

Three presidents named, two others inaugurated at Jesuit universities

WASHINGTON - Three Jesuit-run Catholic universities have named new presidents in recent weeks, while two other Jesuit schools inaugurated new leaders in October.

Richard Allen Beyer, a business executive from Reston, Va., was appointed Oct. 25 as the new president of Wheeling Jesuit University in Wheeling, W.Va. Jesuit Father Timothy R. Lannon, president of St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, was named to head Creighton University in Omaha, Neb.

David W. Burcham, former dean of Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, was elected as the 15th president of Loyola Marymount University Oct. 4. Interim president of the university since earlier in 2010, he assumed his new post immediately.

Thayne M. McCulloh was inaugurated as the 26th president of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Wash., Oct. 22, and John J. Hurley officially became the 24th president of Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y., Oct. 16.

Beyer, Burcham, McCulloh and Hurley all are the first lay presidents in the history of their respective universities.

Beyer, a corporate vice president with Trimble Navigation, a leading provider of global positioning solutions for commercial markets, will take over his new post at Wheeling Jesuit Jan. 2.

In addition to his 23 years of business experience, he has served on the boards of trustees of Olivet College in Michigan, his alma mater; American University in Washington; and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

He also has worked with higher education institutions on financial modeling, board governance and strategic planning.

“In my conversations with Rick, I can tell that he’s committed to fostering the Jesuit, Catholic identity and brings important skills to the task,” said Jesuit Father Charles Currie, a former Wheeling Jesuit president who now serves as president of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities in Washington.

Father Lannon, president of St. Joseph’s since 2003, will assume his new position at Creighton July 1, 2011.

Previously, he was an associate executive vice president and vice president for university advancement at Marquette University in Milwaukee.

A native of Mason City, Iowa, Father Lannon holds multiple degrees from Creighton, Weston Jesuit School of Theology (now Boston College School of Theology and Ministry) and Harvard University. He entered the Society of Jesus in 1977 and was ordained a priest in 1986.

Burcham has been associated with Loyola Marymount since 1981. He graduated first in his class from Loyola Law School and, after seven years in public and private practice, returned to the law school and teaching.

He was appointed senior vice president and dean of the law school in 2000 and served in that capacity until 2008 when he was named Loyola Marymount’s executive vice president and provost.

In 2010, Burcham took over leadership of the university when Jesuit Father Robert B. Lawton resigned for health reasons.