

Laura A. Rosenbury Elected Ninth President of Barnard College
Barnard College Board of Trustees names University of Florida Law's first woman Dean as its next President

New York (March 9) – The Board of Trustees at Barnard College has enthusiastically elected Laura A. Rosenbury, currently the Dean at University of Florida Levin College of Law, to assume the role of president of Barnard College, effective July 1, 2023. She will be the institution's ninth president in its 134-year history.

A leading women and gender legal theorist with expertise that spans reproductive rights, children's rights, and sexual harassment, President-elect Rosenbury, 53, was the first woman to hold the permanent position as Dean at UF Law. During her tenure she also served as Levin, Mabie & Levin Professor of Law teaching feminist legal theory, employment discrimination, children and law, family law, and property. Currently, she serves as a member of the Board of Directors at the Guttmacher Institute that's dedicated to advancing research and policy related to sexual and reproductive health, as well as an elected member of the American Law Institute and a Fellow at the American Bar Foundation. She will succeed Dr. Sian Beilock, who will go on to become the first woman president of Dartmouth College after leading Barnard College since 2017.

"It's an honor to be named Barnard College's next president, and I look forward to carrying forth its legacy as the leading academic institution for the advancement of women," Rosenbury said. "It was immediately clear how committed and close-knit the Barnard community is, and I'm deeply grateful to the Board of Trustees and Search Committee for entrusting me to continue Barnard's undeniable trajectory as a global frontrunner in preparing women to make their mark on the world." She added, "Higher education is where I learned to see and understand the world in a new way, and was given the space to identify where my passions lie. It's incredibly special to be joining a community devoted specifically to helping the next generation of women do the same."

Rosenbury's appointment was the result of a comprehensive, community-wide search process that began last summer with a series of eight virtual and in-person listening sessions to gain input from Barnard students, faculty, staff, alumnae, and parents.

"We believe we found the most outstanding candidate to become the ninth President of Barnard College. Laura's appointment is a culmination of a life and career dedicated to empowering women. She is a committed leader and scholar whose values and passions align with Barnard's mission," said Cheryl Milstein, Chair of Barnard's Board of Trustees. "Every step on her journey – from an undergraduate education steeped in humanities, arts and sciences, to a law career focused on advocating for women and families, to her leadership as a professor and dean dedicated to expanding opportunities for all students – has prepared her uniquely for this institution. Our students will have the incredible privilege of being led and inspired by her."

"It is an honor to be able to pass the baton to Laura Rosenbury, who has been a champion for women's legal rights throughout her career as an attorney and as an academic," said President Beilock. "I am thrilled to welcome her into this amazing community of students, faculty, alums, and staff and am confident that the College will continue to soar under her leadership."

President of Columbia University, Lee C. Bollinger added: "I am delighted to congratulate Laura Rosenbury on her appointment as President of Barnard. She is an experienced and successful university administrator and a wise and established legal scholar who has published extensively on issues of employment discrimination, children's rights, and feminist jurisprudence, and I am confident she will be an excellent leader for Barnard. I wish President-Elect Rosenbury all the very best in this exciting new chapter."

The rigorous search, which also considered hundreds of anonymous submissions to a community-wide survey, was led by a 16-member Search Committee with the support of the leading global executive search firm, Russell Reynolds Associates. "I could not be prouder of the process that led to Laura's selection as our next President," said Ina Drew, co-Chair of the Search Committee and Vice Chair of the Board of Trustees. "It was not just her incredible biography and remarkable scholarship that led to the enthusiastic decision by the board, but also her character and belief in the mission of our liberal arts college. Her devotion to an arts and science education, thoughtful and strategic approach to leadership, and striking emotional intelligence demonstrated that Barnard and Laura Rosenbury are a perfect match."

Search Committee co-Chair Ann Sacher added, “Thanks to the invaluable feedback from all those who participated in the search process, we have no doubt that we’ve found the right person to lead Barnard’s next chapter. We are a premier liberal arts and women’s college, and throughout Laura’s career she has consistently been at the forefront of championing both women’s interests and higher education. Her expertise spans some of the most pressing women’s and gender issues of our time, so we’re fortunate to have her at the helm ensuring students leave our campus prepared to meet the moment and make their mark on the world.”

“Laura Rosenbury’s legal scholarship shows a brilliant mind who has spent a lifetime devoted to women and their navigating the world through work, and life. One that will help Barnard students continue to think about how women gain power, authority, and capture our own history,” said Marcia Sells, Barnard Trustee and Met Opera Chief Diversity Officer.

