

Kean University has named James F. Konopack, PhD, as Dean of the College of Health Professions and Human Services (CHPHS). Konopack's appointment follows a competitive national search for the position.

An award-winning educator and scholar in the health sciences, Konopack comes to Kean following 17 years of progressive leadership experience in higher education, most recently as Dean of the College of Health Sciences, Education and Rehabilitation at Salus University in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania.

What is it about Kean that he finds exciting? "Everything! In a challenging time for higher education, Kean is doing everything right and seems to keep getting better and better under Dr. Repollet's leadership. From the moment I stepped onto campus, I felt an intellectual energy and spirit of community here that gave me an immediate, personal sense of belonging. And as a NJ native and long-time resident, I'm excited about Kean as an engine of growth, discovery, and opportunity in my home state, and I'm grateful to be a part of its next chapter."

Indeed, Konopack sees a bright future for the College: "In the CHPHS, we have a rich collection of health-related programs and departments all under one roof. I'm honored to join the CHPS faculty and staff in providing students with these rigorous, high-demand programs in health professions and human services. I'm looking forward to working with my new colleagues to train future generations of scholars and clinicians." Provost David Birdsell noted that "Jim Konopack's breadth of experience as an administrator, clinician, and scholar matches well with our leadership needs for a College on the move in all of those areas."

Konopack's own academic background includes a bachelor of arts in Psychology from Cornell University, a master of education in Counseling from Boston University, and a PhD in Kinesiology from the University of Illinois, where he was the recipient of an F31 individual predoctoral fellowship from the National Institute of Mental Health and the department's "most outstanding graduate student" award. Previous to his deanship at Salus University, he held appointments at New Jersey City University and Monmouth University, where he earned tenure and promotion for his research in human aging and the psychosocial determinants and consequences of physical activity and was recognized as the "Distinguished Teacher of the Year" in 2017.

Konopack was born and raised in Hunterdon County and resides with his wife Sheryl and their two teenage children in Howell, NJ. A nature lover and trail runner, he has nearly completed his goal of running a marathon or ultramarathon in each state.

Konopack's first Day as the Dean of the College of Health Professions and Human Services at Kean University is Monday, August 7, 2023.