

Dr. Ron K. Patterson named Murray State University President

The Murray State University Board of Regents Presidential Search Committee has announced Dr. Ron K. Patterson as Murray State University President. Dr. Patterson will commence his role as the 15th President of Murray State on July 1, 2025. He will succeed President Dr. Bob Jackson, who will retire on June 30, 2025. The selection of Patterson follows an extensive process and national search.

Currently, Patterson serves as president of Chadron State College, one of three state college institutions within the Nebraska State College System and an institution with approximately 2,300 students and 600 full-time faculty and staff. In his role, Patterson launched and chaired the college's new five-year strategic plan; established strategic enrollment partnerships; commenced new academic programs and partnerships; furthered external relationships with federal, state and local government leaders; and fostered an environment of success within the college's Division II athletic programs.

With 25 years of higher education experience, Patterson has developed a collaborative, servant leader approach which values accessibility and affordability, education and innovation.

Patterson earned a Doctor of Education in Higher Education Administration and Leadership at Creighton University, an Education Specialist degree with a concentration in Community College Administration at Arkansas State University, a Master of Arts at Marietta College, a Bachelor of Science at the University of Tennessee – Southern and an Associate of Arts at Northeast Mississippi Community College. He recently completed professional



development offered by the American Academic Leadership Institute and Penn State University's Academic Leadership Academy for Academic Administration.

Patterson hails from Corinth, Mississippi. He and his wife, Jenny, have two children, Olivia and Braylon.

"I am truly humbled and honored to be selected as President of Murray State University," Patterson said. "I would like to thank the Presidential Search Committee, Board of Regents, campus community and alumni for entrusting me to lead this historic university."

"My family and I are honored and privileged to join the excellent students, faculty and staff of Murray State University and the city of Murray to continue the great momentum of Dr. Bob Jackson and the leadership team, capital improvement projects and rich tradition of Murray State University in its second century."

2025 Kentucky legislative session includes continued support for Murray State University to pursue a School of Veterinary Medicine



Murray State University's efforts to explore a School of Veterinary Medicine received a strong showing of support in the 2025 Kentucky legislative session.

Senate Bill 77, which was passed unanimously by both chambers in a bipartisan manner and was signed into law by Governor Andy Beshear, continues to provide a path forward for the University to work with others, including the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, to establish a new Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at Murray State.

Murray State President Dr. Bob Jackson said, "Countless individuals worked extremely hard over the past two years to further this important initiative. Representative Mary Beth Imes, Majority Leader Steven Rudy, Senator Jason Howell, Speaker David Meade and other legislative leaders, along with Congressman James Comer and Senator Rand Paul, assisted with the passage of this bill."

"I would also like to thank our Board of Regents, Dean Brian Parr of our Hutson School of Agriculture, Assistant Vice President for Public Affairs Jordan Smith, our alumni, friends, supporters, agricultural groups, faculty, staff and students along with many others, all of whom were instrumental in advancing this key initiative to benefit our multi-billion dollar agricultural industry."

Eighty of 120 counties across Kentucky have a veterinary shortage or are deemed underserved rural areas with low ratios of practicing veterinarians to livestock.

Murray State holds multiple existing assets on its campus, as well as a new \$60 million Veterinary Sciences Building to be constructed.

The University also has the largest pre-veterinary medicine/veterinary technology student enrollment in Kentucky and is committed to addressing the veterinary shortage and assisting the animal agriculture economy in the Commonwealth.

Murray State University and the SSC Services for Education grounds department recognized nationally

Murray State University and the SSC Services for Education grounds department has been honored as a Grand Award Winner for a Green Star Award by the Professional Grounds Management Society, in recognition of their outstanding work on Murray State's campus. SSC has partnered with Murray State since 2020, providing custodial and grounds maintenance services for its campus. This is the second consecutive year that SSC has achieved a Grand Award.

The award was given in the University and College Grounds (mid-size: 201-499 acres) category for exceptional grounds maintenance and is the highest award given. Winners were honored during the society's 2024 Awards Celebration, in conjunction with the Annual Conference and Equip Exposition in Louisville, Kentucky.

As part of the recognition, it was noted that "Murray State University's campus is unique in its geographical location which provides the energy of an exciting, state-of-the-art university with the feel of a welcoming hometown college. Murray State's athletic complexes coupled with a vibrant landscape, draws in the eye



and invites the onlooker to explore the campus' never-ending natural beauty."

The Arbor Day Foundation also recognized Murray State University as a 2024 Tree Campus for its dedication to enhancing community well-being through tree education, investment and community engagement.



Professor of Wildlife and Conservation Biology Dr. Howard Whiteman presents climate change research at Carnegie Science Center

Murray State University Professor of Wildlife and Conservation Biology Dr. Howard Whiteman presented his work on how salamanders can signal climate change at the Carnegie Science Center in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on February 24.

Whiteman, who has been studying salamanders for almost four decades, said he chose to work with salamanders because they are both fun and good environmental indicators.

"Salamanders are shifting their biology in response to climate change, and those at high elevations are changing to be more like those at low elevation," said Whiteman. "They are functionally adapting to a changing environment, which is something we have to do as well—adapt to how the climate is changing."



Access the research Whiteman presented at bit.ly/SalamanderResearch.

Student delivers talk at 23rd annual Posters-at-the-Capitol

On March 6, Kate Herrmann, a junior from Mount Vernon, Illinois, presented her research on support services for neurodiverse college students at the Kentucky Capitol Building in Frankfort, Kentucky. Herrmann's presentation was one of nine Murray State University student projects selected for the 23rd annual Posters-at-the-Capitol event.

With unique research projects on display, the event's efforts are to help increase understanding of the important role undergraduate research plays in the education of college students among those responsible for higher education funding in the state of Kentucky. The event provides undergraduates the opportunity to engage in scholarly research and creative works helping to promote an educational experience and professional development.

Program coordinator AJ Boston introduced Herrmann, noting that the Illinois native was drawn to Murray State for its smaller class sizes, undergraduate research opportunities and "amazing faculty members." Herrmann, a Presidential Fellow double majoring in Communication Disorders and Psychology, was accompanied by her faculty mentor, Dr. Michael Bordieri.

