

**Panel: Making History Paths to Leadership – Life Stories of Leaders in the Veterinary Profession**

**Gender and Generational Issues  
Ernest N. Morial Convention center – 385  
Monday July 21, 2008  
3:00 – 3:50 PM**

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**My path to leadership began with frustration. I knew I had more skills than I was able to utilize in my faculty position and yet the men above me mentored only the younger men saying “they couldn’t spend time one on one with me because people would talk”!!!**

**That did it! When the opportunity came up to attend a women’s leadership workshop I jumped at the chance. So I enrolled in the Bryn Mawr Summer Institute for Women in Higher Education. The Summer Institute is a national leadership training program directed at women in higher education to prepare them for upper administrative roles in academia. [www.brynmawr.edu/summerinstitute/](http://www.brynmawr.edu/summerinstitute/)**

**At Bryn Mawr I was exposed to various aspects of higher education responsibilities such as budgets, crisis management, diversity, physical plant, sports, and personal presentation, the development of presentation skills, and CV guidance. But beyond all that, the most important thing I learned was that I did indeed have what it takes to be a leader even though it had not been recognized by my superiors and, in truth, even by me. I saw that I possessed the skills and abilities the women presidents, provosts and deans possessed.**

**So from there I started looking for the right opportunity. Once I realized my goal, the perfect position presented itself. When I read the job description for the Associate Dean for Student Affairs at The Ohio State University College of Veterinary Medicine I saw “me” in every line. I applied and they agreed: the fit was right! So I became the Associate Dean for Student Affairs at the College of Veterinary Medicine at The Ohio State University. By my second year, my Dean agreed that I could handle taking on the academic portion of the missions as well and the academic and student affairs areas were combined under my leadership.**

**This experience has allowed me to develop my leadership style and make positive change where it was needed. However, I was not able to do this alone. My administrative team is empowered to do what they think is right to make the whole better. That doesn't mean this has been without growing pains because some people were empowered but didn't always know what to do with this so I have been learning along with my team how to work together and to give direction and feedback without stifling their abilities.**

**Another thing has happened that has made this journey even more spectacular. I have been allowed to participate in a group that focuses on giving back. So I am able to serve as a consultant and role model for a group of highly accomplished professionals and guide young women to find their inner leader. This has been done by becoming a trustee of my undergraduate college; Elmhurst College, in Elmhurst, IL.**

**[www.elmhurst.edu](http://www.elmhurst.edu)**

**I hope to continue learning how to be a better leader with the hope that someday I may find a deanship somewhere that can use my skills. The most important thing I have learned is that no one does it alone and building a network is critical. Just as others have made a difference for me, be it the women I got to know at the Summer Institute, the wonderful staff that supports me at work, or the great people who I have met as a Trustee, I need to be able to make a difference for those who are to come after me. The day I stop trying to make a difference is the day I need to retire. Being a positive role model and mentor is all a part of the package. Without that I have failed.**