

Dear members of the Ottawa University community,

It is with a heavy heart that I share the news that Dr. Reggie Wenyika has stepped down as President of the Ottawa campus after six years of dedicated service to the University.

Since assuming the presidency in 2018, Dr. Regg has led OUKS to new levels of success in enrollment, athletics, academic achievement, diversity, and internationalization. He pioneered innovative, student-centered programs and advanced the long partnership between the University and the City of Ottawa. His legacy at Ottawa University, especially in the personal impact he had on our students and his obvious passion for this campus and its people, will be a proud and lasting one.

Please join me in thanking Dr. Regg for his leadership, creativity, energy, service, and deep commitment to Ottawa University. I know we all wish him well, with continued success in all of his future pursuits.

Over the short term, I will be working closely and collaboratively with the OUKS leadership team (Dean Donald Anderson, AD Janet Eaton-Smith, Director of Administrative Operations Jay Kahnt, and Director of Enrollment David Tyner) to ensure continuity of operations. An Interim President will be named by the end of the spring semester and a national search for the campus's next President will begin in the late summer.



William M. Tsutsui  
Chancellor and Professor of History

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## **Ottawa Campus President Reggie Wenyika Steps Down**

*(Ottawa, Kansas)* – After 6 years at the helm of Ottawa University's campus in Ottawa, Kansas, Dr. Reggie Wenyika, has stepped down from the role, effective March 6, 2024.

“Serving at Ottawa has been an incredible journey filled with growth and remarkable achievements,” said Wenyika. “I express my deepest gratitude to the faculty, staff, students, and the Ottawa University community for your unwavering support throughout my tenure. Your commitment to excellence, innovation, and the pursuit of knowledge has been truly inspiring. We have achieved significant milestones together, and I am immensely proud of what we have accomplished as a team. As I embark on a new chapter in my professional journey, I carry the invaluable experiences and memories we shared. Thank you for the privilege of serving as your President. OUKS will always hold a special place in my heart, and I look forward to its continued success and prosperity.”

Dr. Wenyika's leadership at Ottawa University began in 2018 as the Campus President for the Ottawa, Kansas campus. During his tenure, the campus has experienced growth and success, including the achievement of the largest enrollment in school history, dramatic increases in international population, and the establishment of the University's first doctoral program. In addition, the construction of the Braves Athletic Performance Center and Creed Family Greenhouse were also during his tenure.

Dr. Wenyika's leadership has expanded the offerings for study-abroad and travel-abroad experiences for students. Recently student groups have traveled to and served in locations such as Malawi, Zimbabwe, India, Australia, Guatemala, and the Orkney Islands. These experiences have enriched the lives of not only the students and sponsors, but also the communities in which they served.

Dr. Wenyika has done exceptional work investing personally in students and supporting student success. In 2023, he established a committee to launch the inaugural Brave Discovery Undergraduate Research and Creative Works Day. During the event, 31 students opted to share their research and creative works with the entire student body and received resounding accolades from the jurors who provided feedback and encouragement.

Under his direction, the campus Top Scholars program has expanded to include all Presidential, Provost and Dean scholar students to write pieces that are published annually in a book that is available for purchase.

During his tenure, five athletic teams were started on campus to bring the total varsity teams to 33 programs. Some standout accomplishments for those new teams include the women's flag football team is the three-time reigning National Champions since the program started in 2021. The Braves esports teams are the 2021 National Call of Duty Champions, 2022 and 2023 KCAC Call of Duty Champions, and the 2023 Overwatch Champions. The men's and women's powerlifting teams had two athletes named All-Americans in 2023 and three athletes competed in the International Powerlifting Federation (IPF) World Classic Championship in Romania in September 2023.

Dr. Wenyika has elevated faculty and staff morale and engagement by supporting professional development, creating and nurturing the Staff Assembly, and leading faculty study trips internationally.

Within the Ottawa community, Dr. Wenyika has made a lasting impact with his involvement in a number of organizations and groups which have strengthened the relationship between the University and the community. He was selected as the "Person of the Year" by readers of the Ottawa Herald in 2023. Under his leadership, the University has hosted and sponsored a variety of events such as the annual Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce Awards banquet and the Ottawa Community Arts Council Art Gala auction.

“Dr. Wenyika will leave a lasting legacy on the Ottawa campus, in the City of Ottawa, and among Ottawa University alumni, and for that we are thankful,” said Ottawa University Chancellor Bill Tsutsui. “We wish him nothing but the best in his future endeavors.”

An Interim Campus President will be announced by the end of the semester. Ottawa University will be launching a national search for a new Campus President this summer.