

It's now official: Harden is 15th president of MSU

After three months as acting president of Michigan State, Dr. Edgar Harden was officially named the 15th president of the university in a unanimous vote by the Board of Trustees in March.

In October, two days after former President Wharton announced he was leaving MSU to become chancellor of the State University of New York, the MSU board named Harden acting president and he assumed the office on Jan. 2.

Trustee Pat Carrigan, chairperson of the board, introduced the resolution which dropped the word "acting" from Harden's title.

"Dr. Harden has fulfilled the board's expectations in every respect," declared Carrigan, who also cited his "dynamic personal presence."

Thus, she concluded, "because Dr. Harden's performance of his responsibilities has demonstrated that he is far more than an acting president, given the traditional expectations of one holding that title, it is appropriate that the board afford his performance some more formal recognition."

Harden was appointed as the 15th president "for a term expiring upon the appointment of a successor under selection procedures already under way."

Although Harden said he did not request the title change, he speculated that "maybe they [the trustees] wanted to get rid of any questions" about his role at MSU.

The upgrading of an acting president to the official status of president is not without precedent at Michigan State. In 1969, with only three weeks left in his nine-month acting presidency, Walter Adams was officially named the 13th president of MSU until then president-designate Wharton assumed office Jan. 2, 1970.

As president, Harden's annual salary of \$65,000 makes him the second-highest paid state official. Only U-M president Robben Fleming, at \$73,640, earns more. Wayne State's President George Gullen also earns \$65,000. Interestingly, the presidents of Michigan's Big Three state universities, plus the presidents of Northern Michigan and Michigan Tech, earn more than Governor Milliken's \$58,000. ■



Harden throwing out the first ball: Cited for his "dynamic personal presence"

Ground-breaking for Arts Center may be in sight

When John Hannah was president of Michigan State, ground-breaking ceremonies for new campus buildings were about as routine as snow removal. And while President Harden probably won't develop calloused hands from ground-breaking exercises, he hopes it won't be all that long before he's in the market for a silver-plated shovel, too.

With \$7.5 million in private donations pledged for construction of the proposed Performing Arts Center, architects have been instructed to update plans in anticipation of an early ground-breaking, perhaps within a year.

Although donations for the Arts Center are \$5 million short of the \$12.5 million needed, university officials are hopeful the remainder can be raised by year's end.

"Under the circumstances," says Harden, "we feel confident enough to go ahead with the working drawings and to prepare the materials necessary to solicit construction bids."

Originally, under former President Wharton's \$17 million Capital Enrichment Campaign, \$11 million in contributions would fund construction of the Arts Center containing two major theatres — a 2,500-seat Great Hall and a 600-seat theatre/recital hall — to be built on a site

on the East Campus at the southeast corner of Bogue Street and Shaw Lane.

Additionally, a third element was included in the original plans — a Department of Theatre wing which Wharton and some other university officials maintained would be financed with approximately \$5 million in state funds.

"Since this was to be an instructional wing," explained Harden, "the original intention was to request funds for it from legislative appropriations. However, the university's present building commitments are such that it would be unrealistic to ask and expect the Legislature to appropriate the necessary \$5 million at this time. (See *Guest Commentary*, page 3).

"Therefore, the decision was reluctantly made to eliminate the Theatre Department wing, which was to be built with tax funds and go ahead with the performing arts components that can be funded through private contributions.

"We regret very much not being able to give the Theatre Department its much-needed space and facilities," said Harden, "but the alternative of waiting until state funds might become available could well have driven total costs beyond reach."

Also, noted Executive Vice President Jack Breslin, "Our priorities have changed substantially since 1974." But, he added, "We made a commitment to go ahead with the facility. We have to complete this project." ■