

A Recognition of Women Who Have Made a Difference

**Celebrating the
MI-ACE Network DWA honorees
and other notable women
who have made history!**

The Distinguished Woman In Higher Education Leadership Award

Established in 2001 to recognize women in higher education who have made a difference in the lives of all by:

- Mentoring **Women**
- Promoting **Women** in increasingly responsible positions
- Having a philosophy of helping **Women** beyond job duties
- Making a positive impact on **Women** in leadership beyond own campus
- Serving as a role model for **Women** by breaking gender barriers and attaining leadership positions

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award

2001



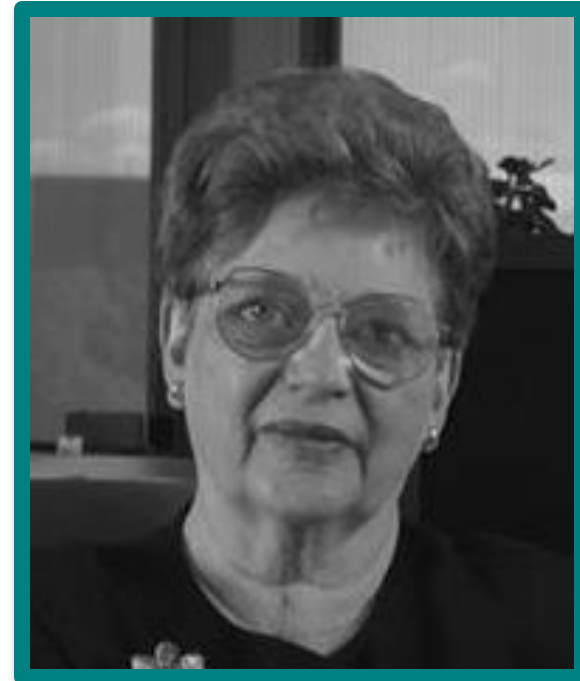
Nancy L. Barker
Vice President - Office of
the President
Northwood University

2002



Dr. Jacqueline L. Zeff
Director, Master of Liberal
Studies, Department of
English
University of Michigan - Flint

2003



Dr. Barbara C. Steidle
Senior Consultant to the
Provost
Michigan State University

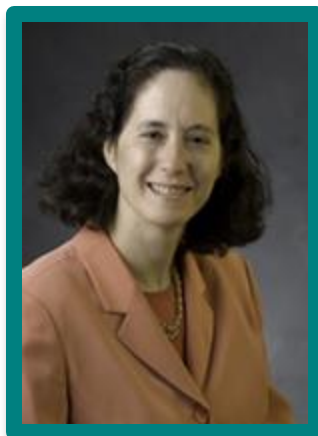
Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award

2004



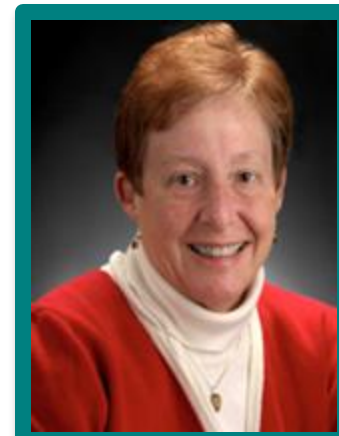
Dr. Barbara A. Mieras
Executive Vice President for
Advancement President
of the Foundation
Davenport University

2005



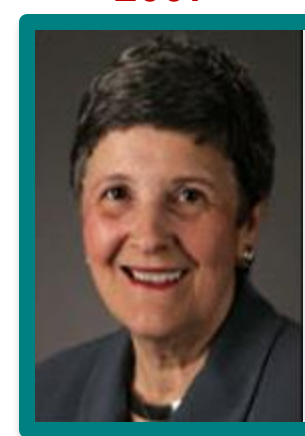
Dr. Elizabeth Simmons
Director of The Lyman Briggs
School of Science Professor,
Department of Physics
and Astronomy
Michigan State University

2006



Elizabeth Alexander M.D.
Professor, College of
Human Medicine
University Physician
Michigan State University

2007



Dr. Janet Pisaneschi
Provost & Vice President
for Academic Affairs
Western Michigan University

