



Summer Newsletter

August, 2015

TEXAS WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION E-NEWSLETTER

Texas Women in Higher Education ...
TWHE is the American Council on Education (ACE)
Women's Network state organization for Texas



Save the Date!
"Navigating Uncharted Seas"
TWHE 2016 Conference
April 4-5, 2016, Corpus Christi



More Details Coming Soon!



Chair's Welcome

On May 26, members of your TWHE Board of Directors overcame wind and rain to assemble on the campus of Texas A&M University-San Antonio for a retreat focused on the vision and mission of Texas Women in Higher Education. By day's end, Board members had developed an exciting vision supported by a mission and priorities that will move TWHE forward and advance the goals of our sponsoring organization, American Council on Education, to advance women in higher education leadership.

I'm so pleased to share this vision and the plans we have for carrying it out.

Vision - Texas Women in Higher Education transforms higher education leadership in Texas and beyond

Mission - Texas Women in Higher Education Advances women who hold or aspire to leadership roles in higher education

Strategic Priorities:

1. Improve our effectiveness at achieving our vision and mission
2. Provide professional development, networking, and advocacy for women holding or aspiring to leadership positions in higher education
3. Empower women to take advantage of opportunities for advancement and professional growth
4. Promote women's involvement in local, state, and national leadership development opportunities
5. Recognize women leaders and celebrate their contributions to higher education
6. Engage leaders in supporting the mission and strategic priorities of TWHE

Directors identified one-year and five-year goals for each Strategic Priority and then took responsibility for addressing the one-year goal. After only two months, we have already finalized a draft of an Operations Manual (Strategic Priority 1); begun plans for 4 regional meetings and the state conference (Strategic Priority 2); proposed an enhanced conference scholarship program to include cohorts (Strategic Priority 3); compiled a list of awards and recognitions received by women in Texas higher education (Strategic Priority 4); and scheduled a reception at the SACSCOC Annual Meeting in Houston. Watch for information over the next few months, on all of these projects and events.

A special thanks to Dr. Cynthia Teniente-Matson, President, Texas A&M University-San Antonio, for hosting our retreat, and to members of the TWHE Board for the time and energy devoted to the retreat and to achieving our vision.

Contact me to talk about how you can get involved. [Kristin Harper](#), Executive Director for Undergraduate Studies, Texas A&M University.



TWHE Recognizes Dr. Sandra Harper as the President of McMurry University

by Jillian Gonzalez



As the first woman president at McMurry University, Dr. Sandra Harper knows the importance of showing up and being engaged.

President Harper has always known that education would be her career path. A native of Dallas, Dr. Harper received her Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education from Texas Tech University. She began her career as a high school English and speech teacher in west Texas, and worked during the summers to complete her Master's degree from the University of North Texas. Following the start of her family, Dr. Harper began working on her Ph.D. and teaching part time at Austin College.

As her career progressed, Dr. Harper gained experience on both the academic and administrative sides of higher education. Beginning as a full-time professor of Communication at McMurry University, Dr. Harper moved through the ranks at several different institutions, holding positions such as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at McMurry University, Vice President for Academic Affairs at Oklahoma City University, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, and President of Our Lady of the Lake College in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Dr. Harper cites a course she took in graduate school as the initial inspiration for her interest in higher education administration. Instead of assigning a textbook for the class, the professor had each student subscribe to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. Dr. Harper became fascinated by the wide variety of issues that administrators face on a daily basis, and welcomed the possibility of one day being president of a college or university.

Acknowledging that being the first of anything puts you in the spotlight, Dr. Harper embraces her responsibilities as a female leader in higher education. As an experienced president of universities in both Texas and Louisiana, President Harper offers meaningful advice for women in the field of higher education. She stresses the importance of being an active participant in your work and education, and advises that women be willing to "show up, be engaged, and do things on time." Though she admits that much of this seems like common sense advice, she notes that it is those who go the extra mile to be present and work hard that make a difference. Additionally, she strongly encourages women to gain an understanding of the financial and legal sides of higher education, as knowledge of both are vital to the success of college and university leaders.

