

# **SPECIAL RELEASE TO THE SPRINGFIELD MEDIA**

**April 15, 2013**

## **HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION GIVES GREEN LIGHT FOR CONSOLIDATION OF SPRINGFIELD SCHOOLS**

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) has notified the presidents of the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, Central Bible College, and Evangel University that their application to consolidate the three institutions has been approved.

“I am thrilled and thankful that the journey we began over 2 years ago has culminated in this moment,” states Dr. George O. Wood, general superintendent of the Assemblies of God and chairman of the Transitional Board of Trustees for the consolidation.

The consolidated Evangel University will open fall 2013. The Transitional Board meeting last month unanimously elected Dr. Carol Taylor, currently president of Vanguard University, Costa Mesa, Calif., as president-elect of the university. She will serve as chief executive officer and lead all consolidation efforts as plans move forward. She begins her duties July 1, 2013.

In November 2010, the church’s executive presbytery began a process to consolidate the three institutions. Early in January 2011, the boards of directors of the schools met and agreed to appoint a Task Force that would provide a mission statement, core values, structure, governance and bylaws for the consolidated university.

The Task Force report in May was sent to the boards and subsequently, in separate actions, approved by each. This report then went in August 2011 to the General Presbytery and on to the biennial business meeting of the Assemblies of God. Both bodies voted overwhelmingly to move forward with the consolidation.

Once approval from Assemblies of God business meeting in session was received, over 200 people from all three of the schools began working on various facets of the application to the HLC. The 6,000-page report was submitted last June.

Wood expressed deep appreciation to Presidents Byron Klaus (AGTS); Gary Denbow (CBC); and Robert Spence (EU) who worked untiringly for this effort. He also thanked the David Green family who donated \$5 million to make the consolidation possible.

“Now our real work begins,” he said. “As we consolidate the student bodies, there will need to be much thought and effort given to developing the structure of the university.”

The Assemblies of God Theological Seminary will be embedded into the university and will have oversight of the School of Theology and Church Ministries within the university, including all classes both undergraduate and graduate. This school will be the first to begin in fall 2013. Other schools to be phased in as soon as possible are the Schools of Arts and Sciences; Behavioral Science; Business and Communications; and Fine Arts.

It is anticipated the full implementation of the consolidation will be completed by 2020. During this time, the full structure of the university will be implemented and the vision for the school will be established in its most expanded form.

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