President’s Biography

Mary Jane Saunders, Ph.D., President, Florida Atlantic University

President Mary Jane Saunders was named Florida Atlantic University’s sixth President by unanimous vote of the FAU Board of Trustees on March 3, 2010. She began her term of service on June 7, 2010.

Prior to her arrival at FAU, Dr. Saunders was Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs at Cleveland State University, where she also was founding Dean of the College of Science, Director of the Biomedical and Health Institute, and a Professor in the Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences.

Her professional background also includes service at the National Science Foundation, the University of South Florida, Louisiana State University and the University of Georgia. She is an award-winning cell biology researcher, educator and academic leader who is known nationally for her commitment to public higher education.

A native of Worcester, Massachusetts, Dr. Saunders holds a B.S. in Biology from Boston University and both an M.S. and a Ph.D. in Botany from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Dr. Saunders is married to Dr. George Newkome, a distinguished polymer science and chemistry research professor.
J. David Armstrong, Jr.
President, Broward College President

J. David Armstrong, Jr. brings over two decades of experience as a leader in the Florida Community College System that is now the Florida College System. He was state chancellor when the community colleges were first approved to offer baccalaureate degrees and he now serves as President of Broward College. FAU and BC share a campus in Davie, Florida that has been praised by many as the model for community college and university collaboration. President Armstrong is a strong supporter of FAU’s Higher Education Leadership program by providing experiential campus-based opportunities for graduate students through internships, field projects and action research.

President Armstrong’s community college career began at Pensacola Junior College, where he worked in public affairs and government relations as well as with faculty and students as adviser to the student journalism class and newspaper. He left the college to enter into education policy and advocacy in Tallahassee. From 1988-1991, he served as Education Policy Director of the Division of Community Colleges, and then moved to the position of Assistant Executive Director, Florida Community College System in 1992. From there he became Acting Executive Director and then Executive Director of the Florida Community College System where he remained until July 2001. First as Interim Chancellor of the Community College System in 2001, he quickly moved to the position of Chancellor of the system until he was appointed to the presidency of BCC.

As Chancellor, President Armstrong increased access to postsecondary education, secured equitable funding for community colleges from the Florida Legislature and formed numerous partnerships with major business organizations such as Enterprise Florida, Workforce Florida and the Florida Chamber of Commerce. Under his leadership, Florida’s community colleges began developing bachelor’s degree programs targeted to high-demand, critical shortage areas in Florida’s workforce. A native of Alabama, Armstrong earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in social science from the University of Montevallo (Alabama) and Master of Management Science degree from Troy State University (now Troy University). He has completed the coursework and comprehensive examination in Florida State University’s High Education Leadership doctoral program, where he focused on higher education and organizational effectiveness.
Deborah L. Floyd, Ed.D.
Professor of Higher Education
Department of Educational Leadership and Research Methodology
College of Education, FAU

Professor Deborah L. Floyd joined FAU in 2001 after 26 years of service in higher education in Texas, Iowa, Virginia and Kentucky. Her administrative career has included service as a dean and vice president of student affairs, a community college president and a special assistant to a university chancellor. She also served as a Senior Fellow with the Association of American Colleges and Universities, the Board of Directors of the American Association of Community Colleges, Secretary of the American College Personnel Association and is a Past-President of the Council for the Study of Community Colleges.

At FAU, Dr. Floyd currently serves as a University Faculty Senator, Chair of the College of Education Graduate Programs Committee, Chair of the University Graduate Programs Committee, Member of the University Graduate Council and Program Leader for the Higher Education Leadership Program.

Dr. Floyd has received numerous awards including the 2010 Distinguished Service Award from the Council for the Study of Community Colleges, the 2005 Contributions to Knowledge Award from the Community College Baccalaureate Association and the FAU College of Education’s 2005 Distinguished Teacher of the Year Award. She received the first Women in Higher Education Achievement Award from the National Panhellenic Association in 1999.

Dr. Floyd’s publications include over 50 articles, books and chapters on various higher education topics such as roles and challenges of presidents; distance learning; student health, student affairs and student development programs; continuing and workforce education; and the community college baccalaureate. Her most recent book, The Community College Baccalaureate: Emerging Trends and Policy Issues is the only book published about this movement. She has published numerous other articles about shifts in higher education including a 2009 paper about the community college baccalaureate that was sponsored by the United States Department of Education’s Office of Adult and Vocational Education for their National Community College Symposium. Research in progress includes a book and manuscripts about applied and workforce baccalaureates, the role of graduate education in this movement, and leadership challenges of presidents.

Dr. Floyd earned her Doctor of Education degree in 1979 from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), specializing in higher education and community colleges. Her 1975 and 1973 masters and bachelor’s degrees were awarded by Texas A & M University - Commerce in Student Affairs and English, respectively. She is a 1999 graduate of Harvard University’s Institute for Educational Management.
George L. Hanbury, II, Ph.D.
President/COO, Nova Southeastern University

Dr. Hanbury became the President/COO of Nova Southeastern University on January 1, 2010. Before his appointment he held the position of Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for the last twelve years. President Hanbury has been a key contributor to Nova Southeastern University's growth. He also teaches courses in Leadership, Organizational Development, Organizational Theory, Public Policy Analysis, Public Administration, Budgeting and Finance, and Comparative Government and Economics.

