

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Karen Butler-Purry 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. Karen Butler-Purry, associate provost and dean of the Graduate and Professional School at Texas A&M University, is the 2021 recipient of the Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education. Dr. Butler-Purry received the honor at an awards ceremony held during the CGS 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

A passionate and steadfast advocate for graduate education, Dr. Butler-Purry becomes the sixth Debra W. Stewart Award recipient for her invaluable contributions to Texas A&M University and the graduate education community. As dean, Dr. Butler-Purry has prioritized graduate student's quality of life, their educational experiences in the classroom and labs, and their professional development opportunities. In addition, she developed new pathways and funding sources for underrepresented students, providing more than 80 doctoral fellowships per year to underrepresented minority students. In 2020, Dr. Butler-Purry led efforts to elevate graduate education at the university, helping to transform the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies to the Graduate and Professional School.

Dr. Butler-Purry has also been involved in many CGS projects, including Supporting the Mental Health and Well-being of Graduate Students, Understanding PhD Career Pathways for Program Improvement, Professional Development for STEM Graduate Students, and the Global Postgraduate Diversity Resource. She has served as chair of the CGS Board of Directors and is currently on the Executive Board of the Association of American Universities' (AAU) Association of Graduate Schools. Dr. Butler-Purry has a demonstrated commitment to mentoring, receiving the American Association for Advancement of Science (AAAS) Mentor Award.

"Texas A&M University could not be more proud of Karen Butler-Purry's recent Debra W. Stewart Award for Outstanding Leadership in Graduate Education. Dr. Butler-Purry is a tireless advocate for diversity, inclusion, and access to graduate programs on our campus and across the country," said Timothy P. Scott, interim provost and executive vice president, Texas A&M University. "We are grateful for her continued service and passion for graduate education."

"The CGS Board of Directors is pleased to recognize Dr. Butler-Purry's leadership and service to the graduate education community. Karen is a passionate advocate for graduate student success and well-being. Under her leadership, Texas A&M University has developed comprehensive learning outcomes for master's and doctoral students, increased data transparency, and demonstrated a deep commitment to ensuring access and opportunity for all," said Dr. Andrew G. Campbell, dean of the Graduate School at Brown University and chair of the Council's Board of Directors.

Created in 2016 by the CGS Board of Directors, this award recognizes outstanding leadership in graduate education, particularly those leadership qualities exemplified by the Council's fifth President, Debra W. Stewart. The selection committee considers 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.

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 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.*