

MI-ACE Women's Network Conference 2020:

Advancing Women in Higher Education

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Michigan

MARY EVANS SIAS OPENING KEYNOTE SPEAKER AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



Dr. Mary Evans Sias currently serves as the director of the Millennium Leadership Initiative (MLI) and assistant to the president of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. A nationally known leader, an advocate for students and higher education, and an involved community leader, Sias served as senior vice president for student affairs and external relations at the University of Texas at Dallas for ten years.

She went on to serve as president of Kentucky State University from 2004-2014.

As a university president, Sias brought a broad range of administrative experiences and valuable state and national perspectives on higher education issues and policies. She chaired the boards of two of the big six national organizations in higher education: The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU). Her consulting work with colleges and universities focuses on strategic planning, fundraising, leadership assessment and development, organization, and board support and development, equity and diversity training and related issues, financial assessment and evaluation, administrative and organizational evaluation and other areas.

A native of Jackson, Mississippi, Sias received her Bachelor of Science in Sociology from Tougaloo College (Miss.) and her Master of Science degree and Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. She also holds an M.B.A. from Abilene Christian University (Texas) and an honorary doctorate in public service from Central Michigan University.

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PHILOMENA V. MANTELLA PRESIDENTIAL KEYNOTE SPEAKER GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

Philomena V. Mantella is one of higher education's leading entrepreneurs. She is a recognized leader in strategic thinking, market dynamics, and innovation in the way education is delivered. Her innovative drive comes from more than 30 years in higher education administration. She has done path-breaking work while serving as an officer at public and private universities in New York, New Jersey, Michigan and Massachusetts.



She is the fifth president of Grand Valley State University, beginning her tenure July 1, 2019.

Mantella has a Ph.D. in college and university administration from Michigan State University and master's and bachelor's degrees in social work from Syracuse University. She spent the last 18 years at Northeastern University as Senior Vice President of Enrollment and Student Life and the chief executive officer of the Lifelong Learning Network.

Mantella is known as a change agent and has had an integral role in expanding global markets and lifelong learning efforts. She is a proven leader in innovation in digital learning and enrollment management.

Her comprehensive understanding of both sides of the educational market—learners and employers—has resulted in success for students and has increased the economic vitality of the markets served.

She is committed to ensuring institutional integrity and building consensus for the mission and the noble cause of education.

Her strong student-centered philosophy, coupled with her operational expertise and strong vision for the future of education, positions her perfectly to lead Grand Valley State University into its seventh decade.

Mantella has been married for 40 years to attorney Robert H. Avery and has three sons and four grandchildren.

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DEANNA BURT CLOSING KEYNOTE SPEAKER SOUTH CENTRAL COLLEGE



Dr. DeAnna R. Burt has over 18 years of experience supporting students, faculty, and staff in a higher education setting, most recently as the vice president of academic affairs for Baker College of Muskegon, Michigan.

She joined Baker College in 1999 where she served in various campus and system roles as faculty, department chair, dean, system department coordinator, chief academic officer, and vice president of academics affairs, as a member of the president's cabinet until her honorable departure in March 2018. She is known for her exemplary leadership of a combination of academic and student affairs functions of the operation. Her contributions bear evidence throughout the community and the Baker College System where she served on nearly all key campus and System strategic initiatives with a positive impact on student access, achievement, and completion, as well as operational efficiencies. Prior to joining Baker College, Dr. Burt was employed as the information technology manager with a Michigan-based affiliate of an international chemical manufacturer and also served in the roles of computer programmer and systems analyst for a major Midwest retailer. But, it was in the role of adjunct faculty for a community college that Dr. Burt discovered her vocation as an educator, which ultimately guided her to opportunities for full-time teaching and progressive advancement in the role of administrator where she continues to leverage her passion and influence to shape higher education policy and practice.

A community servant, Dr. Burt works tirelessly for advancement among all in the areas of diversity and inclusion, education, philanthropy, socioeconomic equality, and workforce development at the local, state, and national levels. Prior to coming to South Central College, she served as a trustee for the Muskegon County Community Foundation, which was named one of the nation's Top 100 Largest Community Foundations. As a trustee for the Foundation, she was appointed as an executive board member, strategic leadership committee member, and chairperson of the grant distribution committee, which determines the allocation of monetary resources throughout the community. Dr. Burt also served as a member of the executive board for the Michigan American Council on Education (MI-ACE), an affiliate of the nationally recognized American Council on Education (ACE) with notable contributions as chair of the membership (fundraising) committee, and contributions also to its subcommittees for public relations and public policy in higher education.

Dr. Burt is often characterized as an authentic, collegial, dynamic, inspiring, process-oriented, and visionary leader, a woman of integrity who is passionate about education. She is a relationship-builder. Dr. Burt studied in Mexico, has received a host of awards and recognitions, and speaks publicly in various personal and professional capacities. Academically, Dr. Burt holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Leadership, Research and Technology (Western Michigan University), which earned her international recognition as a 2008-2009 ASHE/Lumina Fellow "for innovative scholarship examining social, institutional, and policy barriers to opportunity and student success." Her research interests include academic advising strategies in higher education, change management, learning communities, open-enrollment institutions, student persistence and retention, and support for underrepresented and under-served populations including minorities and those with learning disabilities. Dr. Burt also holds a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Business Administration in Computer Information Systems with minors in business and religion, both from Western Michigan University where she is a graduate of the Lee Honors College.