

Britt Rios-Ellis named Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

Rios-Ellis to join Oakland University in her new role on January 4, 2021.

📅 October 12, 2020

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Following a national search, Oakland University has selected Britt Rios-Ellis to serve as Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost pending Board of Trustees approval. She will begin her appointment on January 4, 2021.



Britt Rios-Ellis

“The appointment of Dr. Rios-Ellis is the result of an extensive and rigorous national search that identified prospects from public and private universities,” said Oakland University President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz. “From her first interaction with the search committee, Dr. Rios-Ellis distinguished herself by her collaborative approach, her poise, her sensitivity and her impressive preparedness for the position.”

Rios-Ellis said she was drawn to Oakland for its “cutting-edge combination of programs, research, community-based efforts and focus on student success.”

She added, “I felt a strong sense of connection with the OU community and the mission-driven way in which leadership, faculty and staff seek to transform students' lives through quality education. OU's focus on diversity and inclusive excellence is also a great match and well-aligned with my personal philosophy, life's work and career focus.”

In her role as Founding Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Human Services at California State University, Monterey Bay, Rios-Ellis led strategic planning efforts, established Nursing and Social Work departments and co-founded the Master of Science Physician Assistant Program, the first program of its kind in the California State University system.

In addition, she forged partnerships with local hospitals, clinics, health networks and community-based organizations to increase the College's impact on community health and support regional workforce needs. She also spearheaded the College's Diversity

Celebration Series to highlight contributions of diverse national leaders for Hispanic Heritage Month, World AIDS Day, African American History Month and National Minority Health Month.

A nationally recognized scholar and leader, Rios-Ellis has published and presented on various public health and education issues, particularly focused on HIV/AIDS in the Latino community. She served as co-chair of the National Latino AIDS Action Network, co-chair of the National Institutes of Health Office of AIDS Research Hispanic Advisory Group and co-chair of the Sexual Health Workgroup of the Centers for Disease Control Health Resource Services Administration Advisory Council, among numerous other roles.

From 2005-2015, she served as founding director of the California State University, Long Beach Center for Latino Community Health, Evaluation and Leadership Training, whose mission is to improve, promote and advocate for the health, culture, and well-being of diverse Latino/Hispanic communities. She has also shared her expertise with regional and national audiences on Telemundo, CNN and ABC World News Tonight, and was named Woman of the Year by the National Hispanic Business Women's Association.

Rios-Ellis earned a Ph.D. in Community Health, a master's degree in Health and Fitness Management, and bachelor's degree in Political Science and Spanish, all from the University of Oregon.