



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Dr. Laurie Bernotsky Named President of West Chester University

Harrisburg, PA - The Board of Governors of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) today unanimously selected Dr. R. Lorraine (Laurie) Bernotsky to be the next president of [West Chester University](https://www.wcu.edu) (WCU). The appointment takes effect July 1, 2024.

Bernotsky will succeed President Christopher Fiorentino, who has served in the role since April 21, 2017. Fiorentino announced in July that he would retire on June 30, 2024.

Bernotsky is executive vice president and provost at West Chester University, overseeing budget and planning and labor relations functions. She is temporarily serving as interim president of Pennsylvania Western University.

"Dr. Bernotsky has proven at West Chester and PennWest that she is a tremendous university leader and is the perfect person to take WCU into the future," said Board of Governors Chair Cindy Shapira. "Throughout her extensive career in PASSHE, Dr. Bernotsky has earned respect for her strategic planning, academic programming, and for helping students from all backgrounds have access to a high-quality education in a diverse, vibrant campus community that prepares them for success in life."

Prior to becoming executive vice president and provost, Dr. Bernotsky served as West Chester University's associate provost and dean of the Graduate School, providing leadership in curriculum development, general education, new program development, program review, assessment, regional and specialized external accreditation, articulation agreements with other 2- and 4-year institutions, academic policies, and faculty development.

Bernotsky also led the approval of West Chester University's four doctoral programs and founded the university's Center for Social and Economic Policy Research.

"Dr. Bernotsky has demonstrated that she is a talented higher education leader and, as such, is poised to continue advancing West Chester's growing reputation as a great university," said PASSHE Chancellor Dan Greenstein. "For my entire tenure, I have relied upon Laurie's thought partnership in ways that benefit all of our universities, and I appreciate her ability to see the big picture not only for WCU but for the whole System."

Bernotsky has a master's degree and Doctor of Philosophy in politics from the University of Oxford and a master's degree in sociology from Temple University. She began her PASSHE

career in 1996 as a faculty member at WCU, teaching undergraduate and graduate courses in politics, research methods, and public administration. She has served the community on the Leadership Chester County Board of Directors and the executive committee of the Chester County Economic Development Council Board of Directors.

About West Chester University

West Chester University (WCU) is the largest member of Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education, which comprises 10 state-owned universities within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Founded in 1871, West Chester University is a comprehensive public institution offering a diverse range of more than 180 academic opportunities in 40 fields of study across undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels. In addition to the main campus in West Chester, the university offers programs through its graduate center, the campus in Philadelphia, and online. Six colleges and two schools make up the university: University College, the colleges of Arts and Humanities, Business and Public Management, Education and Social Work, Health Sciences, and the Sciences and Mathematics, as well as the Wells School of Music, and the Graduate School. The university maintains a consistent presence on both *Money* magazine's The Best Colleges in America list and America's Top Colleges list by *Forbes*. The university is also a Military Friendly Schools gold status member and has received the Higher Education Excellence in Diversity (HEED) Award from *INSIGHT Into Diversity* magazine for four consecutive years.

About PASSHE

Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) is the public university system of the commonwealth with a mission to provide a high-quality education at the lowest possible cost to students. The State System annually confers more than 20,000 degrees and has more than 800,000 living alumni, most of whom live in Pennsylvania. The State System universities are Cheyney, Commonwealth (Bloomsburg, Lock Haven and Mansfield), East Stroudsburg, Indiana, Kutztown, Millersville, PennWest (California, Clarion and Edinboro), Shippensburg, Slippery Rock and West Chester universities of Pennsylvania.

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