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Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences President Charles L. Rice Announces Retirement

Bethesda, MD – Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USU) President Dr. Charles L. Rice announced that he will retire at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year, concluding his 11th year as president.

Rice made the announcement during his quarterly campus “Town Hall” meeting Aug. 12, and followed it with a letter to the University community. “Serving as President of USU has been the highlight of my career. Everything I wanted to accomplish when I first became a physician and, later, an academic leader, has been realized through my service as President. Every day I am surrounded by people who exemplify what is best about our profession and our country,” Rice said. “I have never once felt that coming to USU was work. My passion for our mission and my role in it is as strong now as it was in 2005. The temptation to continue serving as President - which I consider the best position in academic medicine - is great. But a tenth anniversary is a milestone, and as mine approached and passed it has prompted a great deal of personal reflection. I have always believed it’s better for an organization for its President to leave too soon rather than too late. Every university can and will benefit from new ideas, fresh perspectives, and renewed energy. Part of a President’s responsibility is to know when the time is right to exit gracefully, and allow his or her Board to conduct a thoughtful and thorough search for a successor. I may be leaving USU, but USU will never leave me.”

During Rice’s tenure as President, the University significantly expanded its academic and research portfolios, completely overhauled its medical school curriculum, while maintaining USU’s signature military footprint and providing a much stronger link between classroom learning and clinical experience. Rice also oversaw the expansion of clinical research across the university, with 310 funded research projects, and \$132.5 million in research funding; the introduction of new academic programs, such as the Master’s and PhD programs in Health Professions Education, Master of Health Administration and Policy, Doctor of Nursing Practice, Women’s Health Nurse Practitioner, and expansion of the Clinical Psychology program and implementation of the LEAD (leadership) curriculum and alternative and complementary medicine curriculum; creation, and subsequent expansion of the Postgraduate Dental College and establishment of Master of Oral Biology degree for Army, Navy and Air Force dental residents.

Rice also established a new Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, oversaw the integration of the USU and Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Departments of Surgery and the integration of a department chair for USU and WRNMMC Radiology departments. He hired new University leaders, including deans of the F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine, the Daniel K. Inouye Graduate School of Nursing, and Postgraduate Dental College, Senior Vice President, Vice President for Research, Vice President for External Affairs, Vice President for Finance and Administration, Chief Information Officer/Vice President for Information and Education Technology, Chief of Staff, AFRRI Director, Brigade Commanders, and established a fully-accredited branch campus in San Antonio.

Learning to Care for Those in Harm's Way

Under his leadership, the University forged strategic relationships with other federal educational and research institutions, such as the affiliations with the Naval Postgraduate School and the National Defense University and the National Institutes of Health. He was also responsible for the creation or development of important interdisciplinary academic centers and programs, including the National Center for Disaster Medicine and Public Health; the Center for Neuroscience and Regenerative Medicine; the Consortium for Health and Military Performance and the John P. Murtha Cancer Center; the Center for Rehabilitation Science Research; the Collaborative Health Initiative Research Program; Surgical Critical Care Initiative (SC2i); and establishing a new Global Health Center. Recently, Rice oversaw the establishment of the University's Enlisted to Medical Degree Preparatory Program, which provides promising military enlisted service members with a pathway to medical school.

In learning of Rice's retirement plans, USU Board of Regents chair Dr. Ronald Blanck stated, "Dr. Rice has provided visionary and inspirational leadership during his tenure at USU, to include acting as Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) for a time. The Board of Regents accepts his announced retirement with regret and profound thanks for all that he has done. We will now move forward with a search to find an equally qualified replacement."

A presidential search committee will be established by the Board of Regents to find a successor to Rice.

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About the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, founded by an act of Congress in 1972, is the nation's federal health sciences university and the academic heart of the Military Health System. USU students are primarily active duty uniformed officers in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Public Health Service who receive specialized education in tropical and infectious diseases, TBI and PTSD, disaster response and humanitarian assistance, global health, and acute trauma care. A large percentage of the university's more than 5,200 physician and 1,000 advanced practice nursing alumni are supporting operations around the world, offering their leadership and expertise. USU also has graduate programs in biomedical sciences and public health committed to excellence in research, and in oral biology. The University's research program covers a wide range of clinical and other topics important to both the military and public health. For more information about USU and its programs, visit www.usuhs.edu.