



Charles E. Perry - B.A., B.S., M.A., LL.D., L.H.D., Ph.C.  
President and Professor of Political Science

In July of 1969 Charles E. Perry became the youngest state university president in the nation. At the age of 32 he was named the first president of Florida International University. His assignment was to build a new state university in Florida's largest population center. In the short space of three years, starting with a staff of four headquartered in the control tower of an abandoned airport and a budget of \$350,000, he created the institution that opened in September of 1972 with 5,667 students--more than any first year enrollment in the history of American higher education. Florida International is currently the fourth largest state university in Florida with over 10,000 students, an annual operating budget of \$20 million and a faculty and staff numbering 1,150. To keep pace with demand for the facilities of an urban-centered and internationally-oriented university, Perry is now planning for the 1976 opening of a second campus to be located at the Interama site on Biscayne Bay in North Miami.

Florida International's two campuses will be a combined \$175 million physical plant by 1985. The University has a projected enrollment of more than 30,000 students--largest in Florida by the mid-1980's. Currently the University offers degree programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Schools of Business, Education, Health and Social Services, Hotel, Food & Travel Services and Technology. In addition, major research and service programs are offered through the Center for Environmental and Urban Problems and the Center for International Affairs.

Dr. Perry, now 37 and beginning his sixth year as president, is responsible for the academic and physical planning and operation of the nation's fastest growing higher education complex. Geared to the needs of South Florida's major urban population concentration, Florida International operates on a 16-hour daily schedule with every faculty member, including himself, handling teaching assignments. The University's international focus is emphasized by the fact that Miami is one of the nation's most active international gateways and a center of banking and commerce keyed to the Caribbean, South and Central America.

It took Perry just ten years to go from public school teacher to university president. After graduating with honors from Ohio's Bowling Green State University, Dr. Perry taught English and history in the East Detroit school system. In 1959 he returned to Bowling Green as an Admissions Counselor and in 1961, at the age of 23, he became Director of Admissions. By 1964 his achievements had earned him the dual posts of Director of Development and Assistant to the President. From 1961 to 1967 he did advanced graduate study on a part-time basis at the University of Michigan. In 1967 Dr. Perry was appointed Special Assistant to the Governor for Educational Affairs, the first person to hold this position in Florida. In 1967-68, he also headed the State's Commission for Quality Education which developed Florida's master plan for education. One year later he became Vice Chancellor of the State University System of Florida, a post he held until appointed to his present position.

Dr. Perry has received many awards and honors, including being named one of the Ten Outstanding Young Men in America by the U.S. Jaycees for the year 1971. He is also listed in all major biographical reviews including Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the South and Southwest, and Who's Who in American College and University Administration. In 1968 he received the Governmental Appreciation Award for his "Outstanding Contributions to the State of Florida." In 1972 he received the Greater Miami Community Service Award for his support of programs on behalf of the migrant population and in 1973 he was the recipient of the Medal of Honor from the Accion Pro Darien Society of Colombia for his leadership in developing greater ties between and among the Americas.

President Perry serves on numerous local, state, regional, national and international professional, civic and business associations and organizations. Some of his major professional and civic activities include being a member of the Board of the U.S. Commission for UNESCO, United Nations University, Florida Bicentennial Commission, Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, Community Television Foundation of South Florida, United Way of Dade County, Museum of Science, Cultural Alliance of Greater Miami, Council for International Visitors, Third Century, U.S.A. and International Center, Inc. Dr. Perry is also very active in the business world serving on several boards including the Barnett Bank of Miami and the American Bankers Life Assurance Company. He is also a member of the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) and the prestigious Florida Council of 100. In addition, he has authored or co-authored numerous publications and has done extensive consulting work in the areas of organizational theory, public policy, management and international affairs.

Dr. and Mrs. Perry and their two children live in Coral Gables.