



# GLOBAL EDUCATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES

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**Ms. Lucy Leske**

Witt/Kieffer Consultants

Dear Search Committee,

## **RE: APPLICATION FOR THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT, FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVERSITY, FORT MYERS, (FGCU), FLORIDA, USA**

In response to your recent advertisement, I hereby apply with humility and excitement, to your Search Committee for consideration for the position of President, Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU). My resume is attached along with a summary of my contributions to educational aspects of US national and international development. The final page of my resume contains the list of my references and their contact information. I am a 57-year old citizen of the United States with a successful record of professional contribution and experience internationally, especially in North America, Asia, Africa and Europe.

FGC's utility to sustainable development of the State of Florida, the United States and the world at large, is underscored by the fact that it delivers several academic programs to about 15,000 students. Indeed, I am quite interested in advancing FGCU's vision and implementing programs for assessment and closure of student achievement gaps, development of technological workforce through educational initiatives, promotion of sustainability, intensification of research across various programs, strengthening of technology transfer programs for delivery to critical economic sectors, extension of FGCU's educational opportunities to many non- traditional students, using advances in information technology, and acceleration of action on k-12 and community college programs that have been configured. I would work very hard with the Board, faculty, other administrators, students and external stakeholders to improve FGCU.

As evident in my resume, I have been quite successful in devising similar programs (to those listed above) collaboratively, with multiple sets of stakeholders, and in implementing them. My professional background includes service in leadership positions, in many academic institutions, government, the business sector and international organizations. I have served as an administrator, reviewer and advocate. Most importantly, and with humility, I have served as the President of two universities that covered complexities of internationally diverse jurisdictions, languages and academic cultures. Also, I was opportuned to serve as the Founding Director of two major cross – disciplinary research institutes in the University Systems of North Carolina and Massachusetts.

In addition to the information contained in my resume, I have outlined some of my utilities and experience with respect to FGCU's mission and vision, as well as the qualifications required for the advertized position. Please excuse my immodesty and suggestion that my full resume be perused for supporting information.

## **1. ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP ROLE AND FACULTY EXPERIENCE AND RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENT**

My experience and leadership roles, some of which have been concurrent include 17 years in administration and program leadership within a 30-year total work experience gained during service as a University President, founding Director of two research institutes; coordinator of institutional efforts to establish two cross-disciplinary doctoral degree programs in engineering, and infrastructure/environmental systems; and primary developer of major research facilities. At the personal level, I have performed research over a 27- year period in the areas of energy, environmental systems and disasters within 40 projects, leading to more than 260 publications, service on 33 journal editorial boards, and development of 29 special editions of journals, all of which are listed in the attached resume. During my service and with humility, I have received about 25 professional awards, most of which are listed in my resume. The most recent award is the 2015 Global Educational Leadership Award conferred by the World Education Council at its event in India.

## **2. COMMITMENT ACADEMIC QUALITY AND EXPERIENCE IN MULTI-PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

Apart from heading a Center in Massachusetts (17 years ago) that operated within a consortium of the University of Massachusetts System, to implement research, educational program development and professional support activities. My experience includes service as President of the African University of Science and Technology with campuses that are spread out in four countries, all of which have very different circumstances. I did this on leave-of-absence from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to which I later returned. Following that service and continuation of research in Charlotte, I also served until recently as the President of the Botswana International University of Science and Technology where I successfully led institutional upgrade efforts that improved the university's Webometrics Global Ranking by 600 places from 2013 to 2014. That success was primarily responsible for my 2015 Global Education Award.

Academic program standardization and evaluation within a university system, are also within my experience. I was both a key contributor and applicant to these processes in both the University of North Carolina System and the University of Massachusetts System. Besides, I have had the opportunity to serve as evaluator of management systems and productivity of multi-component institutions at both the secondary and tertiary levels, in many countries as listed in my resume. In 2012, I was appointed to the Education Caucus of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development.

## **3. CAPACITY TO CATALYZE NEW INITIATIVES AND EXPERIENCE IN STRATEGIC PLANNING AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Perhaps due to my service in both government agencies and self-supporting units of academic institutions, my strength is deep in strategic planning. I have served in many leadership roles on vision and strategy development for institutional sustainability, educational programs, public policies and research for public agencies such as the United States Environmental Protection Agency (on research, future scenario production, etc.), National Science Foundation of the US, and many other agencies in many countries (on multi-institutional research and educational initiatives), corporations (on product development and service delivery) and academic institutions (on faculty recruitment, promotion and incentives; and student research and instructional programs).

