

PRESS RELEASE

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Barbara A. Knuth Receives Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education

Washington, DC – The Board of Directors of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) has announced that Dr. Barbara A. Knuth, dean of The Graduate School at Cornell University, is the 2019 recipient of the Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education. Knuth received the honor at an awards ceremony held during the CGS 59th Annual Meeting in Nashville, TN.

For her invaluable contributions to the Cornell University graduate community, Dr. Knuth becomes the fourth Debra W. Stewart Award recipient. A passionate advocate for graduate education, Dr. Knuth implemented an array of student and program assessment initiatives to foster student success and continual academic program improvement including student and alumni surveys and data transparency dashboards.

During her years as dean, Knuth secured external resources to improve graduate education through multiple awards from NSF, CGS, Teagle, etc. She has fostered an inclusive and holistic approach to graduate student success through supporting programs including *My Voice My Story* facilitated discussions, Future Professors Institute, NextGen Professors, and Careers Beyond Academia, and is Co-PI on Cornell's McNair program and PI on Cornell's AGEP award.

Knuth has been involved in many CGS projects, including Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement, Enhancing Student Financial Education and Literacy, and Preparing Future Faculty. She served on the Board of Directors of the Council of Graduate Schools, the GRE Board, the Executive Committee of the Association of Graduate Schools of the Association of American Universities (AAU), the AAU's PhD Education Initiative Advisory Board, and on the Steering Committee for the Coalition for Next Generation Life Science.

"Barb's colleagues in the higher education community recognize, as I do, her deep commitment to graduate education and her many leadership skills, including the ability to analyze and bring clarity to complex issues, to inspire staff and students, and to find creative ways to address problems," said Cornell University Provost Michael I. Kotlikoff. "Dr. Knuth has been an extraordinarily effective leader for the Graduate School, improving accountability for student outcomes and graduate programs, increasing diversity and improving inclusion, and tirelessly advocating on key issues of most concern to graduate education, including immigration reform, financial aid, research support and healthcare coverage. Our university is indebted to Barb for her outstanding service."

"Barb's dedication and commitment to bettering the graduate school community is evidenced in many ways including the implementation of a suite of graduate student alumni surveys designed to inform program improvement and transparency regarding graduate outcomes," said Dr. Christopher Sindt, provost of Lewis University and chair of the Council's Board of Directors. In addition, Sindt noted that "Barb is thoughtful, creative, and deeply committed to graduate education, both at the level of federal policy and at the level of each individual student's welfare and success."

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The award was created in 2016 by the CGS Board of Directors to recognize outstanding leadership in graduate education, and particularly those leadership qualities exemplified by the Council's fifth President, Debra W. Stewart. The selection committee considers nominees with a strong reputation for ethics and integrity, a history of active participation in the graduate community, and a record of strategic vision and actions resulting in meaningful impacts. Areas of special consideration include evidence-based innovation, program development, diversity and inclusion, student learning and career outcomes, personnel management, policy advocacy in support of graduate education and research, and fiscal responsibility.

Nominees for the award must be a current senior, graduate dean at a CGS member institution (Regular or Associate) and cannot be an active member of the CGS Board of Directors. Nominations are made by CGS member institutions and are reviewed by a selection committee of former graduate deans in the CGS community. The winner receives a \$4,000 prize to support continuing innovations at the awardee's institution.

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The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.