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Car, driver among perks for new UA VP

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University of Arizona President Robert N. Shelton has agreed to provide \$310,000 in "programmatic commitments" to the newly hired vice president for health affairs.

William M. Crist, who's appointment was approved by the Arizona Board of Regents on Aug. 14, will oversee academic and medical services at the sprawling Arizona Health Sciences campus in Tucson and the expanding UA College of Medicine in Phoenix. He is currently dean of the University of Missouri-Columbia School of Medicine.

"The key here is, if we're going to have a serious vice president of health affairs, and we are, we don't want him to come in and immediately have to take money from the colleges to build his inner core of folks," said Shelton in explaining the outlay. "We're basically building his budget."

The money will come from the central administration budget, Shelton said, and will be allocated each year.

In an Aug. 4 e-mail letter to Shelton, Crist asked for funding for administrative support, associate vice presidents and a car and driver to aid in his trips to the Phoenix campus.

Shelton agreed to the requests and detailed the budget allocations in a return e-mail letter, saying he will give \$135,000 for administrative staff, \$150,000 for Crist's "vice presidential team" and \$25,000 to provide a driver from UA's Office of Parking and Transportation and car rental from UA's car pool.

"I do the same thing," Shelton said of the car and driver arrangement. "It gives me four hours up and back (to Phoenix) to do work instead of spending them behind the wheel."

The news of Crist's budget comes on the heels of announcements about reductions every where else on campus.

In July, Shelton announced a redistribution of grant-surcharge revenues normally held at the college level, sending more back to central administration. Then, in August, budget cuts ranging from 1 percent to 4.3 percent were doled out to each college to absorb a \$15 million reduction in UA's state funding.

"When we formulate a (university) budget . . . we look at the whole picture and ask what do we really have to do and fund that," Shelton said. "And we really have to have a vice president for health affairs. . . . Say these dollars were cuts from the history department that came into the central (administration) pool and maybe they were returned to the state as part of the budget cuts or maybe they were used to cover recruitment costs. It's all the same pool."

In addition to his annual salary of \$650,000, Crist will receive \$30,000 in consultation fees for visits to the medical school campuses in August, September and October, according to his letter of appointment.

UA will also provide "one-time funds up to \$10,000" to cover Crist's airfare for trips back and forth to Missouri to help his wife prepare their household for the move to Tucson.

Crist will start Oct. 31, and has said his first priority is beginning searches for deans at both medical school campuses.

Edward "Ted" Shortliffe resigned as dean of the Phoenix campus in May. Joiner resigned his position July 1.

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