

MARCH
6
2009

THE TIGER



EST. 1907, SOUTH CAROLINA'S NUMBER ONE COLLEGE NEWSPAPER ROARS FOR CLEMSON

Volume 103 ■ Issue 8

www.thetigernews.com

Barker responds to salary questions

President expands upon budget decisions throughout his career.

ASHLEY CRISP
EDITOR IN CHIEF

President James Barker responded to questions surrounding recent criticism of University salary spending, resulting from information compiled by John C. Bednar, professor emeritus.

Barker responded to this information in a letter to Clemson University students and faculty and also to questions from *The Tiger*. He said some information distributed was "incomplete and misleading" and several factors were not considered in Bednar's data.

Bednar collected information regarding increases in the Office of the President, Office of the Provost and Office of University Advancement from 2006 and 2008.

His final analysis was presented to the Faculty Senate on Feb. 10 during the free speech time, allotted at the beginning of each meeting.

He expressed concern not only regarding significant salary increases but also with the employees hired. According to Bednar, Barker's son, James C. Barker and son-in-law, Brian Bolt, are both employed with the University. Also questioned by Bednar is the employment of Erin Swann, the daughter of a Board of Trustees member.

"Just as in the case of his own son's situation,



JOSHUA KELLY/S&P

President Barker speaks to *The Tiger* in response to criticism about increases in salaries.

how can President Barker be objective and unaffected by this structural reality in his administration when deciding about salary increases for Erin Swann — when he reports to her father?"

When asked his motivation for looking into this matter, Bednar said, "I want the Clemson

Family to be more aware of the data I have tried to put together, because I think that many of them are not."

"Budget and salary information is a matter of public record. Information on both has always been available and has been easy to access online

for many years," Barker said. "The University subject to internal and external audit."

The "Dear Clemson" letter said inter promotions explain changes in the number employees currently earning more than \$50,000 within these three offices. Because of inter promotions, some faculty members were not included in the previous collection of information, making it appear as though only new people were hired. This is not the case.

In addition, Barker attributes the increase in staff in the Office of the President, Office of the Provost and the Office of University Advancement to reorganization. Only one new position was created, Chief Diversity Officer. However, the departments did gain staff that other departments lost. For example, legal services were consolidated to the Office of the President to provide more efficiency.

"New duties and the change from nine-month to 12-month employment led to appropriate salary increases," Barker said.

The letter highlighted two points, one being the improvements in faculty and administrative compensation that occurred in years of increased state funding and before the current budget crisis.

see **BARKER** page 4

BARKER *from page A1*

The competition to be in the Top 20 public universities is part of a list of 10-year goals created in 2001, and part of achieving this is working toward having the best faculty. Different decisions would have been made at the time had there been an economic crisis.

The second point made was that despite these changes in compensation, Clemson University still spends less than schools like University of North Carolina and Georgia Tech.

In response to questions about the hiring of James C. Barker and Erin Swann, Barker said he was not involved in either hire. "My responsibility is to ensure that State and University policies and procedures are followed in each and every hiring decision, and these were no exceptions."

He also said that he recently asked the University's counsel to ensure the process in hiring his son, James C. Barker was "by the book," and it was.

"I have notified the Chairman of the Board of Trustees that in the unlikely event of a grievance, I will recuse myself from the process and ask the Board of Trustees to step in."

Current University policy does not allow employees to directly supervise a family member. However, because Clemson is a small community, a policy against hiring spouses would "hampers our ability to recruit outstanding faculty."

Faculty Senate's Dr. Wayne Sarasua, chair of the finance committee, said that his committee will again do a review of salaries. The committee will present the final report at Tuesday's Senate meeting.

However, Sarasua said their investigation is unrelated to Bednar's report and the committee will not address this. The process of evaluating salaries began last year and will most likely continue to be an annual review.

Barker acknowledged the finance committee's evaluation of salaries and trusts them to "use sound statistical analysis."