

PAINO | University President Troy Paino announced in a university-wide email Monday morning that he will leave Truman State July 1 to become the President of University of Mary Washington College.

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Paino announced his resignation following the conclusion of the 2015 - 16 academic year in an email to faculty, staff and students Monday. The University of Mary Washington hired Paino following a global search by the university's Presidential Search Advisory Committee. Paino, who signed a four-year extension of his contract with Truman during October, said he accepted the position in Virginia because he wanted to work for a public liberal arts university situated close to family.

Paino said he has expressed to the Board a willingness to be as involved in the process of hiring a new president for Truman as the Board would like him to be.

Paino said he intends to be at Truman until at least June, when he anticipates taking some time off to prepare to begin work at Mary Washington July 1. He said he is at the disposal of the Board and wants to help in any way he can to set the stage for the search for his replacement.

Paino said in regards to the programs and initiatives he enacted during his term as president, everything should and will move forward.

Paino said he decided last week to accept the position after beginning during December to explore the opportunity available to him in Virginia.

Paino said an executive search consultant originally contacted him about the position at Mary Washington during October, but he said he did not contact the university back until November.

"I wasn't on the job market," Paino said. "It was really an opportunity that I became aware of last fall, and initially I decided that it was a good opportunity for personal reasons and for professional reasons, but it was not an opportunity I was going to pursue because I didn't think the timing was right."

Paino said he and his wife often have considered their future and their desire to at some point be closer to family, and he said for the last 25 years they have not been

able to be close to family for professional reasons.

Paino said once he and his wife considered the opportunities within public liberal arts colleges, they decided Mary Washington was probably one of the only universities that converged their professional and personal desires.

"It was after about a month of reflection that we started wondering whether or not it was impossible to line up timing with opportunity," Paino said. "We decided to go ahead and do at least some initial exploration of the opportunity."

Paino said he didn't inform many people, just his close family members, he was considering the job at Mary Washington because he didn't know what he wanted to do until last week.

Paino said he informed his close staff, including Provost Susan Thomas, at the end of last week. Paino said he informed the Board of Governors Sunday and the University as a whole Monday.

"It was the most difficult decision I've had to make in my life," Paino said. "I didn't tell anyone because I didn't know what I was going to do until really last week."

Paino said there were other considerations he looked at when he decided to accept the position. He said many of Mary Washington's programs, the size of the university and the ratio of faculty to students is comparable to Truman. Paino said Mary Washington has many of the attributes of Truman he has come to admire.

Paino said Mary Washington is located not only close to his family, but also close to Washington D.C. and Richmond, Virginia. He said this gives him the opportunity to be close to the nation's capital, where critical public education decisions are made, and also to be close to what he said was the breadbasket of public education because he will be in a state with a rich history of public education.

"That has appeal from a policy perspective where it sort of brings me closer to the seat of power, if you will, and an



Trevor Stark/Index

University President Troy Paino speaks to TMN reporters February 16. Paino announced he is leaving Truman State to become president of the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Virginia, in order to be closer to his wife's family.

opportunity once again for me to be a real public advocate for this public liberal arts mission," Paino said. "I feel it is such an important foundation to our democracy to have liberally

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- University President Troy Paino

educated citizens."

Paino said he feels very passionate about the mission of public liberal arts colleges. He said he really doesn't want to work in another sector of higher education because he thinks public liberal arts education is the sector where his values align with the values of the institution.

"There are very few schools

in the country that I see myself leading and working at," Paino said.

Paino said all the issues Truman will face throughout the future are not contingent on him being present.

Paino said initiatives such as the Blueprint Teams will continue because they come out of the academic side of the University. He said Thomas will be very involved in creating task forces and committees to make sure everything continues with Truman's vision.

"Where I think I can be of help in the interim is working with the provost to create that elevator pitch, if you will, of what that vision is moving forward," Paino said. "And I would like to think it will be helpful to the Board as they think about who might be the new president — that these are the things we're working on, this is the direction we're going, this is what we think we

have to do in order to continue to be viable into the future."

Paino said issues of curriculum reform ultimately are up to the faculty.

Holly Cuellar, chair of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee and rector of the the Board of Visitors for the University of Mary Washington, said the Board of Visitors — comparable to Truman's Board of Governors — appointed 12 members to the search committee last May following the April announcement of University of Mary Washington President Rick Hurley's decision to retire.

Cuellar said the search committee spent last summer deciding on a search methodology before beginning the actual search process during September. Cuellar said the committee began to make final selections during November through January before ultimately deciding to hire Paino.

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