

Mercy College Selects 13th President

Susan L. Parish, Ph.D., M.S.W.



Photo by John Raiola

The Mercy College Board of Trustees has elected Susan L. Parish, Ph.D., M.S.W. the 13th president of the College. Currently Dean of the College of Health Professions and Sentara Professor of Health Administration at Virginia Commonwealth University, Parish will join Mercy College as President on July 1, 2023. The selection of Parish follows a comprehensive search for a leader to succeed President Timothy L. Hall, who announced he will retire on June 30, 2023.

“Dr. Parish’s passion for equity, access and inclusion is a hallmark of her professional career, making her the right person to lead Mercy College,” said Joe Gantz, chairman of the Mercy College Board of Trustees. “I look forward to working with Dr. Parish and am confident that she will continue to build upon Mercy College’s strong foundations.”

Under Parish’s leadership, the College of Health Professions at VCU experienced significant increases in graduate and undergraduate enrollment, and research funding. The College also launched an innovative liberal arts undergraduate degree in Health Services in 2020 and developed new certificate programs and graduate concentrations. Prior to joining VCU, she served as dean of Bouvé College of Health Sciences at Northeastern University.

Parish also has a proven track-record in fundraising. At Northeastern and VCU, she partnered with a range of individual donors and foundations to create new scholarship funds, a student emergency fund, and support for faculty, health innovation, and teaching and research labs.

Over the course of her career, Parish has been a prolific researcher primarily in the area of health disparities for people with disabilities and has garnered more than \$13

million in external research funding. She has received distinctions for her teaching, mentoring and research, including: “Research Matters!” Distinguished Research Award, Arc of the United States (2009), Advocate Hero, Exceptional Parent Magazine (2021), Lifetime Achievement Award, American Public Health Association Disability Section (2021) and Research Award, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (2019).

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“I am deeply committed to Mercy’s mission of delivering exceptional educational experiences that enable students to achieve their academic and career aspirations. I look forward to working collaboratively with faculty and staff to achieve this important goal.”

Parish earned her B.A. in English Literature and M.S.W. from Rutgers University. She earned her Ph.D. in Public Health from the University of Illinois at Chicago and completed a National Institutes of Health-funded postdoctoral fellowship at the Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

The Mercy Community looks forward to welcoming Dr. Parish this summer.