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# NEBRASKA

## *Magazine*

### ATTACKING PARASITIC

# DISEASES

*Mary Ann McDowell ('88, '90) & Michael Ferdig ('87, '90)*

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# Hank Bounds Named NU President

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents has appointed Hank M. Bounds, Ph.D., a lifelong educator with a demonstrated record of expanding opportunities for students, improving higher education outcomes and efficiencies, and building successful partnerships with policymakers, donors and business leaders, as the seventh president of the University of Nebraska.

Bounds, a first-generation traditional college student who has spent his entire 25-year career in education – first as a high school teacher, then as a principal, superintendent and state superintendent – currently serves as commissioner of higher education for the Mississippi Institutions of Higher Learning. He was selected for the NU presidency among four public finalists following an extensive national search that engaged hundreds of Nebraskans, including nearly three dozen key university constituents who served on a pair of search committees.

He begins his tenure as NU president on April 13, 2015.

Since 2009, Bounds has served as the chief executive officer of Mississippi's public university system, which includes four research universities, four regional universities and an academic health science center. Among the universities are two land-grant institutions, three historically black institutions, a law center, a school of veterinary medicine, and 200 institutes and centers. Together, the system enrolls about 85,000 students, employs more than 26,000 faculty and staff, and operates with a combined annual budget of approximately \$4.5 billion including an average of more than \$500 million in research and development.

During every year of Bounds' tenure as higher education commissioner,



Hank M. Bounds

student enrollment and degrees awarded by the institutions in the Mississippi system have increased – by a total of 13.3 percent and 11.4 percent, respectively. He has advocated with legislative leadership for increasing faculty compensation and providing greater opportunities for students, and he has provided oversight and direction for private fundraising in excess of \$250 million per year.

Bounds worked with the Board of Trustees to implement a performance-based allocation model that distributes funds equitably and rewards universities for operating efficiently and achieving attainment outcomes. He designed an efficiencies plan that has saved more than \$90 million primarily through consolidated insurance coverage, bond rating, energy conservation, procurement, course redesign, space management and employee benefits consolidation. He established an internal audit function for all campuses and implemented a comprehensive diversity initiative that has led to increased diversity in faculty/staff, students, and use of minority vendors.

Bounds was instrumental in working

with the Education Achievement Council to build momentum and integrate strategic plans to increase educational attainment in Mississippi. The Council brings together legislative leaders, business leaders and educational leaders. He led the effort to design and implement a singular, statewide articulation agreement with state community colleges. He secured \$20 million in private funding to design the Center for Education Innovation, which focuses on improving learning opportunities for children in communities where poverty, low educational attainment and a lack of infrastructure intersect.

He created the Office of Business and University Relations to foster relationships among researchers, business/industry and economic developers. In 2011, Bounds was tapped by the business community to chair Blueprint Mississippi 2011, a major statewide initiative to bring together diverse perspectives and create an action strategy to improve Mississippi's competitive position.

Bounds grew up on a small family farm in rural South Mississippi and his service in the Army National Guard afforded him the opportunity to be the first in his immediate family to earn a college degree. He received a bachelor's degree in sports administration and secondary education and a master's degree in educational administration from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, and a doctorate in educational leadership from the University of Mississippi in Oxford.

Bounds and his wife, Susie, are the parents of a son, Will, and a daughter, Caroline.

– Melissa Lee, NU Communications