

February 18, 2010

Alberto Pimentel  
Managing Partner  
1111 Corporate Center Drive, Suite 106  
Monterey Park, CA 91754

Dear Mr. Pimentel:

Please accept this letter of application for the position of Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost at Angelo State University. During the past twelve years I have held positions of increasing responsibility that have allowed me to develop and enhance my administrative and leadership skills. The position at Angelo State would provide an excellent opportunity to utilize my skills and expertise in advancing the mission of the institution.

I am currently the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Lake Superior State University in Sault Sainte Marie, Michigan. In just over two years at Lake Superior State I have risen from Dean to Provost, and have realized an enormous jump in the breadth and depth of my administrative responsibilities. At the same time, the position provides me with a great deal of satisfaction in meeting its many challenges and measuring the progress we make. During my career at the University of North Alabama I rose to the rank of Full Professor and was Chair of the Department of Physics and Earth Science and Planetarium Director. In 2007, I accepted the position of Dean of Natural and Mathematical Sciences and, the following year, Founding Dean of STEM at Lake Superior State.

Both UNA and LSSU are classified as regional institutions, or in more modern parlance, State Comprehensive Universities (SCU). Diversity is important at both institutions, and at LSSU our Native American student population approaches ten percent. Both institutions value teaching and student learning as their primary mission, and that has been my emphasis during my years as a faculty member and now as an administrator. I have always been passionate about teaching and I very much value my faculty colleagues who have a similar passion. Even while serving as Dean, I greatly enjoyed the opportunity to teach a Physics course one semester.

Both Universities also value scholarship and research, although those opportunities are somewhat limited by heavy teaching schedules, and in the case of North Alabama, extremely limited science research facilities. At Lake Superior State I was extremely impressed to find a significant number of student research projects under faculty supervision. These often led to publications and presentations at national conferences. The senior projects completed by the students in the School of Engineering are outstanding and result in marketable products. Research and scholarship are extremely valuable, but I believe that at regional institutions there should be a great deal of student involvement in those activities. I have always been supportive of advancing such endeavors and supportive of those faculty members who made these types of efforts. I

have observed that faculty members who are most passionate about teaching enjoy the opportunity to engage students in research and scholarly activities.

The state of Michigan is enduring tremendous financial hardships and Lake Superior State has not been immune to financial difficulties as a result. The largest task we face is to find an equilibrium status between the declining support from the state and the level of expenditures we can afford. Along with the President and fellow Vice Presidents, my Deans and I have worked extensively to find ways to decrease expenditures and pursue alternative revenue streams, such as opening two additional regional centers in Michigan and engaging in entrepreneurial activities with the Prototype Development Center (under the auspices of our ABET-accredited School of Engineering) and the “Smart Zone” that has been designated for Sault Sainte Marie and surrounding area. These may not be “quick fixes” but will ultimately boost the financial health of LSSU and the region.

When I arrived at Lake Superior State, I saw an institution that had many fine attributes, such as a dedicated and caring faculty. I also saw an institution that was badly in need of a system of shared governance, especially to mitigate strained relations between faculty and administration. Since I played a significant role in the implementation of a shared governance system (including serving on a number of committees) at the University of North Alabama, I endeavored to bring shared governance to Lake State soon after my arrival in 2007. When I became Provost last June, I directed a committee that formulated a shared governance structure and plan. I successfully advocated for that plan among faculty, staff, administration, and Board, and it has been approved by all of the stakeholders and will be fully operational during the Spring 2010 semester. This will greatly improve relations between the administration, faculty, and staff by creating a truly collaborative decision-making environment.

The previous Provost assigned me the task of creating a “culture of assessment” at Lake State, and I called together several faculty members who were highly regarded in terms of assessment skills and directed them to assist me in creating an assessment plan for the campus. That plan is now being implemented and it is our intention to have it fully operational before our Higher Learning Commission accreditation visit next November, and to continue the “culture of assessment” beyond re-accreditation. As the on-campus coordinator for the HLC self study endeavor, I am also responsible for working closely with our off-campus self study consultant in ensuring that the project is completed satisfactorily.

I have written in some detail about some of the immediate tasks and issues I felt needed to be addressed as soon as I became Provost at Lake State. It was abundantly clear to me that actions had to be taken swiftly on several fronts in order to begin a substantial turn-around at the institution. These actions had to be undertaken while simultaneously assisting our new President as he began his term in June as well. This was significant because despite his excellent leadership skills (he had been a Superintendent of Schools for many years) he had no experience in higher education. We have worked very well together I have enjoyed making a significant contribution to the new administration. My intention is to make an immediate impact in any new position I accept. In addition, while

I would not claim to have expertise in every area, I am comfortable with seeking out those who have expertise in particular areas and acting on their recommendations or discussing those recommendations with the President.

The purview of the Provost is rather wide at Lake State. I am not only the chief academic officer for the campus and in control of all of the academic budgets, but offices such as Human Resources, Information Technology, and the Regional Centers report to me as well. In addition, I have responsibility for our seven Charter Schools located throughout Michigan. As we continue to re-staff our Foundation, I expect to increase my involvement in fundraising activities. We currently are engaged in fundraising campaigns for a renovation of our Aquatic Research Laboratory and a building for School of Business. I thrive on new challenges and enjoy having a multitude of diverse tasks to address each and every day.

I am well aware of the strong reputation of Angelo State and would be enthused to utilize my background and experience to further increase its stature and status. The strong teaching/learning emphasis at Angelo State is extremely important to me since I have been associated with institutions where those things are highly valued throughout my academic career. I am extremely impressed with the goals outlined in the Angelo State strategic plan. While the quality and quantity of those goals are extremely ambitious, I would welcome the challenge of working to help the institution achieve those goals outlined for the next decade. The plan strongly conveys the impression that the institution as a whole has decided where it wants to be and how it is going to get there. This would be a tremendously exciting environment to work in and contribute to.

I also feel a deep loyalty to my current institution. While there will be no immediate solutions to Michigan's economic problems, the solutions we are implementing at Lake Superior State will begin to have positive effects on the financial and emotional health of the University during the next six months. Should I have the opportunity to accept a position at Angelo State, it would be with the knowledge that I was able to see the positive results of my work at Lake Superior State before I left, and that the institution was moving in a productive direction.

As a faculty member, I was always regarded as a true advocate for students. As a Department Chair and Dean, I was regarded as a faculty advocate. As a Provost, I believe it is my role to advocate for all academics and for the university as a whole. It is a mission I will always approach with passion. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the position at Angelo State further and wish you the best of luck in the search process. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Anthony P. Blöse