
NEWS RELEASE

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(Note to journalists: A publication-quality photograph of James Weyhenmeyer is available at <http://www.uillinois.edu/our/images/>. Contact Weyhenmeyer at (217) 265-5440; weyhen@uillinois.edu.)

Weyhenmeyer named to Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences

Appointment includes private audience with King of Sweden

URBANA, Ill.—James A. Weyhenmeyer, University of Illinois interim vice president for technology and economic development, has been elected to the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences.

The academy is an international, independent institution that promotes research and innovation as well as technological and economic development. The academy has fewer than 1,000 Swedish and international members from the academic, public administration and business communities. There are also about 200 Swedish companies in the Academy's Business Executive Council.

Weyhenmeyer described his reaction to being elected to lifetime membership in the Swedish academy as being "surprised, honored and delighted."

Weyhenmeyer received notification in late November that he had been elected to the academy. He will be inducted at the annual meeting in Stockholm early next October.

Then, Weyhenmeyer will have an audience with His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf, the academy's "highest patron [who] actively participates in our activities," according to the Royal Academy's Web site.

Among other things, he leads the Royal Technology Mission, an annual trip to a country or region that is of interest to research and the business community in Sweden. The aim is to create new contacts that may lead to an expansion in the exchange of ideas and business in the long term."

The majority of the American members of the academy are engineers, technologists and economists from prestigious universities, such as MIT, Stanford and California Institute of Technology, Weyhenmeyer said, “who are interested in understanding of the regional and global economic impact of technology.”

Weyhenmeyer described the overall mission of the academy, as “build[ing] bridges from Swedish research institutions and businesses to premier research institutions in the U.S. and elsewhere.”

The American organizations analogous to the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences include the National Academies of Science, Medicine and Engineering, which are honor societies for top American scholars and researchers. As with the American academies, the Royal Swedish Academy publishes research findings, provides independent advice on scientific issues to the government and recommend efforts to improve the health, education and welfare of the population.

Weyhenmeyer is a professor of cell and developmental biology, neuroscience and pathology at the University of Illinois’ Urbana campus. His position as interim vice president for technology and economic development is a U of I system-level appointment. Weyhenmeyer also is an affiliate at the Institute for Genomic Biology at the Urbana campus.

He has visited Sweden both to present his research on therapeutic strategies to minimize brain damage caused by acute human stroke events and to discuss technology commercialization and transfer.

I presented a series of seminars in 2005 at Swedish research-intensive universities on taking intellectual property into the commercial marketplace,” Weyhenmeyer said. “As part of that series, I also discussed infrastructure financing for new businesses.”

Weyhenmeyer received his bachelor’s degree in biology from Knox College and his doctorate in cell biology and immunology from Indiana University. He then did post-doctoral work in physiology and neuroscience at the University of Iowa before beginning his U of I career in 1979.

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The University of Illinois is a world leader in research and discovery, the largest educational institution in the state with nearly 70,000 students, 24,000 faculty and staff, and campuses in Urbana-Champaign, Chicago and Springfield. The U of I awards 17,000 undergraduate, graduate and professional degrees annually.

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