

## **Gary F. McCracken --- Statement of Interest and Qualifications**

I believe that we need a President who can articulate and effectively promote the numerous benefits provided by the UT System to the citizens of Tennessee. People take care of what they value, and I believe that UT's role in enhancing the social and economic welfare of the State is under appreciated. Attention, when UT receives it, is often negative and focused far too much on peripherals and distractions. For the foreseeable future, the UT System will be in intense competition for very limited resources. Sound skills in fiscal management will be essential, but we will need adequate finances to manage. Our next UT President must have the interpersonal skills, optimism, and force of personality that will make our legislative bodies, the Governor, and the business community want to work with her or him. Effective articulation to our citizens of our true value will provide the political will needed for the Legislature to allocate more money.

Education, both liberal and practical education, is the major mission of the UT System. The often stated, 3-part responsibilities of the University – teaching, research, and service – are all essential to our mission of education. Our next UT President will promote teaching research, and service, and put resources on each of these areas of responsibility. To appreciate and support each of these areas, our next President should have an earned Ph.D. in an academic discipline, experience in the classroom, a history of significant scholarly activity, and a history of service to his/her community. In my opinion, hiring a University President without sound academic credentials would be the equivalent of hiring a varsity football coach who never played football.

Our faculty suffers under an excessive burden of administrative responsibility and detail which distracts from our ability to pursue our major mission. Our next President must work to streamline the administrative burden on academic staff.

Our next UT President will attend to fostering a sense of community, mutual respect, and fairness among our students, faculty, and staff. The University community consists of many talented people who are working at UT under wage and benefit plans that are below what they could achieve in the private sector and at most other Universities. Our next UT President will work to enhance the amenity values that attract people to this University, and will be committed to fair wages and benefits for all employees.

My qualifications to serve are outlined in the attached CV.