MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear HERS community,

It is with a heavy, but full heart, that I announce this will be my last letter as the President of HERS. My time with HERS has been the most rewarding of my career, but it is time for me to retire and pass the torch on to this remarkable organization's next bold leader. As you have heard me say many times, I owe my best years in higher education to the lessons I learned as a participant of the HERS Leadership Institute (HLI) and the many connections I gained from the alumnae network. It has been an honor and joy to serve as the President of HERS alongside an incredibly experienced, resilient, and driven team that pushes the boundaries of our mission impact.

Before joining this team, I had already announced my retirement as a long-serving CEO and Dean. However, when I saw the opportunity for the HERS President, I decided to apply and give back to an organization that gave so much to me. This role has always been a job of passion, and I will be eternally grateful for the honor to serve the advancement of women leaders in higher education.

During my time at HERS, we created an online learning and networking platform for our alumnae to unleash the HERS network's collective expertise—over 6,000 women leaders—to share challenges or ideas for collaborative problem-solving and encouragement. Over the past several months, despite the unforeseen challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, we successfully delivered our two summer cohorts of the HLI virtually and launched four new programs this fall. Additionally, we ramped up our visibility on social media and other channels to increase our digital presence.

Another proud accomplishment was the compilation of HERS' video-herstory, capturing our fore-mothers' achievements and dedication to HERS. One of these historical leaders documented in this video, Carolyn Press Landis, will be stepping in as interim president while the HERS Board of Directors launches a nationwide presidential search. I am thankful to the board for their support and guidance during my tenure at HERS, and I especially want to thank my team of fantastic staff members who I am proud to call partners in this essential work. Ray Burgman, Janet Ash, C.J. Dempsey, Laurie Persico, Kim Galennie, and Karen Ramon have made significant contributions to HERS, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic this year. Their efforts made it possible for HERS to move to remote work and deliver our programs online to continue our mission of advancing women during these challenging times.

My official last day at HERS was November 2, and I look forward to staying connected to the HERS community as an alumna supporting HERS as we approach our 50th anniversary. If you would like to keep in touch, email me at vfitzsimmons@HERSNetwork.org.

Stay bold, my friends,

Verna Fitzsimmons, Ph.D.
President

MESSAGE FROM DR. TUAJUANDA C. JORDAN, HERS BOARD CHAIR
To HERS Alumnae and Friends,

At its regular meeting October 31st, the HERS Board of Directors accepted the resignation of HERS President, Dr. Verna Fitzsimmons, who has led HERS since 2018. Thanking “Dr. Fitz” for her devotion to HERS, the Board noted, “In a year that would challenge any senior leader, Dr. Verna Fitzsimmons was a steady hand as she quickly and seamlessly pivoted to managing the day-to-day challenges caused by the pandemic exhibiting unflappable leadership. The strong relationship she built with her leadership team will ensure that HERS programs continue without disruption, and the quality of programming remains outstanding.”

Anticipating the launch of a search for the next President of HERS early in 2021, the Board confirmed that the mission of HERS continues to be essential.

As many of you know, “Dr. Fitz” was already a familiar face before serving as president, as a HERS Leadership Institute alumna from the 2011 cohort at the University of Denver. After completing the Leadership Institute, she continued to be a strong supporter of HERS as a Dean at Kansas State University and sponsored several women to attend the HERS Leadership Institute. We are delighted that she will continue to be a champion of HERS as former president, an alumna, and an advocate of equity, inclusivity, and excellence in higher education.

We are grateful to have the same history of loyalty in Carolyn Press Landis, who will ensure a smooth transition until a new president is in place. Carolyn has served HERS since its founding in 1972. In the early years, she was a faculty member for the Leadership Institute cohort on the campus of Bryn Mawr College. From 1978 until 2008, she chaired the Board of Directors, and most recently, as Board Chair Emerita, she serves as Co-chair of the 50th Anniversary Task Force and a member of the Finance and Investment Committee of the Board of Directors. She will serve as Interim President of HERS until the next president of HERS has been identified and on-boarded.

We, as the Board of Directors, are confident that our future remains bright and full of bold growth.

Forever onward,

Tuajuanda C. Jordan, Ph.D.
Chair, HERS Board of Directors

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**BY THE NUMBERS**

What does HERS’ success look like so far in 2020?