The experience that is outlined above would be beneficial in my leadership of the efforts of the FGCU's administrative staff, faculty, students and external stakeholders in collaborating to raise standards and profile of FGCU internationally. It is also note-worthy that I served for two terms as the Chair of the US EPA Science Advisory Board Engineering Committee, comprising eminent leaders from industry and academe. The Board is chartered by the United States Congress and deals with many complex and controversial issues.

#### **4. ABILITY TO LISTEN AND PLAN WITH INPUT FROM OTHERS AS WELL AS COMMUNICATION AND INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**

It has been possible for me to collaborate with and communicate very effectively with various categories of internal and external stakeholders at the levels of academic projects, national programs and international activities. I have been aided by my leadership role in fundraising activities, editorship of several journals, international liaison, and research collaboration on cross-departmental and multi-institutional programs for many years. At the level of speeches, I have addressed the legislature of two countries (Switzerland and Nigeria); briefed US Congressmen on energy policies; given public lectures in China, US, Ghana, Finland, Mauritius, Greece, UAE, South Africa, Slovenia, UK, Germany, Canada, Brazil and many other countries as listed in my resume (up to about 180 presentations). Other opportunities on communication are numerous press briefings in both print and television on various aspects of education and sustainable development. This experience and capacity would be deployed to support FGCU's programs that stem from the mission of the University, the vision of the Board of Regents and the collective activities of my prospective colleagues.

#### **5. EXPERIENCE IN PROMOTING THE SCHOLARSTIC EXCELLENCE OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS**

Creation of opportunities for recruitment and retention of high-performing faculty and students is critical to the excellence of any university. I have experience in this. As a member of many committees on indexing and evaluation of academic excellence at my host institutions, and with the work I have done for the Educational Testing Service, Council for the International Exchange of Scholars, the Fulbright Program, the National Science Foundation and many academic institutions, it would be possible for me to extract best practices for collaborative assessment with the campus provosts for possible adaptation. I would catalyze the emergence of FGCU as a growing university through collaborative agreements with centers of learning in several countries to promote the FGCU's sustainability.

At the personal level, I have hosted 22 post- doctoral/ visiting researchers, 5 doctoral students, 21 masters' degree students and 10 undergraduate research interns. At both the University of North Carolina -Charlotte and the University of Massachusetts-Lowell, I created an undergraduate summer research fellowship program in which I used externally sourced grants to support faculty members who would take undergraduates as research interns. Also, I helped in the preparation of college-bound high school students through my 2-year service for the Educational Testing Service (ETS) as a Development Committee Member for AP Environmental Science, within a parent program that was then open to 750,000 students in 13,000 high schools in 60 countries. I would bring some of these ideas to the implementation of FGCU's K-12 and community college support programs. I would also work with the constituent colleges, other academic units and research centers to open up opportunities for international education, research, professional outreach and community service for FGCU's faculty members and students.

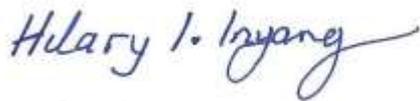
## 6. ACADEMIC CREDENTIALS, INCLUDING TERMINAL DEGREES

My academic background is multi-disciplinary. It covers the earth sciences, engineering, mineral resources and statistics. Details of my accomplishments in these fields are itemized in my resume. I have held academic positions as an Endowed Professor of environmental science and engineering in two university systems (Duke Endowed Professorship in North Carolina, and DuPont Young Professorship in Massachusetts), Professor of the University of Massachusetts System Graduate School of Marine Science and Technology, and Professor of Earth Science at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte.

In China, I continue to teach and perform research intermittently as a Concurrent Professor of Nanjing University-one of the top ten universities there, as well as an honorary Professor of the China University of Mining and Technology (CUMT) in Xuzhou. I have been fortunate to receive 25 academic honors, recognition and commendation awards during 30 years of research, 20 years of contributions to public policy, 15 years of organizational administration and 20 years of teaching (some roles have been concurrent).

I thank your Search Committee in anticipation of a fair evaluation of my credentials, and consideration of my deep interest in contributing in the advertised role, to FGCU. I would be very delighted to serve FGCU and the State of Florida. Greetings!

Yours sincerely,



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