

**Dr. Mitchell M. Zais (Brigadier General, U.S. Army Retired)  
State Superintendent of Education, South Carolina**

Dr. Mitchell M. (Mick) Zais took the oath of office as state superintendent of education January 12, 2011. The son of a general, Dr. Zais grew up in a military family, moving throughout the United States and attending 10 public schools in 12 years. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Dr. Zais served 31 years on active duty in the U.S. Army, retiring as a Brigadier General. Dr. Zais served as president of Newberry College for 10 years before winning public election as the 17th state superintendent of education.

Dr. Zais served in a wide variety of infantry units in Vietnam, the United States and Korea throughout his military career. Dr. Zais was also chief of war plans for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. For three years, he taught at West Point as an assistant professor.

Dr. Zais was a White House aide. He served in Panama as executive assistant to the four-star commander of all U.S. forces in Central and South America. In Kuwait, he was commanding general of U.S. and Allied forces. He also served as commanding general of Operation Provide Refuge, the task force that cared for the 4,000 Kosovo refugees who entered the United States. Dr. Zais' last assignment in the Army was chief of staff of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, the headquarters that administers the 184,000 part-time reservists, 9,000 civilian employees and 11,000 full-time military members of the Army Reserve. Dr. Zais is the recipient of several of the nation's top distinguished service awards including the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the South Carolina Meritorious Service Medal among many others.

Dr. Zais was president of Newberry College from August of 2000 until July of 2010, serving as its 20th president. During his tenure, enrollment nearly doubled, the endowment more than doubled, facilities were constructed and renovated, academic programs were added, and athletic teams competed for NCAA regional and national titles. For the last three years of his administration, *U.S. News and World Report* named Newberry College one of America's best colleges.

Dr. Zais has served as chairman of the presidents' councils of both the South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities and the South Atlantic Athletic Conference. He was also a member of the board of directors for the Foundation for Independent Higher Education, the Lutheran Education Conference of North America, the South Carolina Tuition Grants Commission, the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education, and the Southern Regional Education Board.

Dr. Zais earned a bachelor's of science degree in engineering from West Point and a doctorate in social psychology from the University of Washington. He also earned a master of science degree in organizational behavior from the University of Washington, a master of arts degree in military history from the School for Advanced Military Studies at Fort Leavenworth, and a post-doctoral studies in national security affairs from the National Defense University.

Dr. Zais and his wife Susan have two adult children, who graduated from public schools in Newberry.