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## **Dr. Bob Jackson announces his retirement**

**MURRAY, Ky.** — After many years of loyal and dedicated service and 43 years of association with his Alma Mater, Dr. Bob Jackson has announced his retirement as president of Murray State University effective June 30, 2025. He will continue his employment as President Emeritus and assist with a future transition and as a special advisor to the Board of Regents through a future date.

Jackson has served as president since August 7, 2018, and has held other administrative roles including president of the Murray State University Foundation, Inc. Both President Jackson and his wife, Karen, are alumni of the University.

Under Jackson's leadership, Murray State University has experienced significant growth and success in its mission to advance higher education in our region, state and nation. The University developed a renewed focus on recruitment and retention of students, advanced new academic programs, enjoyed athletic successes and changes, enhanced the look and design of campus with a new School of Nursing and Health Professions building under construction, a Veterinary Sciences building, a Learning Commons and new Residential Hall funded and in design, along with the recent acquisition of Station 74 at Murray State University.

In addition, Jackson has focused on campus improvements, deferred maintenance and preservation of our historic buildings such as major renovations to Lovett Auditorium, Wrath Hall, Curris Center, the bronze statues of Racer One and Dr. John W. Carr on campus and the development of Woods Park, among others.

Jackson has focused much of his professional career in higher education and as a State Senator in ensuring adequate funding and access and affordability in higher education. In addition, a School of Veterinary Medicine continues to be planned, along with a Medical School campus in partnership with the University of Louisville. The University was recently named the #1 Best Value School in the South by *U.S. News and World Report*.

"Serving as President of my Alma Mater has been a lifetime honor and the capstone to my professional career," said Jackson. "I am deeply grateful for this opportunity. But, everything and everyone has a season, and Karen and I are looking forward to spending more time with family and friends, traveling, and enjoying our next chapter of life."

Jackson continued, "These have been very busy years for both of us and we are very proud of the many accomplishments during our tenure. Being a university president provides few breaks and little down time."

"Importantly, no one does these jobs alone and I am very grateful to Karen, our administrative team, the Board of Regents, faculty, staff, alumni and friends, and especially, to our students - these are the individuals who make our University a special place. The future is very bright and many opportunities remain in front of us," Jackson added.

During his tenure, Jackson guided the University through the pandemic, has overseen many significant changes including new academic buildings, celebrated the Centennial of Murray State University and co-authored our centennial history, *The Finest Place We Know*. He oversaw the launch of a \$100 million centennial capital campaign with over \$90 million raised today.

Chair Leon Owens states: "Dr. Jackson's retirement marks the end of a historic period of leadership, change and innovation for Murray State University. We have three new buildings either under construction or in a planning

stage, totaling nearly \$150 million along with deferred maintenance projects, campus improvements and facility enhancements totaling over \$100 million coupled with important academic enhancements. Dr. Jackson has left a lasting mark and we are very grateful for his many years of service. It has been an honor to serve with him."

The Board of Regents will begin a search for his successor, ensuring a smooth transition and the continuation of the University's important work for our region, state and nation.

A complete copy of Jackson's retirement letter and selected list of accomplishments for the University will be available on the President's Office website following a Special Meeting of the Board of Regents on Tuesday, October 1, 2024.

Jackson is a former Kentucky State Senator and president of the Murray State University Foundation, Inc. Karen is a retired registered nurse and both are alumni of the University. They are the parents of Nolan Jackson and his wife Nikki, and Mariel Jackson Gibson and her husband, Dr. Andrew Gibson, all of whom reside in Washington, DC.

Since 1922, Murray State University has provided a collaborative, opportunity-rich living and learning community that fosters personal growth and professional success through a high-quality college experience. Students receive support from inspiring faculty and staff and will join a distinctive campus community — the Racer Family. With more than 10,000 students, Murray State prepares the next generation of leaders to join more than 80,000 successful alumni who make a difference in their community, across the country and around the world. We are Racers. The University's main campus is located in Murray, Kentucky, and includes five regional campuses in Ft. Campbell, Henderson, Hopkinsville, Madisonville and Paducah.

To learn more about Murray State University, please visit [murraystate.edu](http://murraystate.edu).

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Photo: After many years of loyal and dedicated service and 43 years of association with his Alma Mater, Dr. Bob Jackson has announced his retirement as president of Murray State University effective June 30, 2025. Jackson is pictured with wife Karen, both of whom are alumni of the University.

