THE WOMEN'S POWER GAP AT

TOP RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES

2021 - 2023 Progress Report

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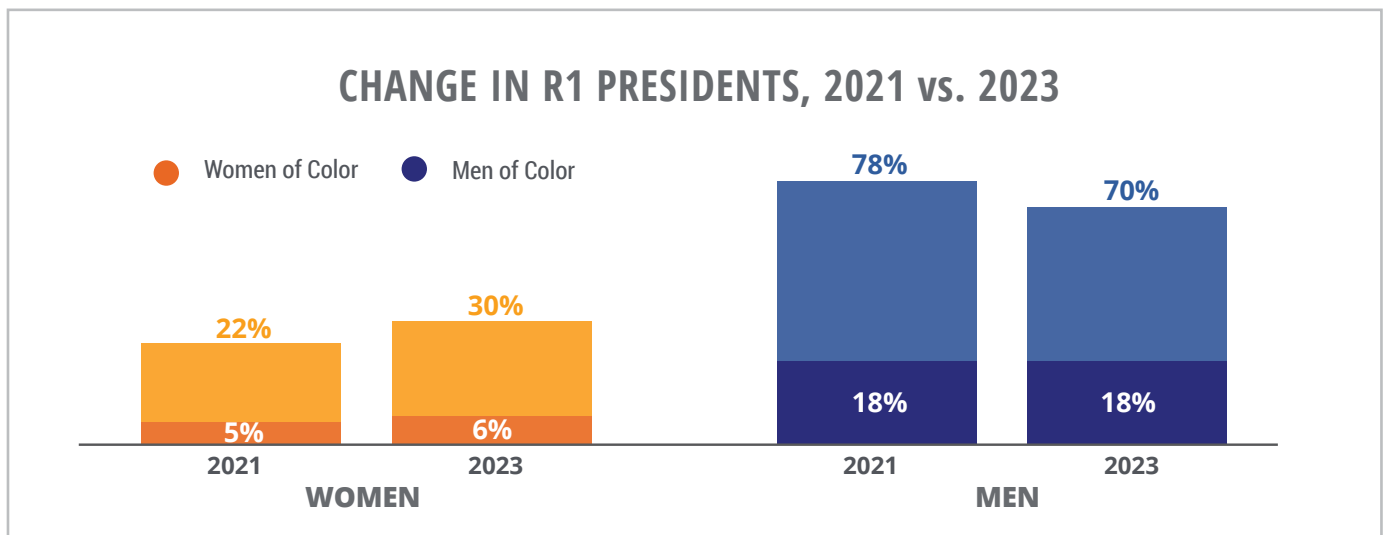Women's Power Gap
Eos Foundation
GENDER PARITY NOW

SUMMARY

Women have [outnumbered men on college campuses](#) since the early 1980s, and today earn 58% of undergraduate degrees, 62% of master's degrees, and more than half of PhDs. Yet, top leadership at the nation's elite universities has been—and remains—predominantly male and white. Fortunately, we are witnessing some welcome change: In our analysis of the leadership of the nation's 146 elite research universities (known as R1s*), we found a significant increase in women presidents in the last 20 months. Between September 2021 and May of 2023, half of the newly appointed presidents were women, increasing their overall representation from 22% to 30%. Today, women are at the helm of six of the eight Ivy League institutions.

> " With increased awareness and bold, intentional effort, we can accelerate the progress toward diversity atop the Ivory Tower. "

Of course, we are still far from gender and racial parity. Only six percent of college presidents are women of color, women account for less than 30% of board chairs, and a full 39% of the universities have never had a woman president. Still, our data suggests that with increased awareness and bold, intentional effort, we can accelerate the progress toward diversity atop the Ivory Tower.**

CHANGE IN R1 PRESIDENTS, 2021 vs. 2023

Legend: ● Women of Color ● Men of Color

WOMEN: 2021 — 22% (5%), 2023 — 30% (6%)
MEN: 2021 — 78% (18%), 2023 — 70% (18%)

* *Carnegie Classification categorizes 146 U.S. universities as R1 — very high research activity.*
** *Data as of May 1, 2023.*

CHANGE THE SYSTEM, NOT THE WOMEN

The goal of the [Women's Power Gap](#) is to dramatically increase the number and diversity of women chief executives across every sector of the economy. The centerpiece of our efforts is state and national rankings: We collect and analyze publicly available data and rank companies and institutions on the proportion of their women executives, with a particular focus on women of color. By spotlighting who's making progress and who's not, our rankings create a race to the top as organizations see peers doing better. Our reports identify the barriers to gender and racial equity, and promote systemic practices and policies to open and expand pathways for all.

