Message from the State Chair

We never could have predicted that the 2020 academic year would end with colleges and universities shuttered across the globe due to a public health pandemic. Nor could we have foreseen the uprisings against the police and the justice system for their brutal and fatal acts against Black men and women. We are experiencing and witnessing unprecedented change, hopefully, change toward greater equity for those who have lived their lives as marginalized, oppressed, overlooked, underrepresented, disrespected, harassed and discriminated against people.

The NC ACE Network aims to address our share of these issues in higher education leadership. We see our role as providing a space for women-identified individuals, and those who are gender non-binary, to build community, find support, obtain skills, and expand their networks to successfully take on increased responsibilities and leadership roles at colleges and universities across the state of NC. We will do our part to build and contribute to a more diverse and better prepared cadre of higher education leaders who welcome difference, embrace it, and celebrate. We are striving to be the change we wish to see in NC higher education and beyond. We hope you will join us.

Gloria D. Thomas, PhD
Recent Activities of the NC ACE Network

Meet & Greet at UNC-Chapel Hill

In November, 2019, we hosted our first professional development event, in collaboration with the UNC System Office under the leadership of Lynn Duffy, Senior Associate Vice President for Leadership and Talent Acquisition. Lynn moderated the women's leadership panel. Panel Participants (pictured on the cover page) included:

- Jennifer Haygood, Chief of Staff/Executive Vice President, NC Community College System Office
- Dr. Tonya Smith-Jackson, Sr. Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, North Carolina A&T State University
- Dr. Kim van Nort, Sr. Vice President for Academic Affairs and Chief Academic Officer, University of North Carolina System Office
- Anna Wu, Associate Vice Chancellor for Facilities Services, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Meet & Greet by the Numbers

- 55 women in attendance
- 11 public/private/independent universities represented
- 2 from community colleges
- 1 from a search firm

Executive Board Activities

The NC ACE Network Executive Board has been engaged regularly in ongoing activities and meetings since the Network's incorporation in 2018. Some highlights include:

- Several Board members presented at the Empowered to Lead: Women in Higher Education 2nd Annual Leadership Conference held at North Carolina A&T State University, May 2019
- Board members also offered a professional development session for BRIDGES, a women’s leadership program at UNC Chapel Hill, October 2019
- The group met for its annual Executive Board planning retreat at Elon University, December 2019.

Planning Professional Development Events

Members of the Executive Board meet monthly to plan professional development opportunities for women faculty and professional staff at our member institutions. The Network’s first professional development conference, which was scheduled for June 12th, had to be cancelled due to the global coronavirus pandemic. We look forward to offering virtual programming beginning this summer.
Planning Professional Development Events, continued...

The “Women Blazing Trails” professional development conference that was planned for June 2020, will be rescheduled for Fall 2020. Look forward to our featured keynote speaker: Dr. Tonya Smith-Jackson, and the presentation of the NC ACE Network’s Trailblazer Award to a female-identified leader in North Carolina higher education.

Institutional Membership Drive & Registered Institutional Members

The NC ACE Network rolled out its institutional membership drive in the Summer of 2019. All 2-year and 4-year accredited colleges and universities were sent a letter via email addressed to the president/chancellor and provost/chief academic officer. We know how such communications often get buried in inboxes, so if you are interested in having your college or university become a member, please let us know if you are willing to help bring this great networking and professional development opportunity to the attention of your campus' leadership.

To date, a total of 14 institutions have registered to become members. To review details about the benefits of institutional membership, go to ncacewomensnetwork.org/membership, and feel free to share this link with others who can advocate for your campus to become an institutional member of the NC ACE Network.

Registered Institutional Members

- Appalachian State University
- East Carolina University
- Elizabeth City State University
- Elon University
- Louisburg College
- North Carolina State University
- Piedmont Community College
- University of North Carolina at Asheville
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- University of North Carolina at Charlotte
- University of North Carolina at Greensboro
- Western Carolina University
- Wake Forest University
- William Peace University
NC ACE Network
Executive Board Members
The Executive Board is comprised of faculty and professional staff from campuses all across the state. For a bios and photos of current Board members, go to www.ncacewomensnetwork.org/about-us/board-leadership/

How to Get Involved with the 
NC ACE Network
To get involved with the NC ACE Network, your institution must be a member. Membership fees are tiered based on student enrollments, starting at $100 for institutions with less than 1,000 students to $750 for institutions with 20,000 or more students. Once your institution registers to become a member, you might consider serving in many ways:
- As your college/university's Institutional Representative;
- As a member of a planning committee;
- As a presenter to offer your expertise at a professional development events.

To learn more about ways to engage, go to our website at www.ncacewomensnetwork.org or send an email to info@ncacewomensnetwork.org.
Dr. Gores spent six years as the President of Southwest Minnesota State University, where she was the first woman president. Previous roles include Interim President at Winona State University; Vice President at Winona State University; Vice President at Randolph-Macon Woman’s College (now Randolph College); Dean at Cornish College of the Arts; and a directorship at Willamette University College of Law.

Drawing on her experience as a leader in crisis management, Dr. Gores is the author of “Courage, Compassion, Communication,” a chapter for the book Managing the Unthinkable: Crisis Preparation and Response for Campus Leaders. She was a featured presenter at the inaugural institute on Crisis Leadership in Higher Education at Harvard University. In addition, she has authored case studies and served as a guest lecturer for graduate classes in Administration and Leadership in Higher Education at the University of Minnesota. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Washington; her master’s degree from Colorado State University; and her bachelor’s degree from North Dakota State University. Connie resides in the Raleigh-Durham area of North Carolina, where she is happy to be closer to her daughters and families, including her three wonderful grandchildren. She is also a Partner with Success Associates, where she focuses on executive coaching and consulting.