

On August 27, *The Beacon* questioned Wilkes University officials about allegations regarding the previous employment of Leo J. Danylak, Wilkes University Financial Aid Specialist, who came to work at the university in November 2006. The allegations were unrelated to his performance in his role at Wilkes. Two days later, *The Beacon* learned that Danylak would not be returning to the employ of Wilkes University.

Danylak, who was previously employed by Marywood University for nearly 30 years, the last six years of which as the Vice President for Business Affairs and Treasurer, denied the allegations prior to his departure.

"I heard these allegations, and I was very much surprised by them... I can certainly tell you, they are not true," said Danylak. Because of confidentiality issues at both universities, sources could not and would not confirm the allegations on the record.

When asked if he was previously aware of any allegations regarding Danylak, Mike Frantz, Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing Communications at Wilkes University stated, "Absolutely not." He added that it is the administration's obligation to investigate any allegations that concern the well being of Wilkes University students.

"Everybody's entitled to a full and fair investigation," said Frantz. "If the allegations turn out to be unfounded, obviously there would be no impact. If the investigation turns up any issues of impropriety, for instance in the application process, that could lead to any number of disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment."

Danylak's departure from Wilkes was "a result of [administration] listening very carefully to... questions and conducting our own internal investigation," said Frantz. When *The Beacon* contacted Danylak for comment, after learning of his departure from Wilkes, he said he was "very surprised the student newspaper would be interested in this... That's an issue between the employee and the employer."

"People come to jobs and people leave jobs. It's part of life." said Danylak. "I left Marywood twice in my career. I left in 1999. I took a leave, and I left in August for personal reasons.... And I left Marywood. I was not terminated by Marywood, and HR cannot confirm or deny that."

When *The Beacon* attempted to contact several offices at Marywood University, including Human resources, Security, the President's office, and members of the Board of Trustees, all calls were deferred to the Public Relations office.

Representatives in the PR office at Marywood University stated that Danylak resigned from the institution on "good terms."

As Financial Aid Specialist for Wilkes University, Danylak helped to manage over \$20 million in financial aid funds.

Maggie Lund, Vice President for Human Resources and Organizational Development, told *The Beacon* that the application process is the best defense an institution has to protect itself. Administration cannot share information regarding any employee with any other person or organization.

When asked how an administration could possibly investigate allegations regarding a previous employer of a prospective employee, and obtain information regarding their record, Lund answered, "I don't know that you would."

"We do a background check," said Lund. "And the background check is done as a condition of employment and the candidate has to sign a complete release form saying 'I am allowing you to do this.'"

The background check goes back seven years, is a two county search and includes the county of residence of the prospective employee. However, a prospective employer can only learn what a previous employer is willing and legally bound to share.

Lund also said that while Pennsylvania is an "at-will" state, and an employer or employee may terminate employment at any time with or without cause, any departure from the university must run through Human Resources. Lund added that Wilkes University takes departures very seriously, especially termination. When a person is terminated, if it is without cause, despite Pennsylvania's "at-will" status, the person can seek legal action against the university. A good example of this would a person in a "protected age group," meaning a person over forty years of age.

According to Wilkes University officials, the investigation regarding the allegations against Danylak is closed. "As far as I am concerned, and Wilkes University is concerned, it's over," said Frantz.