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2021 - 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

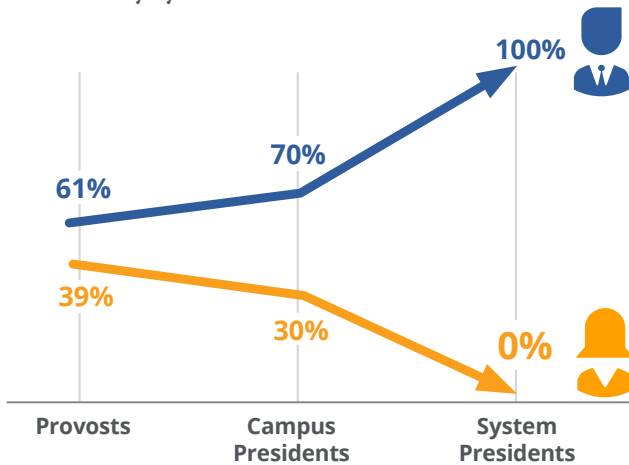### WOMEN R1 PRESIDENTS MOVING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION
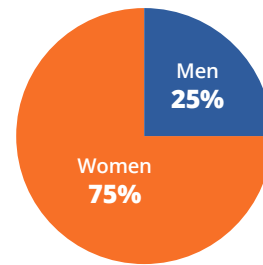
22% 2021

30% 2023

NOT A PIPELINE PROBLEM

Women comprise 39% of provosts, but drop to 30% of presidents. **None are the heads of the 25 independent university systems.**

100%
70%
61%
39%
30%
0%

Provosts | Campus Presidents | System Presidents

THE IVY LEAGUE LEADS THE WAY WITH 6 WOMEN PRESIDENTS

- Brown
- Columbia
- Cornell
- Dartmouth
- Harvard
- UPenn

Men **25%**
Women **75%**

Ivy League Presidents

RACIAL DIVERSITY STILL LAGGING, ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN OF COLOR

1% Hispanic
2% Black
3% Asian
24% White

1% Two or More Races
4% Hispanic
6% Asian
7% Black
52% White

30%

70%
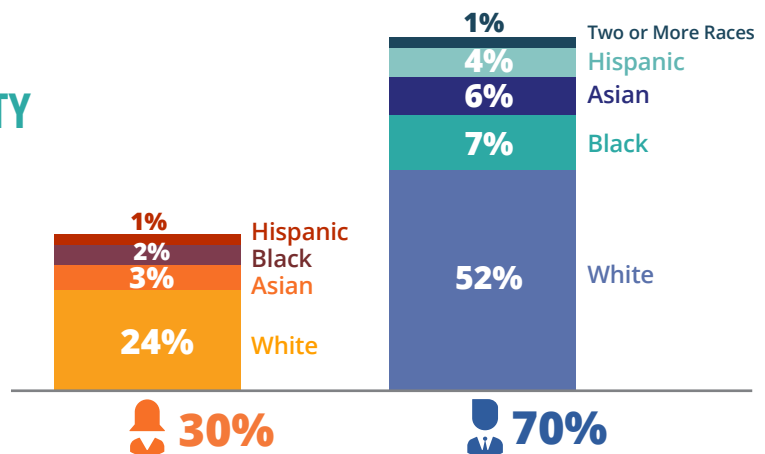
2021 - 2023 PROGRESS REPORT

NEARLY 40% (57 SCHOOLS) HAVE NEVER HAD A WOMAN PRESIDENT

### AND FEWER THAN 30% OF BOARD CHAIRS ARE WOMEN

NEW PRESIDENTS

Over the last two years, of the 38 new presidents appointed:

- **53%** Women
- **13%** Women of Color
- **18%** Men of Color

10 SCHOOLS NAME FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT

- Columbia
- Dartmouth
- George Washington
- New York University
- Ohio University
- Oregon State
- Penn State
- U of Maryland - Baltimore County
- University of Pittsburgh
- University of Texas at Arlington

0%
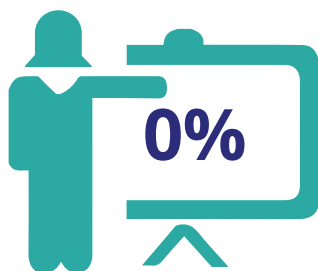
LESS TRANSPARENCY THAN CORPORATE AMERICA

Not a single school discloses diversity data about its board or leadership. NASDAQ requires listing companies to publish gender and racial data about their boards, but no such rule exists for colleges and universities.

LOOKING AHEAD: PRESIDENTIAL SEARCHES

* Never had a woman president

- Boston University*
- Michigan State
- The Ohio State
- Temple
- University of Minnesota
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln*
- Wayne State*

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **CHANGE THE SYSTEM, NOT THE WOMEN.** For decades, the primary approach to increasing organizational diversity has been to train women, people of color, and other underrepresented groups to fit into existing institutional cultures. True diversity comes by creating inclusive environments where all can flourish.

- **DATA DISCLOSURE DRIVES DIVERSITY.** Universities disclose student data but provide no gender and racial diversity data for their governing boards and senior leadership. The U.S. Department of Education should require schools to publicly report demographic breakdown of governing boards and top leadership, as they currently report faculty data to IPEDS* (See WPG suggested reporting matrix on page 7).

