

Cowboy boots for Crawford



BY EMILY WILLIAMS | OCT. 11, 2016

The Miami president's unique fashion choice

“This is my best pair.”

Miami University’s new president, Gregory Crawford, kicked his heels up, slightly lifting the leg of his black dress pants to admire the shiny, dark brown cowboy boots.

Crawford didn’t always wear cowboy boots. It started when he was at Notre Dame University, where, from 2008 through spring of this year, Crawford served as the William K. Warren Foundation Dean of Notre Dame’s College of Science, a professor of physics and vice president and provost for the university.

He had been recruited to volunteer for a charity event to benefit the Center for the Homeless in nearby South Bend, Indiana. For the past ten years, the center has hosted a “Dancing with Our Stars” event, a community-wide dance marathon that draws in notable local figures and has even been hosted by talk-show host and media personality Regis Philbin, a Notre Dame graduate.

Crawford was one of the participants selected to perform a routine with a professional dancer, but he and his partner quickly ran into a problem.

He can't dance.

They tried everything — Michael Jackson, Meatloaf, Creedence Clearwater Revival — but nothing worked.

“They told me, ‘You don't have the moves.’ I really am clumsy.”

In the end, they settled on the two-step. That performance was the first time he had ever worn cowboy boots.

“The boots were phenomenal, so I never went back,” Crawford said.

Now he wears them everywhere, discreetly hidden under the pants of his suits — working in his office in Roudebush Hall, presiding over meetings of the Board of Trustees, biking through Oxford or, as he did yesterday, addressing the Miami community at his formal inauguration.