

Mark Rutland Recommended to Lead ORU

The Board of Trustees will vote on Rutland, who is president of Southeastern University in Lakeland, Fla., later this month.



[] The presidential search committee at Oral Roberts University (ORU) has recommended that Mark Rutland, Ph.D., be named president of the Tulsa, school.

Rutland is currently president of Southeastern University in Lakeland, Fla. The college is affiliated with the Assemblies of God (AG).

ORU officials said Rutland would attend board meetings at the university during the last week of January. The Board of Trustees will vote on Rutland after he has met with ORU stakeholder groups.

Southeastern spokeswoman Anita T. Whitaker said Rutland is the only presidential candidate being considered by the ORU board when it votes on Jan. 28.

If Rutland is named president of ORU, Charles Kelly, chairman of the board of Southeastern University, said a presidential search committee would be appointed and ratified by the school's Board of Regents.

"Southeastern University has experienced unprecedented growth over the past 10 years with Dr. Rutland as the catalyst," Kelly said. "His extraordinary leadership and vision have transformed Southeastern into one of the leading Christian universities in the United States.

"We will be forever indebted to Dr. Rutland and appreciate all he has accomplished for the university far more than words can express," Kelly continued. "He will be greatly missed.

However, the call of God is leading him to ORU, and we trust the same God to bring us the leader that will take Southeastern into the future."

ORU's recommendation of Rutland comes more than a year after the school was rocked by a fiscal scandal. Former ORU President Richard Roberts was forced to resign in November 2007 amid a wrongful termination lawsuit brought against him and the school by three former professors. One professor quickly settled and was reinstated, while the other two professors did not reach a settlement until last fall.

At the start of the 2008-09 academic year, Mart Green, whose family pledged \$70 million to help the debt-ridden school "restore its broken trust," said ORU was "moving forward into a new era of fiscally focused, mission-minded, whole-person education." Green, founder of the Christian supply-store chain Mardel, is chairman of ORU's Board of Trustees and a member of the presidential search committee.

Before becoming president of Southeastern in January 1999, Rutland was pastor of Calvary Assembly of God in Orlando, Fla., one of the largest AG congregations in the nation.

In addition to his role as president of Southeastern, Rutland is founder of Global Servants, a worldwide missions organization that has planted ministries in Ghana and Thailand. According to Southeastern's Web site, the ministry in 1988 founded the House of Grace home for tribal girls in Chiang Rai, Thailand, which rescues girls trapped in child prostitution.

A native of Texas, Rutland was educated at the University of Maryland and the Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta. He also holds a Ph.D. from the California Graduate School of Theology.

Rutland's 30-minute daily radio program, *Herald of Joy*, is broadcast in multiple markets. And he is the author of 13 books, including *Nevertheless*, *Character Matters* and his latest, *Most Likely to Succeed*.

During Rutland's tenure as president, Southeastern College became Southeastern University and today offers 45 bachelor's degrees and seven master's degree programs. The school has invested \$50 million in renovation and campus building projects, university officials said. Its athletic program has participated in 29 NCCAA II National Tournaments, captured 22 South region titles, and won 12 NCCAA II National Championships. Seventy-four athletes have been named NCCAA All Americans.