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University of Southern California Names New President (Update1)

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(Adds faculty appointment in the third paragraph.)

By Oliver Staley

March 11 (Bloomberg) -- The University of Southern California, the largest private institution of higher learning on the U.S. West Coast, named Provost C.L. Max Nikias its next president, succeeding Steven Sample.

Nikias, 57, now is executive vice president and provost, the second-ranked academic officer, the Los Angeles university said today in a statement on its Web site. He will take office as president Aug. 3, according to the statement.

Sample, USC's top officer since 1991, announced his resignation in November. Nikias, an engineer from Cyprus, was dean of the USC Viterbi School of Engineering from 2001 to 2005, and raised \$200 million during his time there, according to the statement. In 2008, Nikias was named to the Malcolm R. Currie Chair in Technology and the Humanities. He received a Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo, now called the University of Buffalo.

USC, founded in 1880, has about 35,000 students and is the 26th best university in the U.S., according to U.S. News & World Report magazine.

The USC endowment was valued at \$2.67 billion on June 30 by the National Association of College and University Business Officers, a Washington organization. The university has counted among its students Neil Armstrong, the first person to set foot on the moon; John Wayne, the late actor, and O.J. Simpson, the former football player acquitted of murdering his ex-wife and her friend.

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