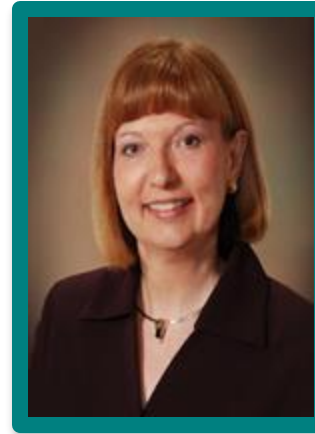
Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2008**



**Dr. Stephanie R.
Bulger**
Vice Chancellor for
Curriculum and
Learning
Technologies
**Wayne County
Community
College District**



**Dr. Nancy S.
Miller**
Dean for
Social
Sciences
Hope College



**Mary Jane
Thomson**
Professional
Occupations
Department Chair
& Instructor
**Alpena
Community
College**



**Dr. Claudia B.
Douglass**
Chair, Department of
Biology
**Central Michigan
University**

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award

2009

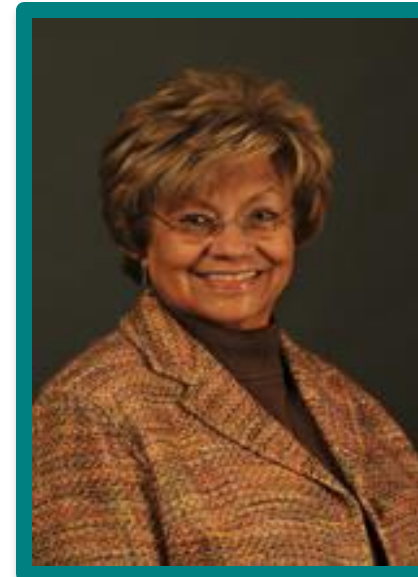


Dr. Gayle R. Davis
Provost & Vice President for
Academic Affairs
Grand Valley State University

2010



Kathleen M. Wilbur
Vice President for
Government Relations &
Public Affairs - Past
Interim President
Central Michigan University



Dr. Martha Warfield
Associate Vice President for
Diversity and Inclusion
Western Michigan University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award 2011



Dr. Gilda G. Gely
Provost & Executive Vice President of
Academic and Student Affairs
Grand Rapids Community College



Dr. Fatma Mili
Professor and Chair Department of
Computer Science & Engineering
Oakland University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2012**



Deborah Hautau
Biology Instructor
Alpena Community
College



Dr. Caroline J. Simon
Professor of Philosophy and
Interim Dean for Social
Sciences
Hope College



Marcy Weston
Executive Associate Director
of Athletics
Central Michigan University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award 2013



**Phyllis Vroom
Deputy President
Wayne State University**



**Laurie Chesley
Dean of Arts and
Sciences
Grand Rapids
Community College**

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2014**



Martha Pollack
Provost
University of Michigan



Lillian Frick
Vice President
Finance &
Administrative
Services
Mid Michigan
Community College



Rene Shingles
Professor &
Program Director
for Athletic Training
Central Michigan
University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2015**



**Roberta Teahen
Associate Provost of
Accreditation,
Assessment, Compliance
and Evaluation
Ferris State University**



**Margarita "Margaret"
Mosqueda
Vice President for Student &
Educational Services
Delta College**

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2016**



Patti Trepkowski
Associate Provost & Dean of
Instruction Support and
Interdisciplinary Studies
Grand Rapids Community
College



Margaret Crouch
Professor of History
and Philosophy
Eastern Michigan
University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award 2017



Christine Wallace
Vice President, Kettering Global
Campus Clinical Faculty, Department
of Business
Kettering University



Chief Theresa Stephens-Lock
Chief/Executive of
Public Safety
Mott Community College

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2018**



Cindy Allen
**Vice President of Administration
and Human Resources**
Jackson College



Olukemi Fadayomi
Professor of Biology
Ferris State University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award 2019



Ann E. Austin
Associate Dean for Research
Professor of Higher Education,
Adult and Lifelong Education
Michigan State University



Kay Keck
Vice President for Student
and Community Services
Kellogg Community College