When asked about the future of colleges and universities, Dr. Harper believes that changes lie ahead. With more incoming freshmen entering their undergraduate careers with college credit from high school courses, colleges must work to answer the question of what today's undergraduate experience means for students. Additionally, as students continue to have greater access to information outside of the classroom, Dr. Harper anticipates changes in the roles of professors and the methods of engaging students in the learning process.

Though she has faced the challenges of those who believe that women should not hold positions of authority, Dr. Harper is hopeful that the gender gap will continue to decrease as the next generation becomes more accustomed to seeing women in high profile leadership roles. As a female university president, Dr. Harper knows that her performance has broader implications for all women in higher education, and she welcomes the seriousness of this responsibility with commitment and enthusiasm.



TWHE Fall 2015 Regional Events

Save the Date
 Friday, September 18, 2015
 One Day Regional Conference
 Sponsored by
Texas Woman's University
 WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Women's Work and Life:
Adaptability & Flexibility



Contact:
 Abigail C. Tilton, Ph.D.
 940-898-3329
 ATilton@twu.edu



Contact: Dr. Abigail Tilton
940-898-3329

Save the Date
 Friday, October 30, 2015
 One-Day Regional Conference

We Can Do It!



Sponsored by
TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE
 Women in Higher Education

Contact Ms. Amy Valdez at 361 593 3938
 amvvalde7@students.tamuk.edu

Contact: Ms. Amy Valdez
361-593-3938

Southeast Texas Regional Event
August 18, Beaumont

West Texas Regional Event
Lubbock
More Details Soon!

Women of Color Conference
Lone Star College-Kingwood Campus
More Details Soon!

Reception for Women Presidents & Chancellors
January 20, 2016, Austin
10:45 – 11:30 a.m., prior to the Lamar Award Luncheon



TWHE SACSCOC Reception
December 7, 2015
In Conjunction with SACSCOC Annual Meeting
More Details Soon!



TWHE Recognizes Dr. Mary Hensley as the President of Blinn College

by Nancy KingSanders



After a national search, Blinn College has selected Dr. Mary Hensley as its 15th District President/CEO, the first time in its 132-year history to have a female president. Dr. Hensley is able to draw on her experience from both K-12 and community colleges. This wealth of experience enabled Mary to be well-prepared to face the challenges of a presidency. Her career path is intertwined with various career opportunities as she moved to various locations with her husband who was a superintendent.

Prior to being selected as District President/CEO of Blinn College, Dr. Hensley had served the Austin Community College District for 14 years, the last six and a half years as the Executive Vice President for College Operations. Among her responsibilities were the oversight of eleven campuses and six off-campus centers. She also provided leadership and support to the campus advisory committees for each campus and to various Board-appointed committees.

Dr. Hensley pursued her bachelor's degree in education from the University of Texas at Austin. After completing her Bachelor of Science degree she moved back to her hometown of El Paso. Mary was hired as an elementary school teacher in the Ysleta Independent School District and soon moved up to other positions. Exhibiting her leadership skills and aptitude as an administrator, Dr. Hensley soon became a middle school counselor, elementary school assistant principal, middle school principal, high school assistant principal, and then high school principal in the Ysleta District. She also completed her Master of Arts degree from the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP).

During the mid-1980s, Mary's husband moved from the superintendency of the Ysleta District to become the superintendent of the Waco Independent School District. This opened the door for Dr. Hensley to expand her administrative career at McLennan College. Dr. Dennis Michaelis, the incoming president at McLennan, asked Mary if she would be interested in joining his team. Accepting this challenge enabled great learning opportunities for Mary in areas specific to higher education. She gained experience with accreditation, program development, finances, presentations, grant writing, working with board members, creating a foundation, and meeting the needs of students in higher education.