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- **GOALS AND BENCHMARKS ARE FOUNDATIONAL TO CHANGE.** Governing boards, in collaboration with presidents, should make bold, long-term public commitments to reaching equitable representation in top leadership and require each college, graduate school, and academic center within the university to do the same. They should create annual benchmarks to achieve those goals and review progress at each board meeting.

- **FOCUS ON EQUITY OF OUTCOMES.** Despite a concerted effort to ensure women and people of color are fairly represented in the final applicant pool for top jobs (sometimes called the "Rooney Rule"), the end results are often disparate. When the focus is on end results, managers must go the extra mile to consider structural obstacles that stand in the way of equitable outcomes. If boards and hiring managers focus only on creating diverse finalist pools, they may not be taking necessary steps to remove selection bias from the final decision.

- **DISRUPT BIAS BY INCLUDING CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICERS (CHROS) ON SEARCH COMMITTEES.** CHROs or others should be tasked with calling out subjective considerations in search committees and pushing for more objective measures. (Studies show that men are more likely than women to be perceived as having qualities such as potential, executive presence, and gravitas.) A good resource is The Center for WorkLife Law, which provides trainings and solutions to interrupt bias in basic business systems.

- **GOVERNORS SHOULD DRIVE CHANGE ON GOVERNING BOARDS.** Governors who appoint chairs and board members for system boards and regents should strive for balanced representation and include candidates with experience in promoting systems change around DEI goals.

- **FUNDERS CAN DRIVE CHANGE THROUGH INCENTIVES.** Government agencies, private foundations, and major donors should ask universities to disclose diversity data and goals and give preferential consideration for grants, contracts, and contributions to institutions that disclose data.

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* *IPEDS is the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System run by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.*

R1 Universities That Have <u>Never</u> Had a Woman President

Arizona State-Tempe	Johns Hopkins	University at Buffalo	U of Oregon
Auburn	Kansas State	UCLA	U of SC-Columbia
Boston College	Louisiana State	U of Central Florida	U of Texas-Dallas
Boston University	Mississippi State	U of Delaware	U of Texas-San Antonio
CalTech	NJ Institute of Tech	U of Florida	Vanderbilt
Carnegie Mellon	North Dakota State	U of Georgia	Virginia Commonwealth U
Clemson	Northeastern	U of Kentucky	Virginia Tech
CO School of Mines	Northwestern	U of Louisiana at Lafayette	Washington State
Drexel	Rice	U of Maryland-College Park	Washington U in St Louis
Florida International U	Stanford	U Mass-Amherst	Wayne State
Florida State	Texas Tech	U of Mississippi	West Virginia U
George Mason	Tufts	U of Nebraska-Lincoln	Yale
Georgetown	Tulane	U of Nevada-Reno	
Georgia Tech	U of Alabama-Huntsville	U of Notre Dame	
Georgia State	U of Arkansas	U of Oklahoma-Norman	

Interim appointments are not included in the historical data.

Sample Template for University Demographic Reporting

TOP LEADERSHIP	GENDER	RACE/ETHNICITY	OTHER DIVERSITY
President/Chancellor			
Provost			
Board Chair			

Diversity Matrix for Each Group of University Leaders, including:

- Academic Deans
- Vice Provosts/Vice Chancellors
- Department Heads/Chairs (including center directors)
- President's Cabinet
- Members of Governing Board

ANY TOWN UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES DIVERSITY MATRIX AS OF JULY 1, 2023				
Total Number of Trustees	30			
	WOMAN	MAN	NON-BINARY	DID NOT DISCLOSE GENDER
Part I: Gender Identity				
Board Members	8	22	-	-
Part II: Demographic Background				
African American or Black	1	2	-	-
Alaskan Native or Native American	-	-	-	-
Asian	1	2	-	-
Hispanic or Latinx	1	1	-	-
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	-	-	-	-
White	5	16	-	-
Two or More Races or Ethnicities	-	1	-	-
LGBTQ+	2			
Did Not Disclose Demographic Background	-			

ABOUT THE WOMEN'S POWER GAP: Change the System, Not the Women

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By spotlighting who's making progress and who's not, our rankings create a race to the top as organizations see peers doing better. Our reports identify the barriers to gender and racial equity, and promote systemic practices and policies to open and expand pathways for all.

METHODOLOGY

This report includes data from R1 universities defined by the Carnegie Classification as Doctoral Universities with Very High Level of Research Activity. Our 2022 report included data for 130 institutions as of September 15, 2021 anchor date. In late 2021, Carnegie Classification was updated to include 146 R1 universities. All 2023 data reflects the new set of R1 institutions as of May 1, 2023 anchor date. Our research team used the universities' websites to collect names and titles of presidents/chancellors, provosts or chief academic officers, chairs of governing boards, and system

leaders. We then assigned gender and race/ethnicity to each individual using publicly available sources, such as bios, press releases, public statements, etc. We used pronouns to determine gender and annotations such as "first ever Black president" to assign race/ethnicity following the U.S. Census categories. A comprehensive quality assurance process was instituted to ensure the accuracy of the data. All calculations related to the president category include publicly announced presidents-elect and do not include interim appointments.

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