



Northeastern University

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Featured Article

'Forward-thinking' Director appointed provost



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Finnegan: Remember 'unfinished lives'

During Monday's Memorial Day ceremony, the chairman of Northeastern's board of trustees urged attendees not to forget the alumni who made the ultimate sacrifice during war.



Services planned for Becca Payne

Memorial services for Rebecca "Becca" Payne will held Sunday and Monday for those who are interested in attending and paying respects to her family.



In the media

- Andrew Sum, director of the Center for Labor Market Studies, was [quoted in the International Herald Tribune](#) for a story about the summer job market for teens.
- Jay Mulki, assistant professor of business, [spoke with KREN](#) in Reno about the sense of isolation experienced by some telecommuters.

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'Forward-thinking' Stephen Director appointed provost

President Joseph Aoun has appointed Stephen W. Director to be the university's provost and senior vice president for academic affairs.

Director, currently serving as provost at Drexel University, is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. He previously served as dean of engineering at both the University of Michigan and Carnegie Mellon University.



Stephen W. Director

"Steve shares deeply Northeastern's core commitments to promoting experiential education, fostering an environment rich with diversity in all its forms, and expanding fundamental and translational research to meet societal needs," said Aoun. "He is an energetic, forward-thinking and collaborative leader – a passionate advocate for excellence in and across disciplines."

Director earned his doctoral and master's degrees at the University of California at Berkeley, and his bachelor's from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He began his teaching career at the University of Florida, and in 2002 was named honorary professor of Shanghai Jiao Tong University by the Chinese Ministry of Education.

Director is a pioneer in the field of electronic design automation and has a long record of commitment to, and innovation in, engineering education. He has published more than 150 papers and authored or co-authored six texts, and has received numerous awards for his research and educational contributions, including the IEEE Education Medal.

"I have always known of and admired Northeastern's leadership in experiential education and its role as a true innovator in higher education," said Director, who becomes provost in July. "During this process, however, I've become more acquainted with the myriad ways Northeastern achieves excellence and distinctiveness in and across academic disciplines. This is a university on the move, and I am excited by the prospect of helping advance Northeastern's momentum."

The provost is the university's chief academic officer and serves as chair of the Faculty Senate. In fulfilling this role, Director will provide leadership for the university's education and research programs and work closely with the deans of the colleges to articulate a vision for the entire academic enterprise.

A search committee was named in October, after consultation between President Aoun and leaders of the Senate, with professor Donna Bishop

as chair and professor Joanne Miller as vice chair. The committee included trustee Margot Botsford, associate dean of computer science Agnes Chan, dean of engineering David Luzzi, professors James Hackney, Karin Lifter, Carey Rappaport and David Sherman, Stephen Lavenberg of the Student Government Association, and Tina Penman of the Graduate and Professional Students Association.

After holding a series of forums to gather and digest input from faculty, students, and staff, the search committee and President Aoun worked collaboratively to identify and interview candidates.

The president lauded Bishop, Miller, and committee members for their "tireless efforts and steadfast commitment to the highest and best interests of the university."

"The input we received from faculty, students and staff was invaluable in helping to inform our deliberations," said Bishop. "In the end, this widely collaborative process has produced not only an outstanding choice in Provost Director, but a more broadly shared clarity about the university's strategy to achieve and sustain academic excellence."

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Chairman Neal Finnegan reflects on Northeastern alumni who died in America's wars. At right is ROTC cadet Brendan Carnes '11, a criminal justice major. / Photo by EMILY CHIAVELLI

During Monday's Memorial Day ceremony, the chairman of Northeastern's board of trustees urged attendees not to forget the alumni who made the ultimate sacrifice during war.

"Pick a name," said Neal Finnegan, speaking next to Northeastern's Veterans Memorial, with its list of those alumni. "Pick a name and spend some time today turning it over in your mind, thinking about that unfinished life."

Finnegan was followed by Stephen Brainard '64, executive vice president of the Northeastern ROTC Alumni Association, who similarly paid tribute to the university's war dead.

Biology professor Gwilym Jones, a Vietnam veteran who served in the Navy's Medical Service Corps, placed a memorial wreath at the monument.

The ceremony was called to order to Lt. Col. John McClellan, professor of military science and head of the ROTC program. McClellan briefly remembered a friend who was killed earlier this year in Iraq.

Brother Joseph Donovan, a university chaplain, gave the invocation, and criminal justice student Devon Torchiana sang the National Anthem and "America the Beautiful."

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Memorial services for Rebecca "Becca" Payne will be held Sunday and Monday for those who are interested in attending and paying respects to her family.

Payne was found slain in her Boston apartment on May 20. Boston police are continuing to investigate.

The wake will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. Sunday, June 1 at St. John's Church, 7 Whittlesey Ave., New Milford, Conn. Her funeral will take place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday, June 2, also at the church.



Rebecca "Becca" Payne

Students, staff and faculty are welcome to attend both services.

The Office of Student Affairs is arranging transportation, and may be able to assist with overnight accommodations for those who wish to attend both days' services. Contact Amal Shumar at ext. 7518, or a.shumar@neu.edu, by noon Thursday to arrange a ride.

You can call the church at (860) 354-5583 with questions as well.

The university has several resources available to students as they cope with this tragedy. For housing assistance, contact Speare Commons at ext. 2814; for grief counseling, contact University Health and Counseling Services at ext. 2772; and for support and guidance, contact Spiritual Life Center at ext. 2728.

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