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Contact:
Debbie Goldberg
Director of Media Relations
GoldbergD@philau.edu
215.951.2851

Philadelphia University Announces Executive Dean Matt Dane Baker as Provost

PHILADELPHIA, May 21, 2015 – Matt Dane Baker, executive dean of the College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts, will become provost at Philadelphia University effective June 1.

Randy Swearer, who has served as provost since July 2009, will become vice president for education at Autodesk in San Francisco, a world leader in 3-D design software for industries including entertainment, natural resources, manufacturing, engineering and civil infrastructure. His last day at Philadelphia University will be June 1.

“Matt Baker and Randy Swearer have worked closely together for five years,” President Stephen Spinelli Jr. said. “This is textbook leadership succession and a perfect transition.”

Baker has served as executive dean since 2011 and was dean of the School of Science and Health prior to that. He joined PhilaU in 1994 as director of its nationally ranked M.S. in Physician Assistant Studies Program. He has been instrumental in working with faculty to develop new programs in health sciences, disaster medicine and management, community and trauma counseling, and athletic training and sports medicine.

“I am honored to have this opportunity to lead such a talented and dedicated group of faculty and staff during this exciting time in the University’s history,” Baker said. “Our commitment to delivering a transdisciplinary, student-centric professional education that integrates global perspectives, ethical reflection and strong communication skills sets a high standard in this dynamic higher-education environment. Our faculty and staff continue to develop and implement innovative curricula that address real-world challenges, often with industry education partners, and engage students in an active and collaborative manner. It will be a privilege to serve our faculty, students, staff and families.”

Baker holds a Doctorate of Health Sciences from Nova Southeastern University, an M.S. in gerontology from St. Joseph's University, a B.S. in Physician Assistant Studies from Hahnemann University and a B.A. in criminal justice from Stockton University.

Prior to joining Philadelphia University, Baker served as a physician assistant in outpatient, hospital and long-term care settings and worked in health care administration. He is the author of multiple publications on medical conditions, hospital procedures and physician assistant education. In 2007, Baker received the Physician Assistant Education Association Master Faculty Award.

“Matt Baker’s institutional commitment and success, coupled with his intimate involvement in the Strategic Plan and Strategic Build, make him the clear choice to build on our success,” Spinelli said. “He is a superior leader and will be an excellent provost and champion of Philadelphia University’s commitment to propel our students into the professions of their passion, into their careers, and into a lifetime success.”

Philadelphia University, founded in 1884, is a private university with 3,600 students enrolled in more than 70 undergraduate and graduate programs. As the model for professional university education, the University, through its award-winning Nexus Learning approach, prepares students to be leaders in their professions in an active, collaborative and real-world learning environment infused with the liberal arts. Philadelphia University includes the innovative Kanbar College of Design, Engineering and Commerce; the College of Architecture and the Built Environment; and the College of Science, Health and the Liberal Arts. For more information, go to www.PhilaU.edu.