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2020**



Rebecca Campbell
Professor of Psychology
Michigan State University



Katie Kiacz
Senior Academic Services
Specialist
Mott Community College



Carla Koretsky
Dean of Arts &
Sciences
Western Michigan
University

**Distinguished Woman in Higher Education
Leadership Award 2021**



Kim Dicaro
Deputy Chancellor
Wayne County
Community College District

- **Spearheaded the Chancellor's Transparency Initiative**
- **Developed and executed capital improvement plans for over \$200M with a focus on LEED Platinum Certification**
- **Co-chaired COVID Taskforce**
- **Served over 20 years as Chief Financial Officer for multi-campus district**

**Distinguished Woman in Higher Education
Leadership Award 2021**



**C. Michelle Piskulich
Interim Executive VP for
Academic Affairs and Provost
Oakland University**

- **Served as a founding member and conference chair of Women in Leadership**
- **Led focus groups and campus client survey to implement flexible work arrangements for employees**
- **Created opportunities for female employees to apply to a COVID19 resource fund for grants, including childcare expenses**

**Distinguished Woman in Higher Education
Leadership Award 2021**



Delois Leapheart
Professor of Business Law
Northwood University

- Created a nonprofit organization, Adoption Option, Inc. helping to place children whose parents have ad their parental rights terminated
- Recognized by the Midland County Historical Society as one of the most influential women in Michigan
- Inducted into the American Mock Trial Association coaches Hall of Fame after leading many teams to national success

**Distinguished Woman in Higher Education
Leadership Award 2022**



Keri Becker
Athletic Director
Grand Valley State University

- **Serving as the Athletic Director since 2016**
- **Serves on the Board of Directors of Women Leaders in College Sports**
- **Serves in leadership roles for both the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (GLIAC)**
- **Spearheaded several social justice initiatives addressing institutional and systemic racism and oppression, such as the Athletic Advisory Council on Racial Equity and Lakers Listen, a multi-year training program on sexual violence prevention for athletic staff and coaches, as well as a student athlete mental health platform.**

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award 2022



Dr. Teresa K. Woodruff
Provost and Executive Vice President for
Academic Affairs
Michigan State University

- Continues to lead efforts to ensure best practices for student mental health services at MSU.
- She and her team are at the forefront of the National Academies Action Collaboration on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education.
- Recognized expert in ovarian biology.
- She holds over 15 U.S. Patents and was elected to the National Academy of Inventors.
- Elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, National Academy of Medicine, and elected Fellow of the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2022**



Dr. Tonya Bailey
Chief Diversity Officer
Lansing Community College

- Advanced a chosen name and pronoun initiative from the Academic Senate through to fruition, allowing students and employees the ability to be seen and addressed in the manner authentic to their identity.
- Girls on a M.I.S.S.I.O.N, a training program that nurtures, empowers, and educates girls, ages 8-18 during a pivotal time in their lives.
- Founder of Women in Power (WIP) initiative, a 2-day empowerment summit for women & teens that attracts over 300 attendees each year.
- Creator/Host for the Equi-Tea Podcast

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2023**



Dr. Maureen Eke
Professional of English
Central Michigan University

- **FORMERLY – ASSOCIATE VICE PROVOST FOR DIVERSITY & INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION**
- **PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS & SOCIAL JUSTICE AS A TEENAGER DURING THE BIAFRA/NIGERIAN WAR – 1966-1970**
- **RESEARCH, PUBLICATIONS & ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS FOCUS ON WRITINGS OF BLACK WOMEN ACROSS THE AFRICAN DIASPORA.**
- **PRESENTATIONS ON WOMEN & GIRLS INCLUDE: UNITED NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**
- **CURRENT VICE CHAIR, NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION – WOMEN’S CAUCUS; MEMBER OF THE WOMEN’S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE & FREEDOM; ESTABLISHED – AFRICAN HUMANITARIAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH ORGANIZATION; CHAIR OF ISABELLA COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE; COMMISSIONER FOR CITY OF MT. PLEASANT**
- **RECOGNIZED AS CENTRAL MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY “WOMAN OF THE YEAR” AND RECEIVED SPECIAL AWARDS FOR HER SERVICE TO DIVERSITY & EQUITY**

