

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **John Keller Receives Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education**

Washington, DC – The Board of Directors of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) has announced that Dr. John C. Keller, dean of the Graduate College, associate provost for graduate and professional education, and interim vice president for research and economic development at the University of Iowa, is the 2017 winner of the Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education. The awards ceremony was held during the CGS 57th Annual Meeting in Scottsdale, AZ.

The award was created in 2016 by the CGS Board of Directors to recognize outstanding leadership in graduate education, and particularly those leadership qualities exemplified by the Council's fifth President, Debra W. Stewart. The selection committee gives consideration to nominees with a strong reputation for ethics and integrity, a history of active participation in the graduate community, and a record of strategic vision and actions resulting in meaningful impacts. Areas of special consideration include evidence-based innovation, program development, diversity and inclusion, student learning and career outcomes, personnel management, policy advocacy in support of graduate education and research, and fiscal responsibility.

For his invaluable contributions to the University of Iowa graduate community, Dr. Keller becomes the second Debra W. Stewart Award recipient. A passionate advocate for graduate education, Dr. Keller undertook several major initiatives at the University of Iowa to enhance graduate education. He oversaw the development of 14 new graduate programs – including three interdisciplinary programs. Keller also developed and implemented a model for systematic assessments aimed towards program improvement. Under his leadership, time to degree was reduced while completion rates improved. In addition to his academic oversight, Keller promotes publicly accessible research, holistic career preparation, diversity and inclusion initiatives, and institutional research support.

"I echo the Council of Graduate Schools' recognition of Dean Keller for nearly two decades of outstanding leadership in graduate education," said University of Iowa President Bruce Harreld. "John holds graduate student success at the core of his vision for graduate education. His national engagement, advocacy, and unwavering commitment to our students continues to advance the research and scholarship enterprise at Iowa."

"John's leadership has extended well beyond the University of Iowa's campus," said Dr. Nancy Marcus, dean emeritus of the Graduate School at Florida State University and chair of the Council's Board of Directors. "Dr. Keller's leadership in the Big Ten Academic Alliance, the AAU Association of Graduate Schools, the CGS Board of Directors and Committee on Advocacy and Public Policy has benefited the graduate education community across the country."

Nominees for the award must be a current senior, graduate dean at a CGS member institution (Regular or Associate) and cannot be an active member of the CGS Board of Directors. Nominations are made by CGS member institutions and are reviewed by a selection committee of former graduate deans in the CGS community. The winner receives a \$4,000 prize to support continuing innovations at the awardee's institution.

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*The Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) is an organization of approximately 500 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada engaged in graduate education, research, and the preparation of candidates for advanced degrees. The organization's mission is to improve and advance graduate education, which it accomplishes through advocacy in the federal policy arena, research, and the development and dissemination of best practices.*