

Fall 1997

UA11/1 Gary A. Ransdell, President

WKU Public Relations

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one vice presidential area.

In this capacity, Ransdell was able to lead efforts to stabilize the institution's budget after several years of budgetary stress, create a needed reserve capacity, redirect important resources to the classroom and reduce bureaucracy.

"While there is satisfaction in reflection, I am more focused on the future and my affection for Western," Ransdell says, adding:

"I know Western's history and I understand the priorities for its president.

"WKU is destined to fully emerge as a premier institution in Kentucky's system of postsecondary education.

"We have an opportunity to achieve a national reputation of teaching and strength in selected academic programs. We will reinforce our statewide reputation for a strong faculty across the curriculum, and our technical innovation and character of this unique campus, and we will fulfill our local responsibility for meaningful research and public service to enhance the economic development and quality of life of this community," Ransdell said.

"We will think national, but we will certainly act regional."

The Ransdells have two sons, Patrick, 18, and Matthew, 14.

Western Kentucky University

Preliminary enrollment, fall 1997: 14,795

Degree offerings: 19 Associate's, 88 Bachelor's,

46 Master's and Specialist's

Numbers to know (Area Code 502):

Campus operator: 745-0111

Institutional Advancement: 745-6208

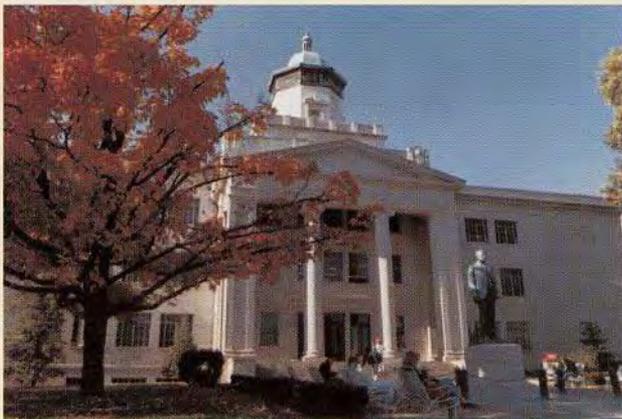
President's Office: 745-4346

University Relations: 745-4295

WKU Foundation: 745-6208

WKU on the Internet: <http://www.wku.edu>

E-mail: Western@wku.edu



G A R Y A .
RANSDELL
PRESIDENT



"We share an ambitious vision for this University, a vision of strength at the national, state and local level," Dr. Gary A. Ransdell told a crowded audience of well-wishers in Western Kentucky University's Regents conference room on a crisp, sunny Sept. 12, 1997, the day WKU Regents appointed him WKU's ninth president.

Dr. Ransdell joins Western after serving most recently as vice president for Administration and Advancement at Clemson University, in Clemson, S.C., where he has amassed a successful record of fund-raising and management in various leadership positions.

"This is an opportunity to return home and apply the skills and instincts which I have been fortunate to develop dur-

ing my career," said the 46-year-old native of Louisville, Ky.

Ransdell and his wife, Julie, met, dated and were married while at WKU pursuing their undergraduate degrees. Then they were absent from Western for 17 years, but those were valuable years spent gaining the expertise needed to meet the challenges higher education faces in the 21st century, and which were to eventually lure him and his family

versity, where he had earned the Doctor of Education degree in higher education administration. During that period, he also taught courses in higher education administration at Western.

Ransdell became director of Alumni Relations and executive director of the Alumni Association at Southern Methodist University that year, a position he held until 1987 when Ransdell was named vice president for Institutional Advancement at Clemson, where his initial task was to launch the university's first capital campaign.

The five-year effort was completed in 1992, and raised \$101 million in outright gifts and \$17 million in deferred gifts, raised academic gift cash flow from \$6 million to \$17 million a year, and caused the endowment to grow from \$22 million to \$90 million. He leaves Clemson during the quiet phase of a new campaign which expects by 2001 to raise \$200 million-plus in new gifts, and push the endowment to \$250 million.

In 1995, Ransdell accepted additional duties as a result of university-wide reorganization at Clemson, becoming vice president for Administration and Advancement, combining most of the university's administrative operations into

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Dr. Gary Ransdell and his wife, Julie respond to questions during his interview.

back to Kentucky and to Western Kentucky University.

"I was shaped by the values of Western. Ideals of collective spirit, individual dignity, trust, responsibility and interdependence permeated the minds and hearts of those who built Western, and I observed and experienced these values when I was an undergraduate and graduate student," he said, adding:

"Cohesion and community have been cornerstones at Western, and they will be daily priorities for me, and those with whom I work."

"Dr. Ransdell brings our University the vision, the experience, the passion, the focus and the commitment to lead us forward to a higher level," said WKU Board of Regents Chair Peggy Loafman, following the board's unanimous approval of Ransdell's appointment.

In addition to receiving his bachelor's degree from Western in 1973 in mass communications, Ransdell also earned a master of public service degree in public administration in 1974.

His ties to Western also include service from 1974-1976 as a field representative in the Office of University-School Relations, and as associate director of Alumni Affairs starting in 1978 until 1981, after his return from Indiana Uni-