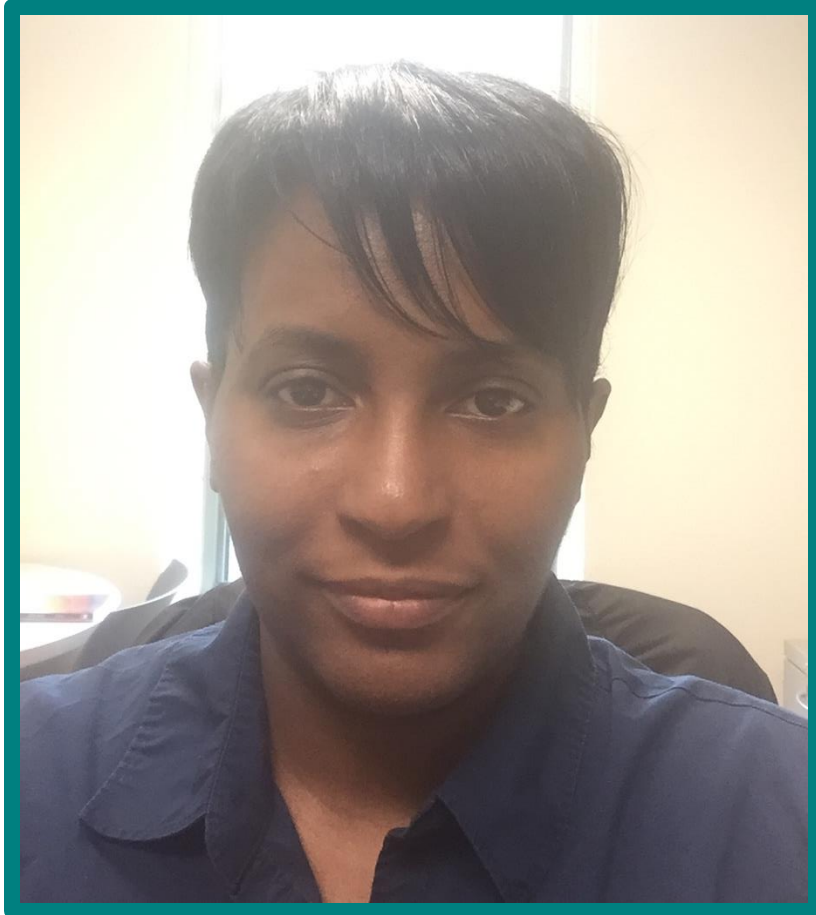
Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2023**



Dr. Michele Kelly
Dean, Liberal Arts & Sciences
Schoolcraft College

- First generation college student who earned her bachelor's degree in Communication from Central Michigan College
- Served as Assistant Dean of Liberal Arts & Sciences at Queens University of Charlotte and at Macomb Community College.
- Graduate of Leadership Macomb & Leadership Detroit
- Represented Macomb County on Art Authority
- Member of Impact100 Metro Detroit
- Serve as Board Trustee for Michigan Philharmonic
- Board Member – Farmington Community Library
- Revitalized & Leads MI-ACE Group at Schoolcraft College

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2023**



Dr. Barbara Patrick

Department Head & Profession, Political Sciences /
Director of Civil Rights & Social Justice Center
Eastern Michigan University

- Established relationships between EMU and Southern HBCU's, resulting in a bridge program to EMU Graduate Studies with ongoing working relationships between the institutions.
- Organizing a roundtable discussion with Police Chiefs and Administrators serving 15 majority-minority or economically vulnerable cities in Southeast Michigan.
- Organized and led interdisciplinary faculty & student team to create a 3-part video series
- Entitled: "Creating a Culture of Belonging at EMU"
- Served on over 35 university & departmental committees focused on advancing mentorship programs for women-identified, culturally-vulnerable students/faculty/staff.
- Catalyst for Policy Change in areas of
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging & Justice within higher education.
- Bachelor of Science - Political Science – Rust College
- Master's Degree and Ph.D. in Public Policy & Administration – Mississippi State University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2023**



Dr. Tara McCrackin
President, Kendall College of
Art & Design / Vice President
Ferris State University

- Board Member -International Interior Design Association & President of the Michigan Chapter 2017-2019
- National Council for Interior Design Qualification Campion Program
- Course Reviewer & Course Auditor for the Interior Design Continuing Education Council, Inc.
- ArtPrize Board of Directors
- Mel Trotter Art & Experience Planning Committee
- Jim Crow Museum Expansion Project Cabinet
- Leadership Grand Rapids Graduate 2022
- Awarded the 2023 Helen Gillespie Ferris Distinguished Leader Award By Ferris Women's Network of FSU
- Bachelor of Arts in Art Education from Western Michigan University
- Bachelor of Fine Arts in Interior Design – Kendall College of Art & Design
- Masters in Education in Adult & Higher Education – Grand Valley State University