Living in Waco also enabled Dr. Hensley to pursue her Doctorate of Educational Administration at Baylor University. As the doors of opportunity opened, Mary was in the inaugural doctoral cohort, *Scholars of Practice*, designed by Dr. Dwayne Estes. Subsequently, Dr. Hensley served at the Austin Community College District in resource development, and the Round Rock Independent School District as Deputy Superintendent. These opportunities completed Dr. Hensley's P-16 perspective, paving the path for her future presidency.

Dr. Hensley has had excellent mentors and educators throughout her journey to the presidency. In the early 1980s, a female professor in the College of Education at the University of Texas at El Paso gave her this advice: "It is difficult for women in education to move into upper levels of administration. Consider these two pathways forward: 1) "Get GAS-ed" (Gaining Attention of your Supervisor); or 2) "Get sponsored." Gaining the attention of your supervisor could be through exemplary work, punctuality, volunteering to do special projects, etc. Getting sponsored could also be asking a supervisor to mentor you, provide experiential opportunities, internships, etc. Dr. Hensley is grateful for the many mentors she has had throughout her career.

Dr. Hensley's advice for other women in higher education is this: strive for excellence; focus on what's best for the students; take advantage of opportunities; don't be hesitant to branch into new areas, and always interact with others in a professional, positive, and supportive manner.



TWHE 2015 Annual Conference

by Donna Lang, Conference Chair

The Texas Women in Higher Education Annual Conference, themed “Surfing the Waves of Change,” was held March 29 - 31, 2015 at the Hotel Galvez in Galveston, Texas. A total of 200 people attended, representing 57 institutions as well as several non-profit organizations, consulting groups, and supporting businesses. Eighty Institutional Representatives gathered for dinner on the Sunday prior to the conference and discussed TWHE activities and organization at the campus and regional levels.

The conference general sessions were enlightening and inspirational. The opening keynote by Ginger Kerrick, the Flight Operations Assistant Director for International Space Station (ISS) operations, provided a fascinating perspective on leading through change. Later that day, Karla Morton, the 2010 Texas Poet Laureate, delivered poems that described the absolute urgency of accepting life changes. Signed copies of Karla’s 10th book, *Constant State of Leaping* (Published by Texas Review Press), were presented to conference participants. Dr. Merna Jacobsen closed the conference with a keynote on the leadership patterns of men and women in the workplace and the five most important things women can do to increase their leadership influence.

In addition, the conference featured video segments called “Her Stories”, produced by Becky Trout, Executive Director of Community Relations in the UTMB Office of Health Policy & Legislative Affairs. The vignettes detailed the personal leadership journeys of four women leaders, each representing different institution types and various functional areas. The featured women included: Dr. Beth Lewis, President, College of the Mainland; Kelli Shomaker, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, Blinn College; Dr. Joan Nichols, Professor, Internal Medicine & Microbiology & Immunology, Associate Director Research and Operations, Galveston National Laboratory, University of Texas Medical branch; Dr. Cynthia Hernandez, Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Texas A&M University. Between general sessions the conference offered twelve concurrent sessions on a wide variety of topics regarding defined tracks of leadership, wellbeing, career advancement and personal branding.

Plenty of opportunities were provided for participants to network during conference lunches and breaks. The social gatherings incorporated additional networking opportunities along with time to relax and rejuvenate. The Monday evening mixer was held at the beautiful and historic Moody Mansion and included guided tours, live piano music, plenty of gathering space and access to the Galveston Children’s Museum. The highlight of the party was the catering and service provided by the students enrolled in the Galveston College Culinary Arts program. Bravo! For those early risers, twenty eight women participated in the Tuesday morning 5k walk and run along the Galveston Seawall.

