

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS
STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA
MARK B. ROSENBERG, CHANCELLOR**



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**Board of Governors chair appoints new member
to Task Force on FAMU Finance and Operational Control**

TALLAHASSEE – Board of Governors Chair Carolyn King Roberts today appointed Joelen Merkel of Ocean Ridge, Florida, to the Task Force on FAMU Finance and Operational Control Issues.



Joelen Merkel

She joins eight other FAMU Task Force members appointed last week by the Board of Governors chair.

Mrs. Merkel is a Certified Public Accountant with extensive experience in the corporate world as an executive with Chris-Craft Industries Inc. She currently serves as chair of the Audit Committee of the University of Florida Board of Trustees.

“Joelen Merkel brings added strength and expertise to the FAMU Task Force,” said Board of Governors Chair Roberts. “Her experience as a CPA will prove invaluable as the FAMU Task Force works to bring Florida A&M University to a position of strength and financial security.”

The FAMU Task Force, announced March 19 by Chancellor Mark B. Rosenberg, will prepare and implement a plan to restore financial and operational credibility

to the university. Chancellor Rosenberg made the decision to create the FAMU Task Force after consultation with Interim President Castell Bryant, with Board of Trustees Chair Challis Lowe and with FAMU's incoming president, Dr. James Ammons. All agree that the serious nature of the issues raised by a recent audit of Florida A&M University warrants a State University System team approach. All support the creation of the FAMU Task Force.

Mrs. Merkel was senior vice president and treasurer of Chris-Craft, a New York Stock Exchange company, and senior vice president, treasurer and a director of BHC Communications Inc., an American Stock Exchange company majority-owned by Chris-Craft, through July 31, 2001. At that time Chris-Craft was acquired by News Corporation and Fox Television Stations. Mrs. Merkel now serves as a consultant to those companies.

Mrs. Merkel graduated with honors from the University of Florida in 1973 with a degree in Accounting. She was employed by Arthur Andersen & Co. in Miami as a CPA for three years before starting her 25-year career at Chris-Craft.

She is a member of the Board of Directors of the UF Foundation, serving on the Finance Committee. She is also a member of the Steering Committee for University of Florida's Fisher School of Accounting and she and her husband, Bob, also a Florida alumnus, are members of the Bull Gator Club.

In June 2001, she was appointed to the University of Florida's Board of Trustees.

Mrs. Merkel and the eight other members of the Task Force on FAMU Finance and Operational Control Issues will hold their inaugural meeting at 10 a.m. EDT Friday, March 30, via conference call. The number is (888) 808-6959, and the pass code is 2450466.

The other members of the FAMU Task Force are:

- **Lynn Pappas, chair, of Jacksonville** – Ms. Pappas is chair of the Audit Committee of the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida and a shareholder in the law firm of Pappas Metcalf Jenks & Miller, P.A., of Jacksonville.
- **Retired Justice Leander J. Shaw Jr., vice-chair, of Tallahassee** – Leander Shaw was the first African-American to be appointed as justice of the Florida Supreme Court. Following graduation from West Virginia State College, he joined the United States Army. He received his J.D. from Howard University School of Law in 1957, and moved to Tallahassee, where he became an assistant professor of law at Florida

A&M University. Later, Shaw had his own law practice in Jacksonville and then became an assistant public defender.

- **W. George Allen of Fort Lauderdale** – Mr. Allen is an attorney in private practice and a graduate of Florida A&M University and a member of the FAMU Board of Trustees.
- **Barbara Bowles of Chicago** – Ms. Bowles is Vice Chairman of Profit Investment Management. She worked at First National Bank of Chicago (currently JP Morgan Chase) for over a decade as securities analyst and portfolio manager.
- **Albert Dotson Sr. of Miami** – Mr. Dotson is chairman and CEO of Puryear Inc., a consulting firm, and is a founding member of the Board of Trustees of Florida International University. He served as chair of the Audit Committee for the Barry University Board of Trustees.
- **Ava Parker of Jacksonville** – Ms. Parker, chair of the Facilities Committee of the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida, is a partner in the law offices of Lawrence and Parker, P.A., and the president of Linking Solutions Inc.
- **William “Bill” Jennings of Orlando** – Mr. Jennings serves as Vice Chair of the Florida A&M University Board of Trustees. He is currently retired as the executive director of the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority. He served as co-chair of the campaign for the FAMU Law School Building Fund and the FAMU Scholarship Fund.
- **Dr. Edward Penson of Tallahassee** – Dr. Penson is a former President of Salem College and a former Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. Currently he is general chairman and senior scholar of Penson Associates Inc., a research and consultations firm, and coordinator and faculty leader of the Presidents’ Academy for the American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

The mission of the FAMU Task Force is to bring stability to the university’s operations and to restore confidence in the institution. Roberts, the Board of Governors chair, said that once the FAMU Task Force’s work is complete “Florida A&M University will emerge in the strongest shape in the university’s history.”

Working closely with the Office of the Auditor General, the FAMU Board of Trustees Audit Committee, the Joint Legislative Auditing Committee and the

faculty and administrators of the institution, the Task Force on FAMU Finance and Operational Control Issues will:

- Undertake a thorough examination of the highest institutional risk areas.
- Review and identify gaps in policies and procedures and compliance that must be addressed in the near term if the institution is to maintain its viability.
- Prepare a plan to correct all financial and operational deficiencies.
- Ensure that all activities of the university fully comply with policies and procedures of the highest standards.
- Recommend actions needed so that all personnel are appropriately trained and are aware of the consequences for failure to routinely carry out policies and procedures.

The Board of Governors is the constitutional body created by voters in 2002 to guide the State University System of Florida.

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