Economics and a Ph.D. in Mining Engineering with an emphasis in Natural Resource Economics from the University of Missouri-Rolla, from which he also received an Honorary Professional Degree in Economics in 2003.

Terrence J. MacTaggart, chancellor of the University of Maine System, said he had accepted Burgher’s resignation with regret.

“The Board of Trustees and I appreciate what Dr. Burgher has done to serve the interests of UMPI and the people of Maine,” MacTaggart stated. “We certainly wish him and his family well as he and they pursue new opportunities and interests.”

MacTaggart said he intends to name an interim president prior to the start of the academic year, which begins on August 28. He said that Burgher will remain available through November to assist with the leadership transition and to help complete work on two initiatives that Burgher has been involved with in conjunction with the University of Southern Maine: information-technology and sponsored programs.

MacTaggart also said that he and others will soon visit Presque Isle to meet with UMPI faculty, staff, and students as well as members of the community. Those meetings, held in preparation for a national search process, will involve discussion about the qualities that Burgher’s eventual successor should possess and the issues that the successor should address.

Burgher said that he is leaving UMPI with the university facing both opportunities and challenges.

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“UMPI has a good workforce, a balanced budget, a robust physical plant, modest working capital, and multiple markets from which to attract students,” Burgher explained. “A highlight for me personally this year was the opening of Gentile Hall with a sliding scale user fee for community engagement--one thousand community members enrolled in four weeks.”

Burgher pointed to several collaborative initiatives undertaken during the past year, including a new academic structure; completion of revisions to the university’s general education requirements; formal and informal collaboration with other universities within the state system; integration of the university’s admissions and university relations functions, with student recruitment initiatives intended to reach underserved populations; and improvements in information technology.

Established in 1903, the University of Maine at Presque Isle is one of seven universities of the University of Maine System. It features a student population of over 1,500, with 26 academic programs in the liberal arts and professions.