The conference would not have been possible without the generous sponsorship of:

Local Hosts and In-Kind Conference Sponsors

Texas A&M University at Galveston
Galveston College
University of Texas Medical Branch, Galveston



Diamond- \$1,500 & Above

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Gold- \$750

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
University of Houston-Victoria

Bronze- \$250

Blinn College
Council of Public University Presidents & Chancellors
Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas
Texas Woman's University
The University of Texas at Dallas
University of Dallas

In Memoriam, Dr. Dorothy Anne Flannagan



Dr. Dorothy Anne Flannagan of San Antonio, TX passed away peacefully on July 8th, 2015 in Austin, TX. Born on October 30th, 1951 in Charlottesville, VA, she was the daughter of Samuel Henson and Bettie Anne Flannagan.

Dr. Flannagan retired from the University of Texas at San Antonio in December 2014 as Professor, Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School. Dr. Flannagan's passion for her work was exceeded only by her love for her family, and her greatest joy was spending time with her only granddaughter, Katie.

She is survived by her son, granddaughter, and husband.

A private internment service for the family was held in Richmond, VA. A memorial service was held on the campus of The University of Texas at San Antonio in San Antonio, Texas on Friday, July 24th.

TWHE sends condolences to Dr. Flannagan's family.



Texas Women in Higher Education Institutional Representatives (IRs): Making a Difference

Every institution of higher education in Texas has the opportunity to designate an Institutional Representative (IR). IRs keep women administrators on each respective campus up to date with information from the state and national organizations and create local opportunities of interest for women on campus. At this time, there are 108 IRs through the state of Texas representing two- and four year, private and public institutions of higher education. IRs are undertaking many wonderful and creative ways to connect, empower, and support women in higher education.

The IR team is dedicated to expanding the number of institutional representatives from two-year and private institutions of higher education. Additionally, the team gathers, shares, and promotes local and regional events and activities conducted by the Institutional Representatives that support the advancement of women in higher education at their institutions and in their regions. We welcome the ideas and suggestions of women leaders on the numerous campuses that are not affiliated with Texas Women in Higher Education. To find out how to connect with your institution's IR or to get involved as an IR, contact one of the following members of the IR team:

Dani Day, Collin College, dday@collin.edu, 972-758-3804

Jean Keller, University of North Texas, Jean.Keller@unt.edu, 940-565-3427

Cissy Matthews, Galveston College, cissy.matthews@gc.edu, 409-9441204

Renee McDonald, Southern Methodist University, rmcdonald@mailsmu.edu, 214-768-1128

TWHE Regional Initiative Grants

The TWHE Board of Directors has approved offering regional initiative grants to motivate colleges and schools to organize regional events focused on topics related to the success, support or promotion of women in higher education. Beginning Fall 2015, THWE will award grants up to \$500 for regional initiatives such as meetings, networking events and speakers that are supportive of at least one of the TWHE strategic priorities. The application process and eligibility requirements will be available soon on the www.TWHE.org website. If you are interested in applying for one of these grants, please contact Cissy Matthews at amatthew@gc.edu.



Texas Women in Higher Education (TWHE) is dedicated to developing, advancing and supporting women employed at colleges and universities across the state. TWHE provides its members with the skills needed to reach leadership positions and to enhancing the leadership skills of those already there. TWHE is the American Council on Education (ACE) Women's Network state organization for Texas. Together, the two organizations develop programs that identify, develop, encourage, advance, link, and support women in higher education careers within the state.

Am I a member of TWHE?

The clear answer is yes! By virtue of expressing your interest in TWHE, through participating in the annual conference or providing us with your email address, you are considered a member. TWHE does not charge membership dues. The organization is supported through the successful operation of the annual conference and the sponsorships and donations received in conjunction with the conference.

Check out TWHE Listserv

For the latest news and information on TWHE and other topics related to women's leadership, sign up for the TWHE listserv by emailing twheconnect@gmail.com.

“Like” Us on Facebook

Join the TWHE community online by liking our Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/TexasWomenInHigherEducation>

If you have an article or suggestion that you would like to submit to the TWHE Newsletter, please email: Nancy KingSanders at nancy.kingsanders@tamuk.edu.