



Item: AS: A-1

Tuesday, June 11, 2013

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF HONORARY DOCTORATE NOMINATION**

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**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

Approve the conferral of an Honorary Doctorate on Roy Church.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

University Policy 2.3 (Honorary Doctorates) specifies that those nominated for Honorary Doctorates be recommended to the FAU Board of Trustees by the University Faculty Senate Honors and Awards Committee, the Provost and the President. One candidate is being recommended at this time.

Dr. Roy Church has been nominated by Valerie Bristor, Dean of the College of Education, for his distinguished achievements as a leader in higher education and for a host of professional and community activities. A 1971 alumnus of FAU's College of Education, Dr. Church has served as President of Lorain County Community College in Elyria, Ohio since 1987. He is credited with leading the development of Lorain County Community College through growth of the student body, collaborative initiatives with business and government, improved articulation with other schools, and the creation of comprehensive higher education centers for local residents.

In addition to these contributions, he has been an active public servant on the local, regional and state levels in Ohio – contributing to education, workforce and human service organizations. In 2012, Dr. Church was inducted into the Northeast Ohio Business Hall of Fame.

This information was reviewed and approved by the Committee on Academic and Student Affairs on June 4, 2013.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE**

If approved, this Honorary Doctorate will be conferred at a future commencement ceremony.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

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**Supporting Documentation:**

**Nomination Materials**

**Presented by: Dr. Brenda Claiborne, Provost**


**Phone: 561-297-3062**



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
Office of the Dean  
777 Glades Road  
P.O. Box 3091  
Boca Raton, FL 33431-0991  
tel: 561.297.3564  
fax: 561.297.3613  
[www.coe.fau.edu](http://www.coe.fau.edu)

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Office of the President  
Office of the Provost

FROM: Dr. Valerie J. Bristol  
Dean and Professor 

DATE: January 29, 2013

RE: Nomination for Honorary Doctorate Degree – Dr. Roy Church MED '71

It is my pleasure to nominate Dr. Roy Church for an honorary doctorate degree from Florida Atlantic University. A 1971 alumnus of the College of Education, Dr. Church has distinguished himself as a leader in higher education through a host of professional and community activities, including serving as president of Lorain County Community College (LCCC) in Elyria, Ohio since 1987. He is widely credited with leading the development of LCCC through advances that have included:

- Growth of the student body from 5,500 to more than 19,000
- Introduction of collaborative initiatives with business and government to improve workforce education and economic development
- Improvement of program articulation and the transfer of students between secondary schools, community colleges and universities
- Creation of comprehensive community higher education centers for local residents to access education from the K-12 level through graduate studies

In addition to the many contributions he has made to LCCC's growth as its president, Dr. Church is an active public servant on the local, regional and state levels in Ohio. He serves as co-chair of the Ohio Board of Regents Articulation and Transfer Council and he is a member of both the Governor's Workforce Policy Advisory Board and the State Advisory Committee on Adult Career-Technical Programs. Regionally, he is vice chair of the Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education. He serves on the Fund for Our Economic Future Funders' Steering Committee, the WVIZ/PBS and 90.3 WCPN Ideastream Board, the Innovation Alliance (co-chair) and the NorTech Board. He chairs the Talent Sub-Committee of the NorTech Board's Information Technology Initiative. Dr. Church also serves on the boards of The Midwest Consortium for Community College Development, Business Volunteers Unlimited, the Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network (MAGNET), TeamNEO and JumpStart.

Memorandum – Office of the President, Office of the Provost

Re: Honorary Doctorate Degree – Dr. Roy Church

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In his community, he has chaired the United Way Campaign and has served as president of the board of the United Way of Greater Lorain County. For three years he chaired the Board of Lorain County 2020, a visioning organization. He also is secretary-treasurer of the Great Lakes Organize Labor/Management Council. He serves on the boards of The Great Lakes Innovation and Development Enterprise, The Center for Leadership in Education, the Lorain County Workforce Institute, Team Lorain County, South Shore Community Development Corporation, Lorain County Port Authority, El Centro de Servicios Sociales, the Lorain County Urban League and the Lorain County Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Church is married to Barbara Church, who is also a graduate of FAU's College of Education, having received an MED in 1975. We are proud to claim them both as FAU alumni and feel it would be highly appropriate to honor Dr. Church with an honorary doctorate from his alma mater. I have attached two recent articles that present comprehensive reports of his accomplishments, including a profile of Dr. Church that appeared in the November/December 2012 edition of IBmag.com to publicize his induction into the 2012 Business Hall of Fame in Northeast Ohio.

