



Touro College

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New Book Examines Glass Ceiling in Higher Education Leadership Posts

Research Study Aims to Increase Women Presidents at Nation's Colleges and Universities

New York, N.Y. – August 10, 2010 – At a time when women lead only 24 percent of American colleges and universities, a new book written on the subject aims to increase that number and examines how women learn to lead, how they lead, and the rewards and challenges they face in academia.

In her new book, *Learning Leadership: Women Presidents of Colleges and Universities: The Perceptions of Women College Presidents as to How They Learned to Lead* (March 2010, LAP Lambert Academic Publishers), Donne G. Kampel, Ed.D., the associate dean of faculty for undergraduate education and the Division of Graduate Studies at Touro College, shares through personal interviews the diverse factors that influence female academics and eventually shape their chosen career paths.

“During the interviews, the presidents spoke candidly about early learning and family influence, formal education, career intentions and pathways to their presidencies,” said Dean Kampel. “They also spoke of training programs, the influence of role models and mentors, and obstacles to success.”

As part of her research, Kampel interviewed 12 female presidents of both four-year colleges and research universities on the condition of anonymity. In order to discover how these women learned to lead, Kampel said she explored “the perceptions of women leaders” and how each acquired the specific skills necessary to lead a college or university.

“As a foundation for the study, my review of the literature covered topics such as generic theories of leadership, academic leadership, and women as leaders,” said Kampel.

Kampel said when her research revealed that, in 2002, only 21 percent of all college and university presidents were women, she felt compelled to investigate, among other things, ways to significantly increase that number.

Kampel's study not only investigated important aspects of how women learned to lead, it "provided a foundation for further research into such areas as the leadership pipeline and equality of opportunity for women in academia in the 21st century," she said.

Interestingly, as Kampel notes, 54 percent of the women interviewed attended a single-sex school (either elementary/secondary or college) and cited "early mentoring" experiences, more opportunities for participation and leadership and "can-do philosophies" as key elements of their success. All but one president described the importance of role models and mentors in shaping their experiences.

In addition, all the women presidents described their leadership styles as different from their male counterparts. Using the words "consensus-building," "collaborative working relationships" and "positive enforcement" to describe their leadership styles, the female presidents' descriptions suggested an inclusive approach to leadership.

While current statistics indicate that more women are leading colleges and universities today than back in 1986, when only 9.5 percent of college presidents were women, Kampel said today's numbers are not very impressive when one considers that women represent 58 to 60 percent of undergraduate students at American colleges and universities.

"While somewhat better," Kampel noted, "it is still not equitable."



Associate Dean of Faculty Donne Kampel has authored a new book examining the glass ceiling in higher education leadership positions.

Touro is a system of Jewish-sponsored non-profit institutions of higher and professional education. Touro College was established in 1971 primarily to enrich the Jewish heritage, and to serve the larger American community. More than 18,000 students are currently enrolled in its various schools and divisions. Touro College has branch campuses, locations and instructional sites in the New York area, as well as branch campuses and programs in Berlin, Paris, Jerusalem, Moscow, and Florida. Touro University California and its Nevada branch campus, as well as Touro College Los Angeles, are separately accredited institutions governed in common by the same Board of Trustees as Touro College. For further information on Touro College, please go to: <http://www.touro.edu/media/>.

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