Dr. Cheryl J. Norton

Cheryl J. Norton was selected by the Board of Governors of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education April 5, 2012 to serve as the 16th president of Slippery Rock University. She is the first woman in the University’s 123-year history to be named to lead the institution.

Norton was appointed following a national search and assumed her duties June 4. She succeeded Robert Smith, who retired in February. An accomplished scholar and educator, Norton was named president of Southern Connecticut State University in 2004 and served in the position for six years. She was the first woman president in SCSU’s 115-year history. Following her presidency, she completed a year-long sabbatical researching how university teacher preparation programs could support public school education reform.

A native of Cleveland, Ohio, Norton graduated with honors and earned a bachelor’s degree in physical education and recreation from Denison University in Granville, Ohio; and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa scholastic honorary. She earned three degrees from Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York; a master of arts in applied physiology and both a master of education and a doctor of education in applied physiology. She has completed additional studies at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Education. For her contributions to the field of sports medicine, including serving as president of state and regional professional organizations, she was elected a Fellow of the American College of Sports Medicine.

Norton looks forward to leading Slippery Rock University into a bright future. “I am honored and privileged to be named the next president of Slippery Rock University,” she said following the announcement of her appointment. “Slippery Rock not only is a caring community of scholars, but also an educational leader that provides academic programs of excellence supporting the growth and development of its students and the region. I am extremely proud to be associated with a faculty and staff committed to this educational vision.”

Norton and her husband Henry have two sons. Joel is married with two sons and employed as an attorney in the Chicago area and Aaron is a graduate student at Georgetown University in nurse anesthesiology.

An accomplished athlete, Norton has been nationally ranked as a marathon runner and has earned a black belt in Tae Kwon Do, won state Tae Kwon Do championships in fighting and forms, played intercollegiate basketball and volleyball, raced a dog sled team for 10 years and refereed soccer games with Henry.

Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania was founded in 1889 as a Slippery Rock Normal School. It enrolls more than 8,700 students and offers more than 60 undergraduate and 20 graduate programs including a doctorate in physical therapy.