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1985 Letter from Madge Phillips re Daily Beacon article

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bc: Dean Hoover

FEB 15 1985

The University of Tennessee
School of Health, Physical Education and Recreation
Knoxville 37916

Office of the Director

February 11, 1985

Mr. Calvin Milam
Daily Beacon Staff Writer
The Daily Beacon
UTK Campus

Dear Mr. Milam:

I have just finished reading your article in The Daily Beacon. I hope you made an error in reporting that "The original goal was to attract 30 such men scientists to the university during a five-year span." I hope that this is an error. I doubt if the University was actually eliminating women from being considered for these distinguished scientist positions.

Would you be willing to call me regarding this matter? Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Madge M. Phillips, Director
School of HPER
(Telephone No. 974-8121)

MMP:es

Attachment

Monday, February 11, 1985

Program loses noted scientist

By Calvin Milam
Daily Beacon Staff Writer

UT's first Distinguished Scientist, George Bertsch, resigned from his $118,000-a-year position Thursday.

Bertsch, whose Nobel-Prize-caliber position required him to commute between UT and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, resigned because he said commuting between jobs was an ineffective use of his time.

"Dividing my time, in the end, meant I wasn't using my time effectively," Bertsch said.

Bertsch also said that the pressure attached to the prominent position was a "minor reason" for his resigning.

His resignation will become effective Aug. 1, one year after he accepted the position here initially.

The Distinguished Scientist program, UT's chair of excellence funded by Gov. Lamar Alexander's Comprehensive Education Reform Act, was created to attract prominent research scientists to boost UT's professional image. The original goal was to attract 30 such men scientists to the university during a five-year span.

With only one position filled, however, Bertsch's resignation could discredit the program.

"My resignation should not be taken as a cut to the program. My decision was a personal one, not a professional one," he said.

Bertsch commuted daily between teaching upperlevel physics courses at UT and doing theoretical nuclear research at the Institute for Heavy Ion Reseach at ORNL.

Paul Huray, co-chairman of the program, said he was disappointed with Bertsch's decision to leave but said the program would continue on schedule.

"Of course we're disappointed, but we can't let this impede our progress. When you are dealing with highly-sought-after individuals, you always run the risk of another institution hiring them away," Huray said.

Bertsch said he would return to Michigan State University where he was able to ride his bicycle back and forth to work.

"It sounds silly, doesn't it? But commuting really didn't work out for me," Bertsch said.

At Michigan State, where he was previously employed, an endowed chair position matching his salary at UT has been created. He was offered that position and he accepted.

"My position will be virtually the same except for the commuting," Bertsch said.

"Apparently the National Science Foundation applied pressure by helping create the position at Michigan State. The endowed chair, with a salary guaranteed by income from endowment interest, is a a very attractive position," Huray said.

At UT, aside from his salary, Bertsch also controlled a $100,000 descretionary fund, of which about $80,000 he had total control.

Although the positions are slow to fill, Huray said he now has eight candidates in the final stages of approval.

"We have eight people in the last stages of approval, and we hope to fill another position soon," he said.

Bertsch said he did not feel his resignation would effect the program's image, but he did say he was concerned about filling the vacancies.