

David O. Belcher assumed the role of chancellor of Western Carolina University on July 1, 2011. As chancellor, he oversees an institution enrolling more than 10,100 students and employing approximately 1,400 faculty and staff. The most important priority of his initial year as chancellor was the completion of a new strategic plan, which resulted in a clear focus for the institution at a moment of fiscal challenge, envisioned strategic enrollment growth complemented by increasing admissions standards, and reinforced the institution's historic commitment to Western North Carolina. The strategic plan that resulted, titled "2020 Vision: Focusing Our Future," also has led to an extensive organizational structure review toward the goal of improving the effectiveness and efficiencies of campus business processes, academic program prioritization to assess the quality and productivity of those programs and their connections to the university's mission and strategic directions, and a campus master plan that will guide the development and improvements of the campus over the next several decades.

Prior to his arrival at WCU, Dr. Belcher served as provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, a position he assumed in July 2003. In this role, he served as the second officer in charge of the university and oversaw the academic mission of the institution. He twice led UALR in strategic planning. His priorities as provost included strengthening UALR's research mission, curricular development at the master and doctoral levels, faculty development and student success. Dr. Belcher began his career on the faculty of Missouri State University, where he served for 15 years, the last nine as dean of that institution's College of Arts and Letters. In that capacity, he served as the founding director of the Missouri Fine Arts Academy, a three-week, intensive program of study for some of Missouri's most talented high school arts students.

An accomplished pianist, Dr. Belcher has appeared throughout the United States as a recitalist and chamber musician. He holds degrees from Furman University, the University of Michigan and the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester. In 1981, Dr. Belcher was awarded a Rotary Foundation Graduate Fellowship to study in Vienna, Austria. While a student at Eastman, he held a one-year appointment on the school's piano faculty and was named recipient of the Jerald C. Graue Memorial Scholarship for excellence in musicological research. Dr. Belcher holds the doctor of musical arts degree from the Eastman School.

Active in civic life, Dr. Belcher serves on the boards of directors of the North Carolina Arboretum and the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce and the board of trustees of DLP Harris Regional Hospital and DLP Swain County Hospital. A member of the NCAA Division 1 board of directors, he has served as chair of the Little Rock Arts and Culture Commission, as president of the boards of directors of the Springfield (Missouri) Regional Opera and the Springfield Regional Arts Council, and as a member of the board of directors of the National Conference of Governors' Schools. He was a member of the 1997 class of Leadership Missouri and the 1999 recipient of the Ozzie Award, which recognizes significant contributions to the arts in Springfield, Missouri.

A native of Barnwell, South Carolina, he is married to Susan Brummell Belcher, a professional vocalist.