VJB/tr

Attachments

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Issue: November/December 2012

## 2012 Business Hall of Fame: Roy Church

By Lynne Thompson

**Roy Church has helped transform Lorain County Community College from a solid institution into a regional asset and economic engine.**



If the name on the sign in front of the Entrepreneurship Innovation Center at Lorain County Community College doesn't tip you off to its mission, then the inside certainly will.

Floor-to-ceiling windows extend along each side of the halls, providing wooded views of the Great Lakes Technology Park on one side and natural light to the glassed-in office suites and meeting rooms along the other. Polished concrete floors, exposed metal beams and unusual contemporary furnishings offer public areas for impromptu collaboration.

"We very much believe that the strength of American business and our economy is going to turn on our ability to innovate," says LCCC president Roy Church.

The 5-year-old structure was built for exactly that, integrating nature for inspiration and gathering entrepreneurs in close proximity for support and connections.

Twenty-one startups, nurtured by the Great Lakes Innovation and Development Enterprise technology incubator, make their homes within these walls, as do more established counterparts.

Spectre Sensors, a Buffalo, N.Y., manufacturer of components for the industrial and defense industries, for example, relocated to the center so it could be close to its 1,800-square-foot "clean room," where workers don disposable gowns, hair nets, boots and gloves to test microsystems and sensors. Next year, the Richard Desich SMART Commercialization Center for Microsystems, as it's known, will move into its own building under construction next door.

None of this was here when Church first stepped on campus as the school's president 25 years ago. Back then, LCCC was a laid-back community college of 5,000 students. Today, it's one of the top 120 schools of its kind in the country as rated by the Aspen Institute, a Washington, D.C.-based educational and policy-studies organization.

The ever-growing institution has been recognized for its innovative educational approaches, particularly for coaching, teaching and mentoring entrepreneurs in an economically challenged environment. The programs, which include the first degree in entrepreneurship offered by an Ohio community college, have helped grow the student body to almost 17,000.

The 65-year-old Church refuses to take credit for the developments. He says his successes are those of the community and the college's faculty, staff and students.

"I don't look at the world through the lens of what I did," he says. "What we do is follow the lead of opportunities based upon what the needs are."

Church grew up a world away from the halls of academia, on a 230-acre dairy farm south of Syracuse, N.Y.

"I milked cows morning and night for the first 18 years of my life," says Church, the youngest of six children.

He earned a bachelor's degree from the State University of New York Cortland, where he played football and lacrosse. His background as an athlete had him leaning toward a master's degree in physical therapy, but

### LIFE LESSONS

> **I've always been very** much a person who likes to be involved with developing things. I like to see things grow and succeed.

> **You see everything** in the cycle of life on a dairy farm. That's a powerful learning experience.

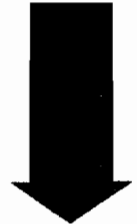
> **You learn to be flexible**, to improvise, to be creative.

> **Things break.** Things don't work the way they're supposed to work.

> **I'm not sure I would have** been patient enough to be a good physical therapist. So much of physical therapy is making progress in baby steps. When you're 20 years old, you don't have that view of the world. You can do anything.

> **What you learn** in working with the good Sisters [of St. Joseph] is how to do a lot with a little. They're very parsimonious, very innovative and

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his plans changed when the government eliminated graduate-school deferments of military service, a result of the Vietnam War.

"My brother had just come back from the war, and my family had a good sense of what was going on there," Church recalls. The government was still offering teaching deferments, though, so he pursued a career in education.

"It's not as big a switch as you would think," he says. "Really, what a physical therapist does is help educate an individual on how to get well."

A year later, in 1969, Church landed a job as an assistant professor at St. Joseph College of Florida, a two-year school where he taught health sciences, and began his graduate work at Florida Atlantic University. The summer after he completed his master's degree in education, St. Joseph's president asked if he'd like to try an administrative position.

"I became the dean of students at 25 years old," Church recalls. "I was barely older than the students."

The experience was a good one, however, enough to send him back to Florida Atlantic University to get a doctorate in higher-education administration.

