

Expertise of new Trustees to strengthen BC3, chairman says

Commissioners appoint health system CEO, retired educator to board

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(Butler, PA) The president and chief executive officer of Butler Health System and the former interim vice president for academic affairs at Butler County Community College say they look forward to continuing BC3's mission as the newest members of the college's Board of Trustees.

Kenneth DeFurio, 53, of Renfrew, who has worked for Butler Health System since 1989, began a two-year term as BC3 Trustee on Oct. 18.

Dr. Bruce Russell, 67, of Connoquenessing Township, who served as BC3's interim chief academic officer from 2015 until his retirement in June, will begin a six-year term on Dec. 6.



Kenneth DeFurio, left, president and chief executive officer of Butler Health System, began a two-year term as a Butler County Community College Trustee on Oct. 18. Dr. Bruce Russell, BC3's former interim vice president for academic affairs, will begin a six-year term as a Trustee on Dec. 6.

DeFurio has demonstrated his leadership in health care and Russell, in education, said Ray Steffler, of Valencia, a BC3 Trustee since 1985 and its board chairman since 1999.

"BC3 can utilize both of their strengths to help us develop and strengthen our curriculum and to continue our success in educating our students," said Steffler, an aide to state Sen. Scott E. Hutchinson, R-21, Oil City. "They are a timely addition to BC3's Board of Trustees."

BC3 "provides great educational opportunities to residents of all ages across eight counties," said DeFurio, who replaces Stephen J. Newcaster on the board and whose term expires June 30, 2019.

"I believe BC3 works very hard to fulfill its mission of affordability and accessibility, and I look forward to assisting BC3 in fulfilling its mission."

Dedication, loyalty at BC3 "contagious"

BC3 has been named the No. 1 community college in Pennsylvania in back-to-back rankings by Schools.com. Its tuition is less expensive than that of 24 colleges and universities in Western Pennsylvania, the Pittsburgh Business Times reported in January.

DeFurio said he is impressed by BC3's "commitment to relevant, practical higher education for over 50 years. BC3 has truly demonstrated its ability to provide value in education, and respond to the needs of the community and Western Pennsylvania."

Russell, who replaces Sarah G. Peart-Forbes on the board and whose term expires June 30, 2023, said he observed the "loyalty and dedication of the faculty, staff and administrators to the vision and mission of the college" during his tenure as interim vice president for academic affairs.

"The dedication and loyalty were contagious," Russell said. "I valued and respected everyone's commitment to the educational and workforce development efforts to help the citizens of the communities the college serves."

DeFurio holds a bachelor's degree in respiratory therapy from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a master of business administration degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

He has worked as a staff respiratory therapist at Butler Memorial Hospital, and as assistant director of respiratory therapy at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore before joining Butler Health System in 1989.

DeFurio, said Dr. Nick Neupauer, BC3 president, "is an incredible leader of an incredible organization. We both started about the same time as president of our respective organizations. In our roles, we have served together on boards and worked collaboratively on initiatives. Ken's role on our board will allow for great opportunities for further collaboration between two strong organizations in our community."

DeFurio is a board member of the Hospital and Health System Association of Pennsylvania and of the American Hospital Association Regional Policy Board.

He and his wife, Tracey, have a daughter, Alison.

"Specialized individuals" will enhance BC3, commissioner says

Russell holds a bachelor's degree in secondary education from Slippery Rock State College, a master's degree in communication from Clarion State College, and a doctorate in education technology and instructional design from the University of Pittsburgh.

He served in civil service and management positions at Slippery Rock State College and Slippery Rock University from 1973 to 1983 before joining the school's communications department as a faculty member for 20 years. Russell was dean of SRU's College of Business, Information and Social Sciences from 2002 until his retirement in 2010.

Russell was also the director of operations for the Regional Learning Alliance from 2005 to 2010 before becoming BC3's interim vice president for academic affairs.

Russell's career in higher education "has been spectacular," Neupauer said. "His dean emeritus status from Slippery Rock University is testimony. But his two years at BC3 were just as important. He made a tremendous impact in a short period of time. Now, our college will once again benefit from Dr. Russell's expertise as a Trustee. The entire college community welcomes this opportunity to once again work with Bruce."

Russell and his wife, Sue, have two grown children and five grandchildren.

He said he is excited to become involved with BC3's new master plan that will "guide the college with new challenges, initiatives and efforts to help with the economic development of the regions where we have educational sites."

DeFurio brings a multi-faceted health-care expertise that will help to guide BC3's board in expanding its nursing program, said Kimberly D. Geyer, a Butler County commissioner and ex officio member of BC3's Board of Trustees. Russell, she said, will bring great expertise with his knowledge and understanding of the accreditation process, pedagogy and curriculum opportunities for students.

"The BC3 administration and Board of Trustees is excited to get to work in the new year with these two specialized individuals who will enhance our institution moving into the future," Geyer said.

Butler County commissioners appoint BC3 Trustees to six-year terms. The board is a policy-making body that provides direction and guidance to BC3's president and administration. The primary functions of the board include establishing basic policy, appointing the president and financial control of the institution.

DeFurio and Russell join on the board vice chairman Joseph Kubit, esq., Montgomery, Crissman, Montgomery, Kubit, L.L.P.; secretary Glenn T. Miller, funeral director, Thompson-Miller Funeral Home; treasurer Scott A. McDowell, chief financial officer, Blair Strip Steel; William A. DiCuccio, M.D., medical director, Sunnyview Nursing Home; Jennifer R. Linn, esq., The Linn Law Group; Gordon L. Marburger, dairy farmer; Bruce Mazzoni, Cranberry Township supervisor; Brian K. McCafferty, owner, Kenmac Rentals and Sales; Gail A. Paserba, president, International Quality Consultants Inc.; Carmine A. Scotece, retired Human Services director for Butler County; and Nancy H. Staible, retired physician's assistant; Joseph Taylor, vice president and general manager, Armstrong Groups of Companies; and Steffler and Geyer.