Lee Bollinger Will Become Columbia University’s 19th President in July

Lee C. Bollinger, president of the University of Michigan, has been named the nineteenth president of Columbia University, it was announced on Oct. 6. He will succeed George Rupp, who will step down from his post in the summer of 2002 after serving as Columbia’s president since July 1993.

“We are delighted to have Lee Bollinger re-join the Columbia family,” said David J. Stern, chairman of the Columbia trustees. “Columbia has gained tremendous momentum during the last eight years under George Rupp’s leadership. With Lee’s record of accomplishment, with his talent and vision, he will surely build on that record and ensure that Columbia remains one of the world’s great universities.”

Said Bollinger of his appointment, “I am looking forward to the opportunity to lead one of the nation’s oldest and most distinguished research universities. Columbia, long known for its embrace of the highest intellectual standards, is by every measure poised to join the very highest echelon of academic institutions in the world. It occupies a unique position: a truly global university that is also part of the fabric of New York City. As New York recovers from the terrorist attacks, as I am certain it will, and as the city resizes and broadens its role as the cultural and intellectual capital of the world, Columbia will be a vital partner.”

Joseph Stiglitz’s Nobel Prize in Economics Marks Third for Department in Six Years

Joseph Stiglitz was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics on Oct. 10 by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Stiglitz, former chief economist at the World Bank, has appointments at Columbia’s School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), the Economics Department of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School of Business. Officially named the Bank of Sweden Prize in Economic Sciences, Stiglitz won the award with his colleague Michael Spence of Stanford University. The Academy selected the trio for “their analyses of markets with asymmetric information.”

“Their work in the field of imperfect markets has had far-reaching practical consequences,” Stiglitz said during a press conference held at Columbia. “Older models assumed perfect information, but even small degrees of information imperfections can have large economic consequences. Our models took into account asymmetries of information, which is another way of saying ‘Some people know more than others.’

Columbia has a distinguished tradition in economics, with its faculty winning three Nobel Prizes in economics in the past six years. The late James Tobin won the prize in 1981, and Robert Mundell received the 1985 award for his contributions to monetary theory and international trade. The late Simon Kuznets won the award in 1968.

In addition to Stiglitz, Vickrey and Mundell, the current department includes noted economists Edwin A. Seligman, Robert M. Haig, and Carl S. Shapiro. The late Milton Friedman was also a faculty member.

In the past six years, five Columbia faculty members have won Nobel prizes. Besides Stiglitz, Vickrey and Mundell, Columbia remains one of the world’s top universities in economics. The Department of Economics has more than 70 full-time faculty members, including 40 tenured professors. The department has 500 graduate majors and 600 degree programs, 53,000 students from all 50 states and 130 countries, and a $3.5-billion annual budget. A legal scholar whose primary interests are free speech and the First Amendment, Bollinger has also served as dean of Michigan Law School and Provost of Dartmouth College.

Ira Lamster Picked to Head School of Dental and Oral Surgery

Ira Lamster has been named dean of Columbia’s School of Dental and Oral Surgery, announced Gerald D. Fischbach, vice president for health and biomedical sciences and dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. The appointment became effective October 8, 2001.

“I am extremely delighted to have Dr. Lamster as dean of the School of Dental and Oral Surgery,” said Fischbach. “We welcome his continued and years of experience and his leadership. I am certain it will, and as the city resizes and broadens its role as the cultural and intellectual capital of the world, Columbia will be a vital partner.”

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(Checked on Page 2)