



## Media Release

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**For Immediate Release:**

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### Bluefield University Announces Dr. Steven Peterson as 10th President

**Bluefield, VA** – Dr. Steven Peterson, the Vice President for Online/Digital Learning at Houston Christian University in Houston, Texas, will become Bluefield University's tenth President in its 102-year history. The Presidential Search Committee, which began its work with the CarterBaldwin national search firm in October 2023 to find Dr. David Olive's successor, unanimously recommended Dr. Peterson to the BU Board of Trustees in June of this year.



"I am honored to be joining Bluefield University at such a pivotal time in its history," said Dr. Peterson. "I look forward to working with the entire Bluefield community to build on the strong foundation already in place and to explore new opportunities for growth and innovation."

With nearly three decades of experience, Dr. Peterson will lend Bluefield his expertise in leadership, advocacy, recruitment, and student aid. He served with Liberty University's financial aid, advancement, and admissions teams before stepping into his administrative role in Houston Christian University's graduate studies division in 2017. Bluefield University leadership believes his impressive background, skillset, and commitment to Christian higher education will

prove valuable as the institution continues its mission of developing servant leaders and embarks on a new strategic plan.

“The President Search Committee is excited to have Dr. Steven Peterson and his wife, Faith, join Bluefield University for this next season,” said Craig F. Stout, chair of the search committee.

“The PSC is highly impressed with Dr. Peterson and believes he is the right man for ‘such a time as this.’ Join us in welcoming him and his family!”

Dr. Peterson holds Master of Arts in Religion, Master of Business Administration, and Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership degrees from Liberty University. He has published articles on leadership, institutional policy and marketing and offered presentations on adult learner enrollment and student retention. Additionally, he has taught undergraduate business and Christian studies courses.

His management and recruitment initiatives tailored to online students were instrumental to the success of Liberty University’s admissions team as the institution neared 100,000 enrolled students in 2016. His dedication to graduate-level programs and digital learning continues to be evident in his current role at Houston Christian University as he leads the Pampell Online Division.

“The Board is very excited that Dr. Peterson has agreed to become the next President of Bluefield University,” said Jack Reasor, Chair of the BU Board of Trustees, “and we believe, with God’s blessing, he will be a leader to move Bluefield University forward.”

Dr. Peterson was selected following an extensive nationwide search. In November 2023, CarterBaldwin contacted 135 prospective candidates from which the Presidential Search Committee identified eight top candidates by March 2024. Following the committee’s recommendation, the BU Board of Trustees voted to offer Dr. Peterson the position on Tuesday, July 9. His service as President will begin on Monday, August 19.

“I want to thank the members of the Committee for their diligence, their prayers, and their thoroughness,” Stout shared. “The Committee consisted of the stakeholders of the University: Trustees, Faculty, Administration, Students, and Alumni. Each participant played an active role in the process for which I am very grateful.”

“Additionally, I want to thank the search firm that assisted Bluefield University in this endeavor. The firm of CarterBaldwin, and their representative Dr. Stephanie Steele, were vital in finding the right person, guiding the process, answering questions, and walking with both parties in this process,” he added.

The search for Bluefield University's tenth President began last fall when Dr. David Olive announced his retirement during his seventeenth year of service. During his tenure, the institution adopted a university model and name, created its online division, began offering master's degree programs, expanded its facilities, and formed relationships with the Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine and Appalachian College of Pharmacy. Since Dr. Olive transitioned to the role of Chancellor, Dr. Michael Salmeier has assumed the role of Interim President in addition to his role as Provost, in which he will continue to serve. The university extends much gratitude to both these men for their contributions and leadership while eagerly anticipating how Dr. Peterson will continue to build upon the institution's legacy.

For media inquiries, please contact the Office of Public Relations and Marketing at [bunews@bluefield.edu](mailto:bunews@bluefield.edu).

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