

## NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

### Texas Women in Higher Education Announces 2026 Award Recipients

HOUSTON, Texas - Texas Women in Higher Education (TWHE) has announced the recipients of their 2026 Presidential Leadership, Institutional Representative of the Year, and Emerging Leader awards, given to only three women state-wide. TWHE awards are designed to recognize the outstanding achievements of women leaders in higher education across the state. Recipients were recognized at the 2026 TWHE Annual Conference, held virtually. The award winners and their achievements are outlined below.



The Presidential Leadership Award winner is **Dr. Del Watson**, Director of Postdoctoral Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Watson's 25-year career in higher education reflects a profound commitment to fostering inclusive excellence and empowering colleagues and emerging leaders. Her service at UT Austin has demonstrated visionary leadership grounded in collaboration, mentorship and organizational advancement.

Dr. Watson also exemplifies the values of TWHE. She has served as a Board member in various positions such as Secretary, Conference Chair, and Grant Administrator. She actively promotes opportunities for women to lead, grow, and thrive within higher education, both locally at UT Austin and as part of statewide initiatives. TWHE is proud to

uplift Dr. Watson as winner of the first Presidential Leadership Award.



The 2026 Institutional Representative of the Year is **Dr. Amanda Galindo**, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at Texas A&M University – College of Pharmacy. Dr. Galindo embodies the mission and vision of TWHE as an Institutional Representative for her campus. She regularly shares TWHE information and announcements to the TAMU College of Pharmacy environment to promote engagement and resources for interested parties. She also collaborates directly with Texas A&M Kingsville’s TWHE committee to expand her circle of influence to promote leadership events across campuses.

Dr. Galindo serves as an example to women in higher education throughout the state bringing more

than 23 years of experience in higher education including over 16 years of service within the Texas A&M University System. Her commitment to advancing women into leadership positions makes her an invaluable Institutional Representative.



The 2026 Emerging Leader award winner is **Dr. Michele Hancock**, Director for Performance Excellence, Strategy, and Communication at Tarleton State University. Dr. Hancock is described as a dynamic leader who encourages individuals at her campus to submit TWHE grants, attend the annual conference, consider presentation opportunities, and attend the virtual workshops or participate in the Common Book reading group. She is a leader in the Women's Mentoring Network on the Tarleton campus where she supports women's leadership by planning professional development opportunities throughout the academic year. Dr. Hancock's dedication to elevating women in

higher education makes her an excellent Emerging Leader.