



Mildred García

President

American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)

Dr. Mildred García assumed the presidency of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) on January 22, 2018. As AASCU's president, Dr. García is an advocate for public higher education at the national level, working to influence federal policy and regulations on behalf of member colleges and universities; serving as a resource to presidents and chancellors as they address state policy and emerging campus issues; developing collaborative partnerships and initiatives that advance public higher education; directing a strategic agenda that focuses on public college and university leadership for the 21st century; and providing professional development opportunities for presidents, chancellors, and their spouses. She is the first Latina to lead one of the six presidentially based higher education associations in Washington, D.C.

As a university president, Dr. García was an active member of AASCU, including chairing the AASCU Council of State Representatives; serving on the AASCU Board of Directors; chairing the Committee on International Education; serving as a Millennium Leadership Initiative Institute mentor; and delivering the Marie McDemmond Lecture and the President-to-Presidents lecture, a signal honor given by the AASCU Board of Directors to one of their colleagues.

Prior to joining AASCU, Dr. García served as the president of California State University, Fullerton—the largest university in the CSU, serving more than 40,000 students and having an operating budget of almost half-a-billion dollars. Under her leadership, the university saw a 30 percent improvement in six-year graduation rates and a 65 percent improvement in four-year graduation rates for first-time freshmen—both university records; the achievement gap was eliminated for transfer students and cut in half for first-time freshmen; and annual gift commitments nearly tripled (from \$8.5 million to \$22 million). In 2016, for the first time in history, *U.S. News & World Report* heralded the institution as a top "national university." The institution is now number one in California and second in the nation in awarding bachelor's degrees to Hispanics, as well as sixth in the nation in graduating students of color.

President García previously served as president of CSU Dominguez Hills where, as the first Latina president in the largest system of public higher education in the country, she eliminated a structural deficit of \$2.8 million; increased media placement by 192 percent; received the highest reaccreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges; exceeded enrollment targets not met previously for eight years; increased donor giving by 140 percent; and increased retention rates for first-time full-time freshmen by 10 percent.

Before her arrival in the CSU, President García served as the CEO of Berkeley College where she was the first system-wide president and first Latina president for all six campuses. In her six-year tenure, she increased enrollment by 25 percent; established professional advisory boards for academic programs, and opened a new campus in Newark, N.J.

She has held both academic and senior-level positions at several universities nationwide (including Arizona State University, Columbia University, Penn State University, Montclair State University, and The City University of New York). Dr. García is a much sought-after speaker at national and international conferences, as well as an academic researcher who has published numerous academic journal articles and contributed to multiple books, most recently, *Latinx/a/os in Higher Education: Exploring Identity, Pathways, and Success* (NASPA, 2018) and *Leading Colleges and Universities* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018).

A recipient of myriad awards, Dr. García was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve on several advisory boards, including the President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanics, and by the U.S. Secretary of Education to serve on the Committee on Measures of Student Success. She presently sits on a variety of local and national boards, including the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, the National Survey of Student Engagement, and the Educational Testing Service. Most recently, she was honored by the Fulbright Commission Franco-Américaine, in Paris, France, where she delivered a keynote address at the Commission's 70th anniversary annual meeting.

A first-generation college student, Dr. García earned a Doctor of Education degree and a M.A. in higher education administration from Teachers College, Columbia University; a M.A. in Business Education/Higher Education from New York University; a B.S. in business education from Baruch College, City University of New York; and an A.A.S. from New York City Community College.