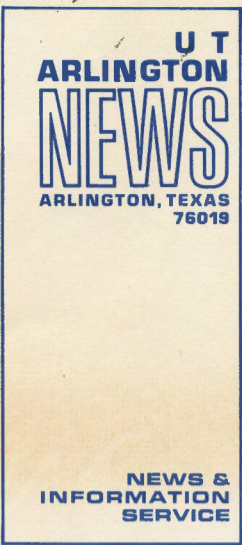


21174



FEATURE MATERIAL ON DR. WENDELL H. NEDDERMAN
NAMED PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

ARLINGTON--Dr. Wendell H. Nedderman cautions observers not to expect a dramatic change in his mode of operation since he was named president of the University of Texas at Arlington Friday.

"My basic approach has always been one of frankness and candor," says Dr. Nedderman who has served as acting president of UTA for 14 months. "Whether my title is acting or permanent, I use the same criterion in making a decision: What is in the best interest of the University -- in the long term?"

"UTA couldn't wait for certain things to happen. The institution is either moving forward or moving backward -- and we couldn't allow it to move backward," believes the tall, direct man who has served as acting president since Nov. 4, 1972.

But Wendell Nedderman was known as the acting president who didn't act like one.

During his interim administration, UTA originated six new degree programs, one of them at the Ph.D. level. The Amon G. Carter Art History Chair, vacant since its establishment several years ago, was filled by Dr. David Merrill, an art historian from Yale. The Office of Veterans Affairs was opened to serve UTA's 2,700 ex G.I.s while the Faculty Development Resource Center, designed to enhance teaching effectiveness, came into being as the first of its kind in the UT System -- and perhaps in the Southwest.

Other strides made during the past few months include:

-- Such outstanding aid to the handicapped that UTA received Governor Dolph Briscoe's citation as the outstanding state agency in working with handicapped employes during 1973.

-- Progress was made in affirmative action with funds taken off the top of the appropriated budget to equalize women's salaries. An intercollegiate athletic program for women was also initiated.

-- An early admissions program was established, allowing outstanding high school students to take UTA courses for college credit during their senior year.

---more---

-- Advisory Councils were established for UTA's College of Business Administration and for its Graduate School of Social Work.

-- UTA's enrollment has continued to increase while student bodies decline elsewhere. For example, UTA's fall enrollment was up 6 per cent and the spring enrollment up almost 4 per cent over the same times last year.

-- Construction continues at UTA on the \$8.5 million Fine Arts Complex and the half-million-dollar scenic mall in front of the Library. Ground will be broken soon on a \$4.5 million Activities Building, boosting the value of UTA's physical plant above its present \$68 million.

Dr. Nedderman says, "I just had to forget the acting title, which truthfully has been a minimal handicap."

He feels that the greatest disadvantage in serving an "interim" term was the lack of a development director.

"People often think that because UTA is part of the UT System that we're wealthy. That's not the case at all. The dedication of our faculty in delivering strong programs on a skimpy budget is admirable. We definitely need a development board and a development director who can inform people about our financial needs so that we can continue to grow in quality of instruction."

This is one of UTA's major priorities in Nedderman's eyes. At the top of his list, however, is faculty salaries.

"I like to think of myself as a student administrator and a faculty administrator," says the newly named president. He taught at Texas A&M University from 1947-59, rising from instructor to the rank of full professor and graduate advisor. While there he received the Faculty Distinguished Teaching Award.

"I'm proud of the 12 years I served in the classroom," says Dr. Nedderman. "And I'm working on raising faculty salaries, but I'm no miracle man. I wish I were," he adds.

Dr. Nedderman says his main drive for the past few months has been in organizing. "We're often so bogged down in mechanical procedures that we fail to do the more creative, productive things."

Believing this, Dr. Nedderman is going to establish a university-wide goals program. "We must ask ourselves where we're going, what we want to be as a university and how we'll get there."

With his engineer-thinking, he foresees the plans broken down into departments and drawn by faculty, staff, students and administrators.

