

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO NAME THE PHYSICS BUILDING  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to name the Physics Building as Begeman Hall.

**Executive Summary:** The proposed name will honor Dr. Louis Begeman, a pioneering and distinguished member of the UNI faculty. Section 6.26-B6 of the Board of Regents Policy Manual permits an institution to name a facility after a former faculty member with Board approval.

**Background:**

- ◇ Professor Begeman joined the faculty at the Iowa Normal School as its first scientist in 1899 and helped lead the effort to extend the Normal School's two-year program of study to a four-year collegiate degree.
- ◇ The Physics Building was the first laboratory science building on campus as the result of Professor Begeman's efforts. He became the first Head of Physics in 1908 and continued his service and leadership until his retirement from Iowa State Teachers College in 1936.
- ◇ Professor Begeman's completed his Ph.D. research at the University of Chicago under the supervision of Dr. Robert Millikan. Begeman's research involved determining the elementary charge of an electron, using charged microscopic water drops in suspension between charged plates. His Ph.D. thesis was the precursor to Millikan's famous oil drop experiment, which helped earn Millikan the 1923 Nobel Prize in Physics.
- ◇ Professor Begeman's academic legacy has been strengthened by the donations of his children and grandchildren to UNI in his honor. Cash and estate gifts in excess of \$1 million have helped hundreds of UNI science students continue their education.
- ◇ Renovation of the Physics Building, which was financed by legislative authorization of academic building revenue bonds, is soon to be completed. Naming the renovated facility in Professor Begeman's honor would be a fitting tribute to his extraordinary contributions to what has evolved as the modern University of Northern Iowa.