

October 13, 2006

Dr. James Appleberry
Academic Search, Inc.

Dear Jim:

I appreciated the opportunity to talk with you about the search for the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents. My vita and references are attached. As you know I have served for the last seven years at Kentucky's postsecondary education coordinating board, first as a senior fellow and for the last five years as academic vice-president for the state. I work with public research and comprehensive universities, independent colleges, and a large community college system in implementing policies that increase access, affordability, accountability, and responsiveness to public needs. The Council develops the budget for the entire system, recommends all capital requests, approves and closes academic programs, develops the strategic plan and accountability system, and sets distance learning, learning assessment, diversity and tuition policies.

Before coming to the Council, I spent twenty years at the University of Kentucky as a professor, department chair, and faculty senate chair. During this period I was elected by my peers to be President of the National Communication Association, the largest association of communication scholars. I am a national consultant for Campus Compact, helping universities become more engaged with public problems. I also served in 1994-95 as a Fellow of the American Council on Education which provided the opportunity to assess best practices in higher education leadership across the U.S. and in Mexico.

During my tenure at the Council, we have been recognized in many regional and national reports as an innovative leader in developing policies that respond to 21st century demands on higher education. I have attached highlights from some of these reports. Other studies have cited our work in assessing the quality of college student learning, distance education, P-16 partnerships, and fostering economic development. All of these areas fall within the purview of my academic affairs office.

My duties require regular interaction with the Governor's office, cabinet secretaries, and legislators. I testify before legislative committees and assist them in drafting legislation that benefits our system. We have succeeded in securing public funding increases that, in some studies, place Kentucky first in percentage increase among the 50 states since 1998. I am particularly proud of this success since it has been accomplished across the terms of two governors from different political parties and with a politically divided legislature.

We have played a lead role in national higher education initiatives sponsored by the National and Southern Governors Associations, Gates and Lumina Foundations, State Higher Education Executive Organization, National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, Southern Regional Education Board and national business roundtables to name a few. I am familiar with the wide spectrum of policy issues challenging systems and institutions to

create effective partnerships with P-12 and economic development organizations, be more accountable for the quality of the education experience (a focus of the current Commission on the Future of Higher Education), integrate data systems that promote accountability and transparency, increase research and development outcomes, and address diversity and affordability concerns.

In my seven years at the Council, I have had the opportunity to work with the Board of Regent's staff in Ohio on a number of projects. I am familiar with the challenges Ohio faces in raising education attainment levels for all its citizens. In Kentucky, my office has developed programs that have contributed to significant increases in college going (we now exceed the national average) and degree production across our system (up five per cent in each of the last three years).

I also know the important role higher education in Ohio must play, in partnership with the private sector, in generating new economy activity and wealth creation. For example, a recent study by the Cleveland Reserve Bank pointed to the need for Ohio to increase what they called its "knowledge stock" (education levels and patent generation) and reduce its reliance on a manufacturing base to grow its per capita income. In Kentucky, I have managed multimillion dollar partnerships with external partners and universities to enhance research productivity and support entrepreneurship, patents, translational research, and business startups. In each of our states we are confronted with the simultaneous challenges of creating the workforce of the future while attracting the businesses that will employ that workforce.

In all of this activity, I have worked effectively with our private citizen board to build trust, ensure no surprises, and secure their support for aggressive goals and innovative improvement strategies. I find the principles that apply to effective board relations are the same ones that I promote in my work as a communication consultant with business and industry.

I have been committed to helping higher education answer one central question: are we contributing to better lives for the people we serve? Are we ensuring greater access to college for students from all walks of life? Are we helping students succeed and graduate from our institutions prepared for life and work? Are our reward systems and organizational structure encouraging engagement with students and public problems? Are we contributing to global economic competitiveness?

Our teaching and research have never been more important. As Richard Florida documents in his recent work on the rise of the "creative class," universities are primary drivers of economic and community development. Despite this, we often fail to make the case for the importance of our work to policy leaders. I see making this case (and helping institutions make this case through research and teaching that serves a public agenda) as one of the most important parts of a SHEEO's work.

The opportunity to lead a system like Ohio's with its enormous capacity to drive change and improvement is what prompts my application. I believe my success here in the areas

you target as major initiatives in Ohio speak to my ability to contribute to the Board's work. You are focused on innovative uses of technology to improve performance. I have worked with the highly successful Kentucky Virtual University and Library. You are focused on access. I have led access efforts here in Kentucky for adult and traditional students that have been recognized nationally for their success and led to consulting roles for me on the national and regional levels. You have several major initiatives to improve the education pipeline through P-12 and transfer work. My office has led a nationally recognized P-16 effort in Kentucky and we have just launched a broad strategic initiative to double the number of college graduates in Kentucky. You are concerned about affordability as we all are. Working with the Lumina funded "Changing Directions" initiative we conducted a comprehensive affordability study and have made great progress in linking our tuition policies to state funding and financial aid to ensure affordability for all of our citizens. You are focused on innovation, collaboration and performance "deliverables" that address state needs as we have been since the beginning of postsecondary reform in Kentucky. Finally, as I noted, both of our systems understand that enhancing economic development is at the heart of our mission and crucial to sustaining public support for higher education.

Thank you for your interest in my application for this position. I wish you luck in your search. We need strong SHEEO's more than ever to keep higher education focused on public issues and public needs.

Sincerely,

James L. Applegate
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education