Board of Governors ratifies Judith A. Bense as interim president of the University of West Florida

ORLANDO – The members of the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida today ratified Judith A. Bense as the interim president of the University of West Florida.

Bense will lead the university while the UWF Board of Trustees selects a new president to replace John Cavanaugh, who is leaving the university July 1 to become chancellor of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

“The Board of Trustees of the University of West Florida made an excellent choice in Dr. Bense as interim president,” said Carolyn King Roberts, the chair of the Board of Governors. “She is dedicated to UWF and its success, and she will provide consistent leadership in this time of change.”

Bense, director of UWF’s Division of Anthropology and Archaeology, said she humbled by her selection and ratification. “The University of West Florida is a tremendous asset to the state and to the Pensacola community,” Bense said. “It is a great honor to have the opportunity to lead this great institution.”

Bense has guided the discovery and preservation of a number of important archaeological sites in Florida. She is chair of the Florida Historical Commission and, in 2005, she helped establish the Florida Public Archaeology Network, based at UWF.

She is a past president of the Society of Historical Archaeology and is the 2005 recipient of the Pace Professional Leadership Award presented by the Pensacola Area Chamber of Commerce.
Twice she has been honored with the UWF Distinguished Teaching Award.

Bense earned her baccalaureate and master’s degrees in anthropology from Florida State University. She received her doctorate from Washington State University.

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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