

WSC announces 2nd semifinalist

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WESTFIELD – Maureen H. Powers, of Worcester, former dean of students at Stanford University, is the second of three semifinalists to be named in Westfield State College's search for a new president.

Powers' name was released yesterday morning by college officials.

According to Timothy Murphy, associate vice president of administration and finance and a member of the search committee, Powers served as dean of students at Stanford until last summer, when she decided to return to her native Worcester.

She also was vice president for Student Affairs at The City College of New York and has held administrative posts at other colleges and universities including Emmanuel College in Boston; Indiana University; Stephens College in Columbia, Mo.; Saint Leo University in Florida, and The Institute for the International Education of Students in Chicago.

Although Powers is expected to be on campus on Monday for an interview, Murphy said, she was out of the country yesterday and could not be reached for comment.

"She's traveling, but she'll definitely be here on Mon-

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day," Murphy said.

Michael Gargano Jr., another semifinalist and the current vice chancellor for student affairs and campus life at the University of Massachusetts

at Amherst, visited the campus on Thursday.

Murphy would not release the name of the third semifinalist until Monday, despite published reports that identified Evan S. Dobelle, current president of the New England Board of Higher Education as the third candidate.

"Last time we lost one of the most promising candidates," because his name was revealed too early, Murphy said.

"He was getting enormous pressure from people at his campus and he withdrew from the list even before coming here," Murphy added, referring to Patrick J. Schloss, president of Northern State University in Aberdeen, S.D., who was one of five semifinalists in the previous search that ended in February.

"We don't want to repeat that mistake now," Murphy said.

None of the candidates was selected for the job then and

the college's Board of Trustees decided to extend the search.

The Westfield Evening News reported Thursday that Dobelle is the third candidate, but Murphy would not confirm that. Dobelle is a former mayor of Pittsfield, White House protocol chief for President Jimmy Carter, former president of Trinity College, Middlesex Community College, and past president of University of Hawaii.

The Board of Trustees will seek input on the candidates from all members of the campus community, including alumni, before meeting at 5 p.m. on Dec. 12 in Scanlon Banquet Hall to discuss the semifinalists, he said.

Powers has a doctorate in

higher education from Indiana University, with a master's degree in urban affairs from Saint Louis University and a bachelor's degree in government from Georgetown University, according to Murphy. She was an administrator in the Worcester Housing Authority and the Census Bureau District Office in Worcester before beginning her career in education.

Dobelle did not return a message left at his Boston office yesterday.

Those who know Dobelle, however, said it would be a coup for Westfield State to have him as president.

"I've known Dr. Dobelle for a long time. He has a first class intellect, great organization skills, and a terrific track record," U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal, D-Springfield, said yesterday. "I think he is an outstanding candidate for Westfield State College."

James H. Mullen Jr., Elms College's president, described Dobelle as a very energetic leader.

"Evan Dobelle is both an accomplished academic and an extraordinary leader. It would be wonderful to have him as the Westfield State's president because he has a unique understanding of an academic leadership and the colleges role in communities," said Mullen who has known Dobelle since 1988 and "had the privilege of working with him" at Middlesex Community College and at Trinity College.

In 2004, Dobelle was fired from his post as president of the University of Hawaii system amid concerns about his spending and about his alleged failure to communicate clearly with the board. Later, however, the university re-

voked the firing and agreed to accept his resignation and clear him of any alleged wrongdoing.

The Presidential Search Committee presented its recommendations to the Board of



Trustees last month after reviewing applications from 60 individuals, including those recommended by its search firm, EFL Associates of Boston.

Each of the candidates will have interviews in Scanlon Banquet Hall centered on major responsibilities facing the president.

Powers will be interview on the following subjects at the following times: planning and financial management, 10:30 a.m.; teaching and learning, 1 p.m.; student life and support

services, 2:30 p.m.; external relations and fundraising, 4 p.m.

She will meet with students in the Student Government Meeting Room in the Ely Campus Center at 7 p.m.

"Members of the campus community are encouraged to attended any or all of the sessions with the candidates," said Gina Golash, chair of the search committee. "Feedback from the campus is vitally important."

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