

## Albany State University appoints new Chief Information Officer



Virginia Stewart, CIO

Virginia Stewart, an experienced Information Technology (IT) professional in both the public and private sectors, has been appointed the Chief Information Officer (CIO) at Albany State University. She will serve on the President's cabinet and report directly to him.

Stewart was selected from among three finalists after a national search. According to Dr. Everette J. Freeman, President of ASU, Stewart was ranked the highest and best qualified among the finalists recommended to him by the search committee. "Ms. Stewart demonstrated an engaging commitment to customer service and making ASU's instructional and information technology operations the envy of the

University System of Georgia," he told the faculty and staff in a campus-wide e-mail.

Before coming to ASU, Stewart was the Director of Information Technology at Houston-Tillotson University in Austin, Texas. She also worked as a technical specialist at Norrell Information Systems in Houston; and as a senior business analyst with American Management Systems in Fairfax, Virginia. She has a bachelor's degree in managerial studies from Rice University and an MBA with emphasis in finance and management information systems from the University of Texas.

Among her responsibilities, Stewart will direct the design and support of innovative technological systems and

align them with ASU's educational and economic development missions; develop and implement a long-range strategic plan for campus instructional technology; develop and administer the annual budget for instructional technology and major equipment purchase; and create a work environment that fosters positive employee relations, efficient and effective deployment of human resources, and utilizes professionally sound personnel management techniques.

Stewart's unique qualifications and combined experience in industry and higher education gave her the edge over the other finalists in the selection process, according to Dr. Abiodun Ojemankinde, chair of the seven-member

campus-wide search committee. "She seems to have a good outlook for the technological trends and needs in higher education," he said. "She is definitely the right person for the CIO position." Stewart also received high recognition for her enthusiasm for technology in higher education from other members of the search committee and Dr. Freeman. "Ms. Stewart is a delightful and spirited person who will go out of her way to help," Dr. Freeman said.

Stewart will direct a department of more than 12 professionals and technical staff.

## Dr. Franklin Perry's excellence reaches Twiggs Under Perry, Sumter and Bibb schools progressed

A former superintendent of Sumter County Schools has been picked to take the helm of the Twiggs County Schools.

Dr. Franklin Perry was voted in a recent 3-2 Twiggs County School Board decision to become superintendent of the 1,400 student school system.

In an interview with the Americus-Sumter Observer on Monday, Perry said he looks forward to the job.

"I want to make a difference here," Perry said. "I want to help the district and the students with their needs."

Perry started working in the Jeffersonville Office a couple weeks ago. He said he top priority will be helping the students with their needs.

Perry was the Sumter County Schools superintendent before resigning here in early 2005. His term in Sumter County ended with a lot of contention with the Sumter County School Board, much of which the local NAACP said was racial.

"They didn't want a black man to be in charge," said John Marshall, president of the area NAACP.

The board voted in a split decision among racial lines to accept Perry's resignation.

Perry eventually found a job as school superintendent of Bibb County. Perry said Monday he left the job to devote more time to a used car dealership he owns in Decatur.

"It's a good business," said Perry of the dealership that sells 60 vehicles a month. "And I wanted to leave my family the legacy."

However, Perry said at least one official told him that his expertise was needed for the Twiggs County Schools job.

"They felt I would be of great help there," said Perry, who was hired on a three-year contract. Twiggs County Board members Johnnie N. Moore and Shirley Stokes voted against Perry's hiring.

Perry did run into some problems with the job.

It was the county's second attempt to hire the

new superintendent. In November, three Twiggs County residents - including board Chairman Milton Sampson's replacement - filed a legal petition to block Perry's hire when board members signaled their intent to pick him, according to a local paper.

David Sanders, chairman-elect of the Twiggs County school board, and two other county residents claimed Perry was not the most qualified candidate and was chosen improperly. Their lawsuit also accused Sampson of speeding up the hiring process to bring Perry on board before Sampson's term expires at the end of the year.

But eventually, a Superior Court judge - who at the end of November temporarily stopped the county from hiring Perry - said no laws were violated and dismissed the suit. Twiggs County has gone without a permanent schools chief since Wanda West left in February.

Perry played down the contention.

"There's no controversy," Perry said. "I'm just here to do a good job."



Dr. Franklin Perry

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