



NEWS RELEASE

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Thomas to Retire After Upcoming Academic Year

KIRKSVILLE, Mo. – President Susan L. Thomas has announced she plans to retire from Truman State University following the upcoming academic year.

“It is an honor of a lifetime to serve as the president of Truman,” Thomas wrote in an email to campus announcing her decision. “Truman State University is an extraordinary institution with a proven legacy of transforming students’ lives, producing exceptional outcomes, and cultivating generations of remarkable alumni. I did not come to this decision easily.”

By the time of her retirement, Thomas will have served 11 years, marking the sixth-longest tenure of the University’s 17 presidents. Particularly beloved by students, she can regularly be found on campus, attending events and introducing herself to visiting guests as “the enormously proud president of Truman State University.”

“Throughout her presidency, Dr. Thomas has been an engaged presence on campus and a strong advocate for Truman’s students, faculty, staff, and alumni. Her personal engagement and genuine concern for their success have strengthened the Truman experience for countless students,” said Bill Lovegreen, chair of the Board of Governors.

More than a third of Truman’s rankings from U.S. News & World Report as the No. 1 public university in the Midwest have taken place with Thomas as president. Under her leadership, the University added 16 undergraduate and 10 graduate degree programs to meet student interests and workforce needs. Thomas oversaw the investment of more than \$67 million in campus facility and infrastructure improvements while simultaneously maintaining exceptionally low debt levels. That achievement has placed Truman on excellent financial footing and led the University to the best Higher Learning Commission Composite Financial Index among its peers.

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What may ultimately define the Thomas presidency is her commitment to Kirksville and the surrounding area. The Greenwood Interprofessional Autism Center came to fruition under her watch, and countless children and their families will benefit from that much needed resource. Thomas is also responsible for the Kirk Building renovation project and the creation of the Senator Roy and Abby Blunt SKILLS Center, which will support the local economy and workforce. Through her collaborations with the City of Kirksville, Thomas established partnerships with Kraft Heinz, the Kirksville Community Connections Group and Special Olympics Missouri.

“We have accomplished so much together over the past 10 years, never letting a challenge stand in our way. Please know the words ‘thank you’ cannot adequately express my profound gratitude and appreciation for you, our remarkable achievements, and what we will achieve this upcoming year. I remain fully committed to our work,” she said.

Thomas joined the Truman community in July 2014, serving as the executive vice president for academic affairs and provost. She assumed the position of interim president July 1, 2016, and was offered the role of president in February 2017 following a unanimous vote by the Board of Governors. Thomas will officially retire July 31, 2027. Her full year’s notice will allow for a comprehensive presidential search and a smooth leadership transition.

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