Paul Ferguson Named 17th President of Azusa Pacific University

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AZUSA, Calif. (PRWEB) April 10, 2019 -- Paul Ferguson, Ph.D., an experienced and acclaimed administrator and educator, becomes the 17th president of Azusa Pacific University on June 1.

A Southern California native, raised in Hacienda Heights and residing in Yorba Linda, Ferguson is known for spurring academic innovation and improvement, fostering effectiveness in administrative practices, and building a strong bond with students, faculty, and alumni. Presently the founding dean of the School of Science, Technology, and Health at Biola University, Ferguson served with distinction in leadership roles at five universities, including as president of Ball State University, Muncie, Ind. (2014-16), and president of the University of Maine (2011-14).

The chair of APU’s Board of Trustees, David Poole, JD, said Ferguson brings tremendous credentials to the post and a knowledgeable and sophisticated perspective that is vital to facing the many challenges of today’s higher education environment. “Dr. Ferguson will work to restore financial stability to APU,” said Poole. “I’m confident he will strengthen our position as a leading university in teaching, student development, and Christian service.”

Ferguson expressed excitement in joining APU’s leadership team. “I’m grateful for this opportunity, and I want to thank the Board of Trustees for the confidence placed in me,” he said. “I’m devoted to APU’s Christ-centered mission, achieving sustainability, academic advancement, and a joy for learning to all our campuses.”

Ferguson earned his doctorate from the University of California, Davis, and his undergraduate degree from Whittier College. In addition to his roles at Ball State and the University of Maine, he held leadership positions at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville; the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; and the University of Louisiana, Monroe.

“Dr. Ferguson is an accomplished and admired academic and administrative leader,” said Elizabeth Maring, JD, co-chair of Azusa Pacific University’s Presidential Search Committee. “He’s the right person to lead APU with his vast experience, thoughtful leadership, and commitment to Christ and biblical principles.”

“This is a key time for our university and all of Christian higher education—one marked by extraordinary opportunities and challenges,” said Dan Fachner, search committee co-chair. “I’m confident Dr. Ferguson will hit the ground running when he arrives on campus.”

Ferguson is recognized for a consistent commitment to scholarship through writing and publishing scientific and academic literature, as well as teaching graduate and undergraduate courses in higher education leadership, toxicology, and public health.

Azusa Pacific University, founded in 1899 and currently the largest Christian University on the West Coast, grew in size and reputation under the leadership of its president for the past two decades, Jon R. Wallace, DBA, who retires in June.
“The Board of Trustees made an excellent choice in Paul Ferguson,” said Wallace. “I’m confident he will advance APU’s mission as a premier university that reflects the life of Christ and shines the light of Truth through future generations of Azusa Pacific students and graduates.”

The appointment follows a 10-month search that drew a significant pool of accomplished candidates. The search committee, a diverse group representing trustees, faculty, staff, students, and alumni, narrowed consideration to four candidates before advancing Ferguson for full board consideration.

“Dr. Ferguson brings to APU a positive spirit, proven leadership skills, and a distinguished academic background,” said Rev. Albert Tate, pastor of a multiethnic, intergenerational church in Southern California and search committee member. “He will accomplish much during his tenure as president.” Tate said the committee was pleased to have a diverse pool of candidates to consider and that Ferguson was the ideal candidate for APU at this time.

“He performed superbly as founding dean of the School of Science, Technology, and Health,” said Barry Corey, Ph.D., president of Biola University. Corey said Ferguson was well-known for an open and engaging demeanor with colleagues and students and for his insightful and discerning leadership style. “We congratulate APU on selecting a true servant-leader and an administrator of remarkable ability. I look forward to working together as peers.”

“APU is blessed with an excellent faculty and staff,” said Ferguson. “My wife, Grace, and I are eager to get better acquainted with everyone and begin working as a team to make our school the best it can be.”

Azusa Pacific University is a comprehensive, evangelical, Christian university, located 26 miles northeast of Los Angeles, California. A leader in the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities, and designated as a Hispanic Serving Institution, APU is committed to keeping God First and excellence in higher education. APU offers 68 bachelor’s degrees, 45 master’s degrees, 24 certificates, 12 credentials, and 8 doctoral programs to more than 10,000 students at the university’s main campus in Azusa, seven regional locations, and online, and continues to be recognized as one of America’s Best Colleges by U.S. News & World Report.
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