

BHE unanimously approves Evan Dobbelle as Westfield State president

The Massachusetts Board of Higher Education unanimously approved the selection of Evan S. Dobbelle of Pittsfield, Mass., as the new president of Westfield State College. Dobbelle, president and CEO of the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE), began his new position at the Westfield, Mass. institution on Monday, Jan. 14.

John F. Flynn III, a member of the Westfield State College Board of Trustees, presented the board's recommendations to the BHE. The college selected Dobbelle from an initial pool of 140.

Dobbelle's nomination from Thomas J. Foley, chair of the trustees said, "Dr. Dobbelle is a candidate of unmatched experience, outstanding credentials, and demonstrated commitment to the ideals and goals of Westfield State College."

"The references examined by the college's search committee and by the board, as well as the feedback we received from the campus community, express utmost confidence that Dr. Dobbelle would provide the kind of collaborative leadership that will enhance Westfield State's already considerable strengths well into the future," the report said.

Dobbelle's selection has received praise from several members of the higher education community.

"Evan has been a superb president of NEBHE," said Mary Cathcart, chairman of the board at NEBHE. "He is a persuasive and passionate advocate for higher education, and his leadership abilities and record of success at every institution he has led are

respected throughout the nation."

"Evan is an experienced and effective leader who will bring new ideas and great energy

track record," he said.

Frederick W. Clark Jr., chairman of the BHE, also has praised Dobbelle's record as an



to Westfield State as its new president," said Gaston Caperton, national president of The College Board, based in New York City.

U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal (D-Springfield) told The Republican newspaper of Springfield, Mass., that he has known Dobbelle for a long time. "He has a first class intellect, great organization skills, and a terrific

educator and community leader in The Republican. "Evan Dobbelle is a solid choice as the next president of Westfield State College," he said. "His dynamic leadership quality, national stature, problem solving ability, and collaborative style make him a very welcome addition to the public higher education system in Massachusetts."

"The honor that the

search committee and the board have given to me is one I accept with great passion and devotion to the faculty, staff, students and alumni of Westfield State," Dobbelle said. "I look forward to listening carefully and providing leadership to our academic community. I also extend my gratitude to the New England Board of Higher Education which allowed me the honor to serve as their president these past three years."

Dobbelle previously served as president of Middlesex Community College in Massachusetts, City College of San Francisco, Trinity College in Hartford and the University of Hawaii system. He has bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as an Ed.D. from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and an MPA from Harvard University.

Before his career in education, Dobbelle was mayor of Pittsfield from 1973 to 1976. He was also treasurer and deputy chair of the Democratic National Committee and national chairman of the Carter-Mondale Presidential Exploratory Committee.

He was chief of protocol of the United States with the rank of ambassador in the late 70s. His state political career also included serving as commissioner of Environmental Management and Natural Resources and executive assistant to the former U.S. Sen. Edward W. Brooke (R-Massachusetts).

Dobbelle will be the 19th president of Westfield State College. The college was founded in 1838 as America's first co-educational teaching institution.