

## Special Projects UNT Federal Investigation

### UNT research vice president resigns

10:29 AM CDT on Friday, July 21, 2006

By Matthew Zabel / Staff Writer

*Date of original publication: Wednesday Aug. 24, 2005*

Dr. T. Lloyd Chesnut, the University of North Texas' vice president for research and technology transfer, re signed Tuesday, and the university continues to investigate a conflict of interest, university officials said.

Chesnut, 63, had held that position since 2003.

With his resignation, Chesnut relinquished his tenured faculty position in the biology department.

"Dr. Chesnut has acknowledged his participation in negotiations on behalf of UNT for a services contract with an outside private firm in which he held a significant financial interest," university officials said in a prepared statement, Tuesday. Chesnut did not disclose that conflict of interest to the university, the statement said.

Chesnut, who has been on paid administrative leave since July 27, could not be reached for comment.

In his resignation letter Tuesday, Chesnut said he would step down immediately from his administrative position so an interim vice president could take over soon. But he offered his help through Nov. 30 in making a smooth transition to the office.

He will remain on paid administrative leave and will keep his tenured faculty position in the biology department until that time.

Chesnut's annual salary is \$197,513.

In a letter accepting Chesnut's resignation, UNT President Norval Pohl thanked him for his offer to help and asked him to be on call full-time to answer questions.

Pohl also asked for his continued cooperation in the investigation.

The statement said the university would soon announce an interim leader for that office and would begin a search for Chesnut's permanent replacement in the coming months.

Deborah Leliaert, the university's spokes woman, said because of the investigation she could not say what company Chesnut was negotiating with or how much financial stake he had in it.

The university prevented the contract from going through, but Leliaert said university employees must not have any business relationships that conflict with or appear to conflict with the university's business.

"UNT has high ethical standards that apply to employees at all levels," Leliaert said.

Leliaert said Chesnut has made numerous accomplishments during his two-year tenure at UNT.

"Under Dr. Chesnut's leadership, UNT has seen a significant increase in the number of patent applications, the licensing of intellectual property for commercial development, and the position of the UNT Research Park as a future location for start-up companies," she said.

*MATTHEW ZABEL can be reached at 940-566-6884. His e-mail address is [mzabel@dentonrc.com](mailto:mzabel@dentonrc.com) .*