Rosenbury was named dean of UF Law in 2015 with the charge of raising its national and international profile. She spearheaded a strategy that led to record levels of private donations, a 200 percent increase in applications, and the enrollment of seven of the most accomplished and diverse classes in the law school’s history, propelling the school into the top 25 law schools in the nation. Under her leadership, UF Law jumped 27 spots in the U.S. News law school rankings, rising from #48 to #21 among all law schools and from #24 to #6 among public law schools.

“Dean Rosenbury has been intentional about strengthening equity outcomes, and successfully cultivated a welcoming environment where all students, regardless of their background, can experience a deep sense of belonging and freely express their views. It’s impressive what UF Law has been able to accomplish to continue making its community more diverse and inclusive under her leadership,” said Joe Glover, provost at University of Florida.

Rosenbury hired the college’s first Assistant Dean for Inclusion who plays a vital role on the leadership team and in respect to admissions. She oversaw the creation of a full-tuition scholarship program for graduates of Historically Black Colleges and Universities that has now successfully enrolled two classes of John Lewis Fellows. She also established the funding and development of a Racial Justice Research Assistant Program that pairs students with faculty members researching systemic racism and other forms of racial inequity.

Kent Fuchs, President Emeritus at University of Florida said, “I have watched Laura Rosenbury take the Levin College of Law to remarkable heights, elevating its stature to among the top law schools in the country. She is student focused and truly a gifted leader who exceeds her stated goals in breath-taking fashion. I commend Barnard College for selecting Laura Rosenbury as its next president, and I eagerly look forward to seeing the great things she will accomplish there.”

Rosenbury’s longtime mentor, Kent Syverud, Chancellor and President of Syracuse University added: “Laura Rosenbury has been the most successful law dean of the decade in elevating both the academics and the student experience. She cares deeply about her students and her faculty, and about enhancing the intellectual life and the education of all. I believe she will be a wildly successful president at Barnard.”

Rosenbury grew up in rural northern Indiana before moving to Rye, New York in her senior year of high school, and then went on to Harvard-Radcliffe College where she earned her Bachelor of Arts in women’s studies. After graduation Rosenbury worked for the national office of Planned Parenthood where she observed how gender and the law intersect, and became inspired to return to school to earn a degree in law.

While attending Harvard Law, she held the position of editor for the *Harvard Law Review*. “Laura Rosenbury brings vibrancy, vision, clarity, and humanity to every interaction. That helps explain her spectacular achievements as a leader and her talents as a mentor. Her wisdom and contagious joy are true treasures,” said Martha Minow, 300th Anniversary University Professor at Harvard University, who was presiding dean of Harvard Law School when Rosenbury attended.

Prior to entering academia, Rosenbury was a litigation associate at Davis Polk & Wardwell in New York City, and clerked for Judge Carol Bagley Amon of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York and Judge Dennis Jacobs of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

In 2002 Rosenbury became a professor of law at Washington University Law School in St. Louis, Missouri, and was named Vice Dean in 2010. She has been a visiting professor at Harvard, Stanford, and the University of Chicago, and her work has been published in the *Yale Law Journal*, *Michigan Law Review*, *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, and *Cornell Law*

Review on topics including feminist legal theory, parental rights, children and law, and friendship. She is the co-author of *Feminist Jurisprudence: Cases and Materials*, and is frequently invited to speak at conferences, regional meetings, and trainings on issues of diversity, implicit bias, gender and leadership, and sexual harassment.

In a joint statement signed by faculty of the Presidential Search Committee, members said: "On behalf of the faculty who were on the presidential search committee, I would like to express our unreserved enthusiasm about our next President. In Laura, we have a feminist legal scholar whose research and perspective on scholarship and pedagogy are in complete alignment with the mission of Barnard. Along with my faculty colleagues I look forward to working with the President-elect over the coming months as we listen and learn together." Signees included Peter Balsam, Professor of Psychology and Samuel R. Milbank Chair; Christopher Baswell, Ann Whitney Olin Professor of English at Barnard College and Columbia University; Yvette Christiansë, Claire Tow Chair of Africana Studies and English Literature, Director of the Consortium for Critical Interdisciplinary Studies; and Lisa Tiersten, Professor of History.

"I want to go where she's going," said Alexa Easter, student representative on the Selection Committee in reference to Rosenbury.

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