

---

Lees-McRae



COLLEGE

P. O. Box 128  
Banner Elk, North Carolina 28604

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION,  
CONTACT

Meghan Wright  
Associate Director of  
Communications

wrightm@lmc.edu  
(828) 898-8729  
Fax: (828) 898-8820

---

24 February 2010

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Dr. Barry M. Buxton appointed fifteenth president of Lees-McRae College**

BANNER ELK -- The Board of Trustees of Lees-McRae College has announced the appointment, effective June 1, 2010, of Barry M. Buxton as president of Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, North Carolina. Dr. Buxton becomes the fifteenth president in the 110 year history of the four-year liberal arts college.

Buxton currently serves as Vice President for Special Projects at the Savannah College of Art and Design, where he is responsible for major gift solicitation, leadership development, and foundation relations. He also serves as executive liaison to the Savannah, Atlanta, and European Boards of Visitors.



“To be part of the Lees-McRae family, working in partnership with faculty, staff, students, and alumni, while providing continuity, stability, and leadership in the president’s office, is an honor and sacred trust. I am especially grateful to the Board of Trustees, Chairman Tommy Brigham, and Interim President Scott Colley, for the support and friendship extended to Debbie and me,” said Dr. Buxton.

A native of Blowing Rock, North Carolina, Dr. Buxton has a long history of involvement with institutions of higher education in Appalachia. During the decade of the 1980s, he served as Executive Director of the sixteen-member Appalachian Consortium. In this capacity, he worked with faculty on research projects, scholarly conferences, and publications related to Appalachia. In 1987, he received a distinguished service award from the Blue Ridge Parkway in recognition of the historic studies he conducted of Mabry Mill, Moses H. Cone Estate, Davey Farm, and Brinegar Cabin.

Dr. Buxton has served as president of science and history museums in North Carolina, Texas, and Georgia. In Houston, he worked with former President and First Lady George and Barbara Bush and the Harris County Medical Society to establish the Museum of Health and Medical Science. He was vice president of the North Carolina Grass Roots Science Museums and a co-founder of the Houston Museum District Association.

An award-winning author who has written and edited over a dozen books, his centennial history of Blowing Rock, [A Village Tapestry](#), was recognized as the best local history in North Carolina in 1989.

In a diverse career spanning 35 years, he has been a teacher, researcher, publisher, editor, and community leader with extensive international experience. He has served as a consultant to such diverse organizations as the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Tennessee State Board of Regents, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Texas A&M University. Dr. Buxton is a past member of the North Carolina Humanities Council and the Nebraska Humanities Council.

Buxton holds two degrees from Appalachian State University, where he received his teacher certification and was an E.F. Lovill Fellow. His Ph.D. is from the University of Nebraska, and his dissertation was titled “Job Satisfaction of College and University Presidents.”

Tommy Brigham, chairman of the Lees-McRae College Board of Trustees, commented that “Dr. Barry Buxton is a proven leader in higher education. With his roots in Appalachia and a strong sense of calling, Dr. Buxton will bring dynamic energy and passion to shaping Lees-McRae now and in the future. I truly believe we have found a remarkable person to lead the college, serve the community, and transform our destiny.”

Interim President Scott Colley added, “Our trustees have made an inspired choice. President Buxton will lead us into a great new era.”

Throughout his career, Dr. Buxton has received high marks for rolling up his sleeves and getting involved in community projects. He was the first non-hospitality professional to be chosen to serve as Chairman of Savannah’s powerful Convention and Visitors Bureau. He was also a member of the Chamber of Commerce executive committee and served on the boards of Bethesda Home for Boys, YMCA, the Lucas Theatre, Historic Savannah Foundation, and the Savannah Economic Development Authority. In North Carolina, he was statewide Chairman of Project Assist (a smoking cessation initiative), and a board member of United Way and the Asheville Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Buxton is married to artist Deborah Keyes Buxton and they have two sons: Loren, a technology executive in Nebraska, and Peter, who lives in New York City and works in television and commercial production. Dr. Buxton’s avocational interests include tennis, bicycling, and landscape architecture.

“The opportunity to serve as Lees-McRae’s president is a calling I could not ignore. It’s where God wants me to be. It’s where we’re intended to serve next and we’re thrilled to be returning to our roots in Appalachia. This is a wonderful chance to give back to the place and the people we love,” said Dr. Buxton.

*Lees-McRae College, a four-year, co-educational liberal arts college affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, USA, is located in the scenic Blue Ridge Mountains of northwestern North Carolina. Being a year-round tourist destination, the area provides the best of a vibrant college community coupled with natural beauty and a rich history. Please see [www.lmc.edu](http://www.lmc.edu) for more information.*

###