

Temple appoints first Black woman dean

There is usually nothing unusual about the appointment of an acting dean, but in the case of the acting dean in the School of Social Administration the appointment is something unique.

The acting dean is Dr. Ione Vargus and Dr. Vargus is the first Black woman to be appointed to such a position in the history of the University.

Dr. Vargus replaces Dr. Simon Slavin, who goes on leave then to return to the school in a teaching capacity.

In making the announcement, Dr. Marvin Wachman said: "Temple is very fortunate to have such a competent person as Dr. Vargus already on board. Dean Slavin did an exceptional job guiding the school through its first ten years and it will require equally skillful leadership to take Social Administration into its second decade, given the increasing demands placed on schools such as ours to help solve some of the more pressing social service problems and the financial constraints facing higher education today."

In a recent interview Dr. Vargus was asked how she felt as the first Black woman dean. She said "I have been the first Black in so many aspects of my career. I am sorry that that is the way things are. I'll be happy when we don't have to point to people as the first Black into something."

"I am aware of the many stresses on the minority administrator," said the new dean, who has recently written

is also important to the School and the University.

"I like the diversity of the student body here and I particularly appreciate the composition of the faculty. Generally speaking we have a good faculty, one with a lot of strengths."

Dean Vargus was born in Medford, Massachusetts, attended Tufts University, earned a master's degree from the University of Chicago and her Ph.D. from Brandeis.

She has been in the field of social work for 24 years and has worked in a variety of positions.

She has been on the faculty of Brandeis, The University of Illinois, San Francisco State and at Temple, where she is a full professor.

"I come from a strong Black family and was raised with a strong Black consciousness and an interest in history."

In 1952 Dean Vargus' mother was the Massachusetts Mother of the Year. She put all six of her children through college.

Her father was a lieutenant colonel and the commanding officer of the 372nd Infantry. There is a playground in Medford named after him.

Dr. Vargus has two children, one is finishing graduate study at Drexel and the other is a junior here at Temple.

A search committee will be formed soon to screen applicants for a permanent dean and Dr. Vargus will be among the candidates.



Dr. Ione Vargus