



For Immediate Release: 06.12.07

From: David Powers
Communications Director
708.358.5781

Contact: David Pope
Village President
708.358.5796

NU professor nominated to fill vacant Village Board seat

A Northwestern University research professor and Oak Parker since 1995 has been nominated to fill the vacant seat on the Village Board of Trustees.

Village President David G. Pope nominated Ernest J. Moore, Jr., PhD, at a special meeting last night. The Board is scheduled to vote on the nomination at its regular meeting on Mon., June 18, at Village Hall, 123 Madison St.

If approved by a majority of the Village Board, Moore, who has been a [Residence Corporation](#) trustee since 2001, will fulfill the two years remaining in the term of former Trustee Martha Brock who resigned in January. Approval of the nomination is expected and a swearing-in ceremony planned.

"Ernest is exceptionally bright, thoughtful and deeply committed to the long-term future of our community, as is evidenced by his tenure with the Residence Corporation," Pope said. "But these are only a few of the aspects that will make him a valuable contributor at the Board table.

"He also brings a strong commitment to focusing on outcomes, which I believe is one of the most important elements requiring our concentrated focus. I am deeply grateful that he is willing to step forward and serve our community."

Following Brock's resignation, which came too late to have her vacant seat filled via the April ballot, Pope issued an open call to the Village Board and members of the community to recommend individuals to consider for appointment. From a very strong field of candidates, three individuals ultimately were interviewed by the entire sitting board, including President Pope, who under state law has the responsibility to nominate the candidate.

"All of the individuals who were willing to serve were exceptionally qualified," Pope said. "In the final analysis, Ernest brought very strong skills in areas that will help to complement the collective expertise of the current members of the Village Board.

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“His experience at Res Corp will provide insights into the pressing issues related to affordable housing. His experience in academia will help the Board to better understand issues affecting our schools so we can work with those governing bodies to help address important issues facing the community. And his experience as a department head at a major university will offer insights into working within a complex organizational structure. In the final analysis, Ernest offered an exceptional combination of attributes that will help the Board to address numerous challenges in Oak Park today.”

Moore, who said he chose to live in Oak Park because of its diversity, good schools, housing and impressive history, said he was, at first, reluctant to step into the highly visible role of a Village Trustee. However, after considering the importance of housing issues to maintaining the diverse character of Oak Park and the benefit of bringing an African-American perspective to Board discussions, he said he felt a sense of duty and a need to give back to the community.

“I had been approached in the past about running for the Village Board, but there were others who I supported, so I chose to work diligently behind the scenes for them,” he said. “The individual and collective competencies of the current Village Board is impressive. My background in education and housing offers a unique opportunity to make a contribution.”

Moore said he did not take his role as the only person of color on the Village Board lightly, pledging to be a conduit between the African American community and its elected officials. He said he also hoped to inspire others to step forward and become actively involved in the community.

Currently a professor of molecular pharmacology and biological chemistry at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, [Moore’s research](#) focuses on overcoming hearing loss. He earned his PhD from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, his master’s degree from Northern Illinois University and bachelor’s degree from Tennessee State University-Nashville.

For more information on the nomination, call 358.5796 or e-mail board@oak-park.us.

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