"I was hooked," he says. "I like to see things accomplished. You get some of that satisfaction as a teacher. But in an administrative role, you have a chance to impact more people and larger issues and development. It was a matter of scale and scope, not kind."

Church left St. Joseph College for a job as assistant to the president of Broward Community College in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., where he subsequently advanced to positions as dean of academic affairs and provost on the school's satellite campuses.

A job as vice president and chief academic officer of St. Petersburg College followed. He was looking for a college presidency — and "a wholesome environment" for he and wife Bobbi to raise their two young children — when he saw an ad for the post of LCCC president.

A friend who had graduated from Baldwin Wallace College told Church it was a good opportunity. He applied and got the job.

In 1987, Church assumed leadership of what he describes as a solid institution with a balance of liberal arts and applied manufacturing and health care programs. "It was not as community-focused as I would have anticipated," he admits.

He saw the surrounding environs as a beautiful place whose residents harbored "an undeserved negative self-concept" rooted in the recent demise of the local manufacturing economy. The county was among the last in Northeast Ohio when it came to the number of high school students going directly to college, a legacy of industries that once provided good jobs requiring no college diploma.

"I would have people tell me stories about how their jobs were passed down from a grandfather at Ford or an uncle at the steel plant," Church says. "I was just astonished. I'd never heard of any such thing. But that was deeply ingrained in the culture here."

That was all about to change.

"It's like Dr. Church lit a fire under the president's chair," Rita Pullen, an LCCC business division administrative assistant, told the LCCC Collegian earlier this year. The college hired a second secretary for his office to help handle the workload he generated.

Church good-naturedly acknowledges that the attitude of some faculty and staff may well have been, "We can't wait for him to leave."

Yet James Miraldi, former chairman of the LCCC board of trustees and current LCCC Foundation board member, remembers that he instantly liked Church when they first met at an on-campus event at the Stocker Arts Center.

"He was confident, without any arrogance whatsoever," he says. "My first impression was, This fellow is going to connect well with people around here."

Church saw his first task as sending "an immutable message" to local high school students and their parents about the importance of obtaining a college degree. The Lorain County Community College Foundation, of which Church remains president, launched a \$4 million community fundraising initiative to endow the Trustees' & President's Scholarship Program, which guarantees paid tuition for an LCCC associate's degree to any Lorain County high school graduate with a grade-point average of 3.7 or higher and 60 percent paid tuition to those with a GPA of 3.4 to 3.7.

"By the time of the 1990 census, we had the highest percentage of adults with associate degrees of any of the counties in northern Ohio," Church says. The county, however, was still last in terms of adults holding four-year and graduate degrees.

To help remedy the situation, Church championed a 1995 levy to fund the University Partnership, an initiative that provided four-year and graduate degree programs from local universities, complete with their courses and instructors, on the LCCC campus.

creative in doing their work.

> **Coaching and mentoring** are pure forms of teaching. They just aren't done in the classroom.

> **The creative process** is a collective process, particularly when you're working in an institutional setting. If you're an artist or a writer, you can function independently. But if you're in this leadership role, you're always working with and through other people.

> **Some have talked about** operating in an environment of permanent whitewater. That's a metaphor for the world we live in, isn't it?

> **I love to ski.** One of my life goals is to ski all of Skiing Magazine's top 50 resorts in North America. I've skied about two-thirds of them. My favorite is Whistler Blackcomb in British Columbia. It has some of the best terrain in the world.

> **The biggest challenge I've had** in 25 years is being able to help others see the possibilities and to mobilize them to address the possibilities.

It was an ambitious proposition. "Traditionally, four-year colleges or universities would have been loathe to partner with a community college," says Luis Proenza, president of the University of Akron, one of the partner institutions. "It's just not something that came naturally. In many cases, it still doesn't." To win support, Church and his team made presentations to 75 community groups and held a series of public conferences. During the meetings, attendees were asked for their input on four-year participants and programs.

The levy passed, and five universities began offering programs at LCCC the following year. Today, 10 universities offer 32 bachelor's degrees, eight master's degrees and seven professional certificates to 3,000 students. Church points out that the partnership has done more than eliminate long commutes to partner campuses: Students only pay a four-year school's higher tuition rate for the classes it brings to the LCCC campus — only a year of coursework for more than half of the baccalaureate degrees. Church cites 2010 census data that shows Lorain County enjoyed the second-highest education-attainment gain in the region during the 2000s.