Meanwhile, he'd served for three years (1943-46) as an engineering officer in the U.S. Navy, logging 175,000 miles on destroyers in the Pacific where he earned six battle stars. (Dr. Nedderman received two more stars for his service in the Phillipine liberation.)

His accomplishments throughout life have been noteworthy.

An active civic leader, he is formerly chairman of the board of the First Christian Church in Arlington and vice-chairman of the board of Arlington Memorial Hospital since 1968. A former member of the Arlington board of education, Dr. Nedderman is past president of the Arlington Kiwanis Club and was chairman of the Tarrant County General Hospital Coordinating committee from 1971-73. He has recently been elected to the board of directors of the United Way of Tarrant County.

How does he do it all? "I'm afraid I'm not a very good family man, " says the father of four who believes that it "takes an understanding wife who keeps the home fires burning." He and his auburn-haired wife Betty have four sons: Howard, 24, who received his masters degree from UTA and now works in Dallas; John, 22, a graduate of UT Austin in communications; Jeff, 18, a freshman business major at UTA, and Eric, 13, a seventh-grader at Bailey Junior High in Arlington. The Neddermans also have a five-year-old granddaughter, Kristine.

He sees the president's job as a "jack of all trades.

"Operating a university is like operating an industry or any other endeavor; it requires total team work. The secret is getting good people around you, delegating authority and emphasizing that with responsibility goes accountability.

"I believe in making decisions by getting all the facts, hearing reasoned argument and receiving input from all available opinions."

Wendell Nedderman believes "the real key to this institution -- the thing that will keep it moving at its potential is teamwork. Every segment of the university needs to feel that it's doing something worthwhile to build UTA."

And what is that potential? Dr. Nedderman predicts an eventual enrollment of 25,000 to 30,000 students.

Throughout these 14 months, Arlington citizens and UTA faculty and students have supported Nedderman enthusiastically. They'd probably agree that enrollment will double because they're convinced that Wendell Nedderman's mode of operation works.

---LSD---

This all fits into Dr. Nedderman's master plan for academic and physical development which he expects to present to the UT System board of regents as UTA's program for progress in the coming years.

Dr. Nedderman came to UTA in 1959 as the first dean of the College of Engineering. "I had come to a fork in the road. I made the decision 15 years ago to pursue a role in administration."

The presidency of one of the state's largest universities seems a logical step for the 53-year-old educator.

"Frankly, the campus wasn't very impressive," remembers Nedderman. "There were only six permanent buildings plus some old frame structures and the engineering building was only a reinforced concrete skeleton.

"But I was intrigued by the picture that Jack Woolf (then president) painted for the future. It was an ideal geographical location for a new school of engineering. In that respect, my foresight has proved correct because we have one of the largest colleges of engineering in the nation.

"But, to be honest, UTA has grown even faster than I had anticipated."

Dr. Nedderman's professional career has grown with the institution. While he was dean of the College of Engineering, engineering degree programs were introduced in five different fields, including bachelors, masters and Ph.D. plans. From 1967 to 1969, he wore two other hats in addition to the deanship; vice president for research and graduate affairs and vice president for academic affairs.

He admits that industry has often tempted him away from academia. Engaged in pioneering design of coastal and offshore structures, he has served as consultant to Gulf Oil Corp. in its international operations, as well as 30 other different firms. He has been involved in work in the Gulf of Mexico, Venezuela, Indonesia, Alaska, Nigeria, Portuguese Angola, the North Sea, and the Arabian Sea and offshore Brazil.

That's a long way from his native Iowa where he grew up on a farm. Nedderman laughingly attributes his success to that background: "My basic motivation was to get out of the drought and depression of the farm." But he also recognizes that work on the farm helped him establish early habits of hard work and self discipline.

Dr. Nedderman received his B.S. degree in civil engineering from Iowa State University. He returned there for his Ph.D. degree in 1951 after receiving his masters from Texas A&M University.