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2024**



Dr. Tonya Forbes
Vice President, Instruction
Kellogg Community College

- More than 30 years of experience in community college instruction, beginning her career as a chemistry instructor
- Received the Excellence Teaching & Innovation of the Year Awards at Wake Technical Community College, as well as recognition from the American Businesswomen's Association (ABWA) in Raleigh, NC
- Certifications in Organizational Inclusion & Diversity and has worked with the Higher Learning Commission Assessment Academy

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award 2024



Dr. Madonna Jackson
Academic Dean, Technology Division
Mott Community College

- Served as the Inaugural President of the Mott Community College Chapter of the American Association for Women in Community Colleges which gained national recognition for its exemplary programs
- Serves as Vice President for Professional Development for the National AAWCC and created the 2024 “Day of Dialogue” with the theme of “Women Who Advocate for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.”
- Devotes own time to mentoring students in various clubs and organizations such as the Black Student Union and helped support the National Technological Honor Society at Mott Community College

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2024**



Dr. Candy McCorkle
Vice President, Diversity & Inclusion
Western Michigan University

- Established the WMU Racial Justice Advisory Committee
- Nurtured alliances with external groups such as the YWCA, Kalamazoo Promise, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, 4-H, & Future Farmers of America to create a more inclusive society
- Served as the Chair of the Chief Diversity Officers Committee of the Michigan Association of State Universities; Boards of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education; and serving on the Editorial Board for the Malaysian Online Journal of Counseling, and PSI CHI (National Honor Society for Psychology)

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2024**



Dr. Amy McGinnis
**Director of the Student Engagement &
Professional Development Hub,
College of Business Administration**
Central Michigan University

- Recognized at the State and National levels by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM); even serving as a subject matter expert nationally for the certification exam creation
- Received the HR Unite! Education Excellence Award in 2023, nomination for '23 MISHRM Lifetime Achievement Award, the '13 CUPA-HR Inclusion Cultivates Excellence Award, and the Top Young Trainer (Top 40 under 40 Nationally) by Training Magazine.
- Served from 2009-2014 as a Co-Institutional Representative for the MI-ACE Network

**Distinguished Woman in Higher Education
Leadership Award 2025**



**Sophia Brewer, M.L.I.S
Serials and Collection
Development Librarian**

Grand Rapids Community College

- **Worked at the Grand Rapids Public Library for 23 years**
- **Serves as a Board Member on the Michigan Library Association, City of Grand Rapids Civilian Appeals Board, and Greater Grand Rapids Women's History Council. As well as a Library Commissioner for the City of Grand Rapids Board of Library Commissioners from 2015-2022**
- **A Freelance Columnist for the Grand Rapids Times**
- **Received her BS in Elementary Education from Jackson State University in MS and her Master's in Library and Information Science from Wayne State University in Detroit**

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award 2025



Dr. Christine Jackson
**Vice Provost, Partnerships &
Workforce**
Wayne State University

- Served as Chair of the Management Department in the Mike Ilitch School of Business
- Leads initiatives to strengthen academic partnerships, workforce development, and global engagement
- Contributed to initiatives such as the Detroit Police Department Leadership Academy, the Academy Leadership Academy (ALA), Gender Equity Advances Retention in STEM (GEARS), the Mandela Fellowship Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), and the Quality Assurance & Improvement Council.
- An active member of Wayne Women LEAD, WSU's Chapter of the MI-ACE Women's Network

Distinguished Woman in Higher Education Leadership Award **2025**



Sr. Nancy Marie Jamrox
Co-Director of the Center for Catholic
Studies & Interfaith Dialogue
Madonna University

- **Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Felix (CSSF)**
- **A provincial councilor for the Felician Sisters Our Lady of Hope Province**
- **After 20 years of teaching, she was appointed as Dean of Students at then Madonna College, and then Vice President for Student Services.**
- **Served in leadership roles for the Felician Sisters, and is active on several boards, including Angela Hospice, Marywood Nursing Care Center, Deo Gratias Ministries, and Orchard Lake Schools Board of Regents**