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Retired Blue Cross officer Wilson takes role as Wake Forest executive in residence

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Wake Forest University has added another prominent North Carolina business official, retired Blue Cross Blue Shield of N.C. chief executive Brad Wilson, as an executive in residence.

Wilson will begin his tenure Aug. 1 for both the business and law schools. Wilson earned a law degree from Wake Forest in 1978.

Wilson could not be reached for comment.

Wilson retired from Blue Cross in October after 21 years, including leading the insurer from 2010 to 2017 through several major innovation and technology changes, some associated with the Affordable Care Act such as cost-comparison data on its website.

For example, Wilson was responsible for Blue Cross making the decision to remain in the 2017 federal health insurance exchange statewide after competitors Aetna and UnitedHealthcare exited the market.

Other experiences that Wilson brings to his executive in residence include serving as general counsel to former N.C. Gov. Jim Hunt, chairman of the UNC Board of Governors and on the Wake Forest law school's Board of Visitors.

A lifelong North Carolinian, Wilson holds a bachelor's degree from Appalachian State University and a master's degree from Duke University.

Wilson becomes the third active executive in residence at the university.

He joins John Allison, retired chairman and chief executive of BB&T Corp., and Steve Reinemund, former chief executive of PepsiCo and former dean of the Wake Forest law school.

Allison's role is with the BB&T Center for the Study of Capitalism, which began in November 2015.

Allison retired as BB&T's chief executive in December 2008, as its chairman in December 2009 and as chairman and chief executive of the libertarian Cato Institute after 2½ years in April 2015.

While at BB&T's helm, Allison was the driving force behind the creation of the Wake Forest capitalism center, as well as dozens of similar centers across the country.

Reinemund served as law school dean from July 2008 to June 2014. At PepsiCo, Reinemund was chairman from 2001 to 2007 and as chief executive from 2001 to 2006.

Other business officials who have served as executive in residence include: Steve Dollase, president of Inmar Supply Chain Network; Jesse Cureton, chief consumer officer of Novant Health Inc.; John Medica, senior vice president of Dell Inc.; and Barbara Maida-Stolle, executive vice president of business enterprises for Goodwill Industries in Charlotte.