The University Partnership led to similar joint efforts.

In 2007 Church and Proenza founded the Innovation Alliance, an effort to improve access to science, technology, engineering and math degrees at member institutions while sparking entrepreneurship and commercialization.

"We are kindred spirits," Proenza says. "The two of us have a great deal of passion for serving our communities and the industries that are represented in our communities."

With expanded educational opportunities in place, Church turned his attention to creating local jobs by assembling a task force to determine the county's needs.

The top priority? An incubator that would nurture and support entrepreneurs.

In 2001, GLIDE, the county's technology incubator, opened in 4,000 square feet on the LCCC campus with \$2.5 million in county funding. Six years later, the LCCC Foundation founded the Innovation Fund to provide up to \$100,000 to technology-based startups for proving their products and business models.

Over the last decade, the incubator has advised or assisted 2,600 entrepreneurs or businesses. Portfolio companies have created 700 jobs with an average salary of \$48,000. In addition, those startups have grown by \$60 million in revenue and added \$81 million in follow-on investments.

"We have created a culture where, when the college sees an opportunity, people are responsive," Church says. "They say, 'Well, we know that's probably going to be successful because the college has got a track record of being successful. We're willing to cast our lot with the college.'"

The college's successes have attracted outside resources as well.

The National Association of Seed and Venture Funds moved its headquarters to the LCCC campus earlier this year.

And the Blackstone LaunchPad, a program funded by the Blackstone Charitable and Burton D. Morgan foundations, began providing aspiring entrepreneurs the tools and coaching needed to transform ideas into companies.

Church's list of off-campus activities is as staggering as his on-the-job projects.

He currently maintains seats on close to two-dozen boards, committees, councils and task forces.

"Many of the boards that I'm involved with are interconnected, so it's not like each of them is a whole new endeavor," he explains. "All of the things I'm involved in have a connection back to this role I play as president of Lorain County Community College."

The pleasure in his voice is audible, however, when he talks about his role in founding Eastern Gateway Community College, a 3-year-old institution with a main campus in Steubenville and six satellite campuses.

"That was a pretty exciting initiative," Church enthuses. "It created an important resource for that sector of Ohio."

Yet most will point to what's happening on the LCCC campus as Church's legacy.

The length of his tenure is remarkable — Church notes that the average college president's tenure is 5 1/2 years — and he has no plans to retire.

"Everyone desires to reach a place in their careers where they're doing something that is gratifying and fulfilling and provides them an opportunity to sustain their families in the way that they want to," Church explains. "This environment has given [my wife and I] that opportunity. That's why we've stayed here all these years."

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### Career Timeline

**1968:** Roy Church graduates from the State University of New York Cortland with a bachelor of science degree and marries his wife, Bobbi.

**1969:** Church lands a job as assistant professor at St. Joseph College of Florida. "I didn't go to Florida for

the weather. I went to Florida to pursue a career."

**1971:** He graduates from Florida Atlantic University with a master's degree in education; promoted to St. Joseph College's dean of students. "I enjoyed working with people and seemed to have some success in doing it."

**1973:** Church accepts a position as assistant to the president at Broward Community College; graduates from Florida Atlantic University with a doctorate in higher-education administration.

**1981:** Church is hired as vice president and chief academic officer by St. Petersburg College.

**1987:** He moves to Ohio to assume the presidency of Lorain County Community College.

**1989:** The Lorain County Community College Foundation, of which Church is president, establishes the Trustees' & President's Scholarship Program.

**1995:** Church successfully leads an effort to promote a levy to fund the University Partnership.

**1996:** The University Partnership program is implemented.

**2001:** GLIDE, Lorain County's technology business incubator, opens as a joint effort of LCCC, county commissioners and the Lorain County Chamber of Commerce. "We were able to build [a partnership] because we'd created that culture of working together and getting things done."

**2007:** The LCCC Foundation starts the Innovation Fund, and the Entrepreneurship Innovation Center opens. Church and University of Akron president Luis Proenza found Innovation Alliance. "Our institutions are active in promoting innovation and entrepreneurship. We said, 'If we're promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, maybe we need to walk the talk.'"

