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Nov. 21, 2000
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NEWS RELEASE

UD TO LAUNCH CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY, NAMES DICK FERGUSON DIRECTOR

DAYTON, Ohio — The University of Dayton, which throughout its 150-year history has looked beyond itself to connect to the community, will launch a Center for Leadership in Community next summer and seek funds to permanently endow its operation. Dick Ferguson has been named the founding director of the center, which will be located in UD's College of Arts and Sciences.

Ferguson, currently assistant to the president for regional and government relations, assumes the new role immediately. He also will serve as special assistant to Brother Raymond L. Fitz, S.M., through the remainder of his presidency.

"The Center for Leadership in Community will work at the intersection of the University of Dayton and the community to help develop the community's assets while giving faculty, staff, students and alumni opportunities to support neighborhoods and build communities," Fitz said. "Dick has spearheaded with competence, vision and energy a number of key UD initiatives in the Dayton region. He's the ideal person to lead this highly visible center that symbolizes the University of Dayton's historic commitment to community leadership and service."

Paul Morman, dean of UD's College of Arts and Sciences, called Ferguson a veteran community partnership broker. "He brings years of experience of mediating between the academic community and the many public and not-for-profit agencies in the community," he said. "He can broker connections between academic theory and actual practice."

Ferguson, 49, has been involved in a number of high-profile community initiatives, including the Genesis Project, an innovative \$15 million private-public partnership to redevelop the Fairgrounds neighborhood and Brown Street; the Rubicon Park Master Plan, a long-range plan for the southern edge of the city; the Dayton Area Graduate Studies Institute, a collaboration among area universities to create a strong graduate engineering capacity to meet the region's needs for high-tech training; SWEAT, Ohio's first AmeriCorps program, now in its

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seventh year; and the Montgomery County Child Protection Task Force, which recommended an integrated child protection system after several highly publicized deaths of children from abuse.

Still in the development stages, the Center for Leadership in Community will consolidate and expand the activities of two existing centers, the Institute for Neighborhood and Community Leadership (INCLUD) and the Center for Family and Community Research. Ferguson, who directs INCLUD and team teaches a course with Fitz called "Leadership in Building Communities," will work with faculty from various disciplines to develop new curriculum, possibly an undergraduate minor in leadership in community and concentrations in select graduate programs. The center will expand UD's service-learning activities for students. UD students and faculty are increasingly involved in neighborhood development projects in Dayton, ranging from business studies to the development of a computer center and an urban land lab.

UD is seeking a \$5 million endowment for the center, to supplement University funding, grants and contracts. Last month, the Cincinnati Province of the Society of Mary earmarked \$1 million of its \$10.5 million "Call to Lead" campaign gift to the center to establish the Father William J. Ferree Chair of Leadership in Community. Ferree, Dayton native, former provincial of the Cincinnati Province of the Society of Mary and an internationally known advocate for social justice, died in 1985.

Ferguson said the Center for Leadership in Community will be grounded in Catholic social teaching and Marianist ideals. It will build upon more than two decades of outreach work coordinated first by UD's Strategies for Responsible Development (SRD) and later by the Institute for Neighborhood and Community Leadership. "The Center for Leadership in Community will leverage a strong tradition in neighborhood development and the research expertise of UD's Center for Family and Community Research to stimulate, coordinate, and facilitate learning and scholarship on leadership in community while building community in urban Dayton and throughout the region," Ferguson said.

In the community, Ferguson chairs the City of Dayton's Rubicon Park Master Plan Committee and the United Way Public Policy Committee. He is a member of the Leadership Dayton Board of Governors, the Board of Directors of the United Way of the Greater Dayton Area, the St. Mary Development Corporation Board of Trustees and Executive Committee, the Montgomery County Advisory Board of Supporting Council of Preventive Effort (SCOPE), the Board of Trustees of Serving with Energy and Talent (SWEAT/AmeriCorps), the Genesis Investment Board, the League of Women Voters Community Advisory Board and the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Cincinnati. He recently served as a member of the Montgomery County Out of School Youth Task Force and is a

member of the Out of School Youth Resource Center Advisory Board.

Ferguson has held several major administrative positions in 27 years at the University of Dayton. For five years, he worked in various positions in the undergraduate admission office, including associate director of admission. For seven years, he served as director of University communications (now public relations), during the introduction of a new president, most of a \$43 million fund-raising campaign and development of UD's reputation as a major Catholic university and Ohio education resource. For three years, he worked as assistant dean and director of admission and financial aid for the School of Law before serving as associate provost for enrollment management for four years. For the past seven years, he's worked as assistant to the president.

Ferguson is a 1973 graduate of the University of Dayton with a degree in English and a 1993 graduate of The Ohio State University School of Public Policy and Management with a specialization in higher education policy. His wife, Susan, is a full-time administrative faculty member in UD's School of Education and Allied Professions. The Fergusons live in Beavercreek and have three sons: Mark, David and A.J.

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For media interviews, contact **Dick Ferguson** at (937) 229-4122 or via e-mail at Dick.Ferguson@notes.udayton.edu. For a digital photo, contact Teri Rizvi at rizvi@udayton.edu.