- In 2020, 94 women graduated from the [HERS Leadership Institute (HLI)](https://www.hers.org/leadership-institute). Amidst the pandemic challenges, we adapted and pivoted to our summer and fall cohorts’ successful virtual delivery.
- Between January and August, 32 women joined [Next Stages Next Steps](https://www.hers.org/next-stages-next-steps).
- 4 new programs enrolled women at various stages of their leadership and career journey and expanded the HERS mission serving over 800 additional clients.
  - HERScnnct Webinar series – launched in April
  - Inclusive Leadership Series – launched in September
  - Chart Your Career Journey – launched in October
  - 360 Leadership Assessment – launched in October
- [The HERS Network](https://www.hersnetwork.org) launched, an online learning and networking platform designed for and available exclusively to over 6,000 HLI alumnae.
- HERS celebrated 53 appointments amongst alumnae to leadership roles at their higher education institutions so far this year. Please share your promotions at [hers@hersnetwork.org](mailto:hers@hersnetwork.org), so your fellow alumnae can share your success.

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**UPCOMING DEADLINES**

January 2021 Next Stages Next Steps Workshop
Four weekly sessions delivered virtually over Zoom
January 7 – 28, 2021 (between 11:00 AM and 3:45 PM ET)
[REGISTER NOW](https://www.hers.org/register) or by December 02, 2020, for a $300 discount

June and July 2021 Intensive 9-Day HLI Cohorts
June Cohort: July 1 – 10, 2021 – Denver, CO
July Cohort: June 13 – 22, 2021 – Philadelphia, PA
[APPLY NOW](https://www.hers.org/apply) or by December 03, 2020, for a $500 discount

COMING SOON
HERSconnect Webinar Series on Well-Being in Today’s Workplace
Each one-hour webinar will be recorded and available on-demand.

Online Women’s Leadership Resilience Workshop
New offering to combat burnout and the unique challenges women face in our personal and professional lives through new solutions that go beyond typical “self-care tips” and builds deeper resilience reserves.

HERS NETWORK SPOTLIGHT

Wanda Costen, Ph.D., MBA
Dean of the School of Business at MacEwan University in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada (HERS Institute Alumna, Class of 2019)

“Organizations are now pivoting so quickly they need people who can stay calm in the midst of the storm, come up with high-quality recommendations and ideas, and can implement decisions quickly. Being around the table is critical, and now is a great opportunity to show how you can help your institution ensure its sustainability and even advance in new ways.”

Dr. Costen shares her thoughts on how the HERS Leadership Institute experience shaped her career and helped her lead during a crisis.

Read more >

RECENT JOB BOARD POSTINGS

- Dean, College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences – University of Denver
- Provost Search – Hollins University
- Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs – Northern Kentucky University
- Founding Dean of the new College of Ethnic Studies – California State University, Los Angeles
- Vice President of Equity, Inclusion, and Justice – Lesley University
- Associate Dean for Academic Affairs – Case Western Reserve University, Frances Payne Bolton School of Nursing

See Job Board Announcements >

WHAT WE’RE READING

The Virus Moved Female Faculty to the Brink. Will Universities Help? New York Times (October 6, 2020).

The pandemic has laid bare gender inequities across the country, and women in academia have not been spared. The challenges facing faculty, particularly women of color, represent long-standing gender gaps that will require countermeasures beyond institutional responses to the pandemic.

If you’re in a position to empower women at your institution, become a HERS partner school, and support the continued advancement of rising women leaders during this pandemic and onward.


This study warns that one in four women are considering downsizing their careers or leaving the workforce due to COVID-19. The pandemic is on the cusp of erasing the modest progress of the past six years that women have made towards greater equality at work.

Put this report on the desk of senior leadership and consider supporting the women in your lives. Read the full report for a framework for taking action.

SUPPORTING HERS
For nearly 50 years, HERS has made great strides concerning women's advancement in higher education and their respective institutions. However, there is much work to be done, and HERS plans on boldly moving onward to ensure greater diversity and equality in university and college leadership moving forward. To accomplish this, we need your support.

Please consider donating to HERS in 2020 so we can continue to expand our programs and support more women in 2021 and beyond.

If you would like to contribute in honor of Dr. Verna Fitszimmons, another alumna, or in honor of your cohort, you can do so by noting their name in the donation form.

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STAY CONNECTED

Stay in the know and follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter!

If you’re an alumna, join the HERS Network and make sure your contact info, title, and institution is up-to-date by completing this form. The exclusive benefits of this membership will be available for free for a limited time only.

If you would like to receive all communications about a specific program, please complete our ‘request info’ form and select your program of interest.

If you have questions about becoming a HERS partner or sponsor, please email C.J. Dempsey at cdempsey@hersnetwork.org.

We hope you stay safe and mentally strong during these unprecedented times. The institutions you work for need your leadership more than ever.