



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees Announces Appointment of John W. Mills as Interim President of Northern Vermont University

MONTPELIER, VT —Today the Board of Trustees of the Vermont State Colleges System voted to appoint John W. Mills interim president of Northern Vermont University, effective August 2021. This follows yesterday’s announcement that current Northern Vermont University President Elaine C. Collins will be stepping down in mid-August after six years as president of NVU and before that Johnson State College. President Collins received national recognition for leading the unification of Johnson State College and Lyndon State College into Northern Vermont University.

Dr. Mills served as president of Paul Smith’s College in New York for ten years and two years at Mount Aloysius College in Pennsylvania. He also served as Provost at both institutions. Dr. Mills has a B.S. from the University of Rhode Island and a Ph.D. from Brown University. He has also been a faculty member at MIT, Harvard Medical School, Dartmouth Medical School, and Clarkson University. Additionally, Dr. Mills has a robust background in civic engagement, including over a decade of service on the Saranac Lake Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, where he also served two years as President, seven years on the Board of Directors of the Adirondack Economic Development Corporation, two years on the Executive Roundtable of the Blair County Chamber of Commerce, and two years on the Board of Directors of the Cambria County Chamber of Commerce.

Vermont State Colleges System Board of Trustees Chair Lynn Dickinson released the following statement: “the Board of Directors of the Vermont State Colleges System is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. John W. Mills as Interim President of Northern Vermont University. Dr. Mills immediately impressed us with his robust experience in higher education as a faculty member, administrator, and President. His commitment to advancing opportunities for young people to gain access for higher education in order to achieve their economic goals is also notable. We are looking forward to Dr. Mills bringing his broad experience to our Northern Vermont University campuses and to the VSCS system as we continue to modernize and adapt to the changing landscape of higher education and workforce development, and the developing needs of the state in these areas.”

Chancellor Sophie Zdatny added, “Dr. Mills will be a tremendous asset to Northern Vermont University. We look forward to helping him build on the solid groundwork laid by President Collins to enhance and strengthen Northern Vermont University as an economic anchor in the Northeast Kingdom and in Lamoille County. With his strong background in economic development, community engagement, and



his recognition of the imperative link higher education plays to advancing the economic wellbeing of individuals, we are confident Dr. Mills will be at home in his new role at NVU.”

Dr. John W. Mills stated, “the opportunity to lead Northern Vermont University, especially as it engages with the entire Vermont State Colleges System in system-wide transformation, is incredibly exciting. Across the nation, state systems are struggling with many of the same issues as the VSCS. Vermont’s commitment to higher education and workforce opportunities, especially in rural communities, and the state’s willingness to directly address the tremendous challenges confronting higher education are remarkable. With this dedication, Vermont can be a model for the nation. I look forward to meeting the students, faculty, staff, and community members that contribute to Northern Vermont University’s reputation as both an incredible institution of higher learning and a rural economic development engine.”

For the benefit of Vermont, the Vermont State Colleges system provides affordable, high quality, student-centered, and accessible education, fully integrating professional, liberal, and career study, consistent with student aspirations and regional and state needs. The Vermont State Colleges system includes Castleton University, the Community College of Vermont, Northern Vermont University, and Vermont Technical College. Learn more at www.vsc.edu.

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