Prior to his appointment President Hanbury enjoyed a long career in municipal administration working over thirty years as the City Manager of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Portsmouth, Virginia, and Virginia Beach, Virginia. While City Manager of Fort Lauderdale, from 1990 to 1998, President Hanbury helped develop project Riverwalk, the Las Olas area, and the beautification efforts of Fort Lauderdale’s public beachfront. He also held the position of Assistant City Manager in the cities of Norfolk and Virginia Beach, Virginia.

President Hanbury has been recognized for his leadership by service organizations, city councils and commissions, and chambers of commerce across the nation and has been invited to lecture and speak to national associations and groups. His many awards and honors include: Riverwalk Trust Tribute 2009 Honoree, Leadership Broward Foundation 2008 Honoree, SEFLIN Horizon Award 2006, Rotary Club of Davie-Cooper City, 2006 Man of the Year, American Diabetes Association Valor Award Recipient 2005, Listed Who’s Who in America from 1978 to the present, The 2000 BCCMA Leadership Award, Exemplary Employee of the City of Fort Lauderdale for 2000, Distinguished Alumni of Old Dominion University for 1997, Outstanding Young Man of America 1977, Outstanding Young Man of Virginia in 1976, and Outstanding Young Man of Virginia Beach in 1975.

He currently volunteers his time to the following civic activities as a member of the Board of the following organizations: Florida Lambda Rail Board of Directors, Museum of Art Fort Lauderdale / Nova Southeastern University (Board of Directors), Library Foundation of Broward County (Board of Directors), and the Finance Committee of the First United Methodist Church of Ft. Lauderdale.

He is a proud FAU alumnus, having received his Doctor of Philosophy in Public Administration at Florida Atlantic University in 1971. He earned a Master's degree in Public Administration from Old Dominion University in Virginia, and his Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with a major in Public Administration from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). He has been certified by the Senior Executive Institute at the University of Virginia and was inducted into Pi Alpha Alpha, the national honor society for the field of public affairs and public administration.
Sherry Plymale, Trustee, FAU

Trustee Sherry Plymale, of Palm City, Florida, is a charter member of the FAU Board of Trustees and a past Chair of the Board. She is also a member of the FAU Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at FAU’s Foundation Board.

Trustee Plymale has significant experience in educational and community leadership having served in numerous leadership positions. She is past Chair of the State Board of Community Colleges, a former Chief of Staff of the Florida Department of Education and a former member of the St. Leo University Board of Trustees.

She has served as the Vice Chair of the Florida Republican Party and a member of the Board of Directors of the Healthy Kids Corporation. She currently serves on the executive committee of the Children’s Home Society of Florida Board of Directors, a member of the Education Committee of Tax Watch and a member of the Business Development Board of Martin County. She is a past member of the Board of the YMCA of the Treasure Coast, the National Assembly of the YMCA of the USA, and the Martin County School Readiness Coalition. Trustee Plymale is a member of Leadership Florida.

As thirty-year residents of Martin County, Florida, both Trustee Plymale and her husband, Dr. Tom Plymale, are also proud and active members of FAU’s National Alumni Association.

Trustee Plymale earned her bachelor’s degree from St. Leo University.
Dr. Anne E. Mulder began her nearly 55 year long career in education as a high school English teacher which evolved into teaching and administrative experiences in colleges, universities and public school settings, as well as extensive consulting. Highlights of her career include serving as a dean of a college of education in a regional university, a president of two community colleges, a dean and administrator in a community college, and as a consultant to various organizations. For over a decade she has served as a doctoral university professor where she designs curriculum, teaches various courses, and chairs doctoral dissertation committees. She currently serves as a member of FAU’s Associate Graduate Faculty and has been a full time visiting assistant professor at FAU since 2009.

Dr. Mulder has written over 20 publications in the areas of marketing, minority student recruitment, women in educational administration, adult and continuing education, staff and professional development, the arts, and leadership and organizations. She has also served on refereed editorial boards for professional journals. She has been the keynote speaker and panelist for over 500 professional organizations at national, state, and local conferences and even hosted a monthly show on a local cable television station.

Her many awards include the National Award for Distinguished Lifetime Service from the American Association of Community Colleges and the Distinguished Professor of the Year awarded by Nova Southeastern University. She has served on numerous national, state and local boards including the American Council on Education, the American Association of Community Colleges, the President’s Academy of AACC (President), the Council of North Central Community and Junior Colleges, COMBASE, the Foundation Board of the AACC, and the Board of the Michigan Community Colleges Association. Representative consultations include advising the Kellogg National Fellowship Program and the American Council on Education.

Dr. Mulder earned a Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy, Planning and Administration and Master of Arts in English Language and Literature from the University of Michigan. She received her Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature from Transylvania University. She also received an Honorary Doctor of Public Service degree in 2003 from Grand Valley State University.