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FRANK
IACOBUCCI

Iacobucci named as interim president

August 16, 2004

by Jane Stirling

The Honourable Frank Iacobucci, a former justice of the Supreme Court of Canada and former law dean and provost of the University of Toronto, has been appointed interim president of the University of Toronto, effective Sept. 1.

The appointment, announced by Rose Patten, chair of U of T's Governing Council, was approved at a special Council meeting today.

"We are absolutely delighted and fortunate to have the Honourable Frank Iacobucci as our interim president," Patten says. "His broad-based leadership experience, impeccable credentials, personal qualities and all-round excellence mirror everything this great university stands for. He is an extraordinary individual.

"His deep passion for the University of Toronto, combined with his demonstrated success as an accomplished academic administrator and scholar, will result in outstanding leadership and contribution," says Patten. "And we are grateful to the law firm of Torys LLP for enthusiastically endorsing Dr. Iacobucci's desire to serve U of T by delaying Dr. Iacobucci's employment commitment with the firm."

Patten consulted widely within the University of Toronto for advice on the appointment of the interim president. "The engagement of our community in this consultative process was truly gratifying," she says. "A significant number of capable and dedicated candidates were identified, all of whom represent the high standards of our institution. This ability to attract top talent will serve us well as we proceed in the search for a new president."

Iacobucci will serve until June 30, 2005 or until a new president is appointed and takes office, whichever comes first. President Robert Birgeneau, who will be leaving U of T in September to join the University of California at Berkeley, will be named past president as of Sept. 1. Until Sept. 15, he and Iacobucci will work together on the transfer of key files and other transitional issues.

"I am profoundly honoured to serve the University of Toronto at this time, particularly because it was my

professional home for 18 years," says Iacobucci. "My respect and affection for the University, its distinguished faculty, talented students, dedicated staff and accomplished alumni have only increased over the years. To work again with its governing bodies, senior officers and leaders from all sectors and divisions of the university is a privilege that I look forward to eagerly. I thank the chair and members of the Governing Council for their confidence in me; I shall do everything I can to justify that confidence in meeting the exciting challenges and opportunities that currently face us."

Iacobucci, who received his BCom and LLB from the University of British Columbia and his LLM from Cambridge, has a long and distinguished history with U of T. A member of the university's Faculty of Law from 1967 to 1985, he served as dean from 1979 to 1983. In addition, he held two vice-presidential positions at the university – vice-president (internal affairs) from 1975 to 1978 and vice-president and provost from 1983 to 1985. In 1989, U of T awarded him an honorary degree in recognition of his contributions to the academic discipline and profession of law.

Outside the university, Iacobucci has held distinguished national roles as deputy minister of justice and deputy attorney general of Canada (1985-88), chief justice of the Federal Court of Canada (1988-91) and, most recently, justice of the Supreme Court of Canada (1991-2004). Among many other activities, he has served as vice-president of the National Congress of Italian Canadians, vice-president and governor of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Legal Studies and chair of Ontario law deans. He has received numerous awards in Italy and eight honorary degrees in Canada and Italy. As well, he is an honorary fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.