

McClaurin to direct Urban Research, Outreach Center

Written by

Tuesday, 11 December 2007 18:00

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She reports to Dr. Robert J. Jones, Senior Vice President for System Academic Administration, who announced her selection for the position last month.

As associate vice president, McClaurin will oversee project and management assignments for the senior vice president's office and other units comprising System Academic Administration. She will help identify funding opportunities to support the University's Urban Agenda, the University Northside Partnership, and the Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center.

Dr. McClaurin an anthropologist and a tenured professor at the University of Florida, also served as deputy provost in charge of faculty development, accreditation, and strategic planning at Fisk University; and was most recently a program officer with responsibility for higher education, scholarship, and diversity programs at the Ford Foundation.

"She is a strategic and innovative thinker, collaborative leader, accomplished administrator, and award-winning scholar who will help advance our vision for a comprehensive Urban Agenda," said Jones.

For over 30 years, as an activist, administrator, teacher, and writer, McClaurin has championed the eradication of social inequality. At the Ford Foundation she worked in the areas of race/ethnicity, class, and gender. Before joining Ford, McClaurin in 1999 was the first African American to gain tenure in the Anthropology Department the University of Florida, where she coordinated the Zora Neale Hurston Diaspora Research Project. In 2004, she was the Mott Distinguished Professor of Women's Studies at Bennett College for Women and from 2002-2004, she served as Deputy Provost at Fisk University. In 2000-2001, McClaurin was an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Diplomacy Fellow in the Office of Policy Development and Coordination at USAID. She has a BA in American Studies (Grinnell College, 1973) and holds advanced degrees in English (MFA, 1976) and Anthropology (University of Massachusetts at Amherst, MA, 1987 and PhD, 1993).

Jones said as part of the "Transforming the U" mission, the University has committed to serving urban communities through scholarship, teaching, and public engagement. The Urban Agenda should produce meaningful, cooperative, and sustainable engagement with multiple urban communities, he said.

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The University Board of Regents in November approved moving forward with the purchase of the Penn-Plymouth Shopping Center in North Minneapolis which it will renovate to house the University's first Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center (UROC).

McClaurin will serve as the first Executive Director of the UROC, providing administrative oversight and coordination of the University Northside Partnership (UNP) initiatives, which include collaboration between the University, Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, and several North Minneapolis organizations and constituent groups.

The University said the UROC is being patterned after those that are strategically located across the state and have served our agricultural rural community effectively for decades.

McClaurin will work with senior administrators and an Executive Steering Committee on academic program development, community involvement, outreach, facilities, and finances, Jones said. She will be responsible for helping to enhance urban community partnerships; identify and secure resources; administer programs; and coordinate communications with north Minneapolis residents.