#### **Related Taxonomy**

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## A STUDENT PUBLICATION OF LORAIN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

[Search](#)**LCCC has been home for 25 years****By Karl Schneider  
Staff Writer**

Dr. Roy Church, Lorain County Community College's third president, is celebrating his 25th anniversary this year at LCCC. Under his guidance and leadership LCCC has grown from a 5,500-student campus in 1987 to a 19,000-student campus today.

LCCC's first president was Max J. Lerner, who served from 1964 to 1971. Lerner was followed by Omar L. Olson, 1971-1986, and Richard R. Mellott, who served in an interim capacity until Church was hired in 1987 as the college's third and current president.

Moving to Northeast Ohio from St. Petersburg, Fla., Church found Lorain County to be a nice home for his wife and two young children. "I was looking for a presidency and a friend of mine at Baldwin Wallace told me about LCCC and suggested I would enjoy it," said Church. Lorain County's diverse environment, from rural farming communities to its close proximity to the Cleveland metropolis, gave Church and his family a great place to lay down roots. It was a different change of pace for Church, "I couldn't believe there was no traffic," explained Church. "I remember going to meet a friend on Broadway in Lorain and I think I only hit one traffic light the whole way." Traffic in Ohio proved to be quieter than Florida.

Becoming the president of a community college was a natural progression for Church. He had worked with two Florida community colleges and brought a variety of administration experience to LCCC. Church's administration saw the need for jobs in Lorain County and wanted the college to be more active in the role of making these jobs accessible to the county's residents. "We always try to do as much as possible with what our resource base allows us," said Church. LCCC has been one of the least wealthy community colleges in the area. This has not stopped Church from innovating new ways to make higher education available to the community. Early censuses showed Lorain County had the highest rate of associate degrees but the lowest rate of bachelor and higher degrees in the area. "As a community college we needed to focus on how to raise the attainment rate of higher degrees," said Church.

**Support from the community**

LCCC and the residents of Lorain County initiated and passed a \$1.2 million levy in 1995 that helped create the University Partnership program. This initiative has been substantial in helping students attain degrees above an associate. The 2010 census shows that LCCC has the second largest growth rate for higher education degrees in the area.

Church is proud of the impact LCCC has made on the surrounding community. "I'm delighted about this achievement and find it fulfilling," said Church. LCCC worked with county commissioners and the Ohio Department of Development in 2001 to form The Great Lakes Innovation and Development Enterprise (GLIDE). Numerous high growth areas have seen 700 new jobs with the help of GLIDE. LCCC has seen a 120 percent increase in tuition under Church's leadership. The tuition growth has stimulated the development of new facilities on campus. "We focus on critical facilities that will bring a high quality collegiate environment," said Church. Church has worked with many faculty members during his time at LCCC.

**Others weigh in**

Dean of Arts and Humanities Dr. Robert Beckstrom was a first year faculty member when Church took the position of president. "Before Dr. Church, this was a good school but far more tranquil. He has been a change maker," said Beckstrom.

Beckstrom explains that Church's momentum has helped keep progress at LCCC from leveling into a plateau. For the first 12 years of his presidency, he was thought of as 'the new president' just because he always kept things moving and changing in a forward progression. "Because he was so dynamic and effective



Dr. Roy Church answers questions and give the 'state of the campus' summary at the President's Forum March 20.  
Drew Scofield|The Collegian

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The Collegian is published online and in print by the students of LCCC.

College Center  
Lorain Community College  
1005 N. Abbe Road  
Elyria, Ohio 44035  
Phone: 440-366-4037  
E-mail: collegian@lorainccc.edu  
Alt: lcccstories@lorainccc.edu

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there was an operative theory that he would be here a short time and move onto a more prestigious role, such as a member of congress," said Beckstrom.

Rita Pullen, administrative assistant at the Business Division, remembers the times before Church held office. "It was much more laid back and quiet before Church. LCCC had to hire an extra secretary for his office and everything was on the go. It's like Dr. Church lit a fire under the president's chair," said Pullen.

#### **Fond memories**

Pullen remembers a time when Church actually had to deal with a serious fire. "During the fire [Spring 2009] Church was the man getting everything organized. It was the only time that I didn't see him smiling," recalled Pullen.

"His presidency has always carried very high standards of institutional and personal ethics," said Beckstrom. "I've had a wonderful career here, and much of it I owe to Dr. Church."

Church said he is trying to create a healthy culture at LCCC and hopes to see more and more students participate and get engaged with the school.

Filed in: Features, Stories

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