

# MILLS

## PRESS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### [Janet L. Holmgren](#) Concludes 20-year Tenure as President of [Mills College](#)

*President Holmgren's inspiring two-decade legacy ushered Mills College into the ranks of America's most respected women's colleges.*

**Oakland, CA—April 14, 2011—**[Janet L. Holmgren's](#) unprecedented 20-year tenure as President of Mills College in Oakland, CA, draws to a conclusion in 2011. Holmgren's legacy is highlighted by numerous achievements that helped advance Mills College academically, strengthen it fiscally, and elevate the College's reputation as a nationally recognized, independent liberal arts college committed to providing an environment that values, encourages, and demands equity and social justice for all. Holmgren's tenure as President of Mills College will end June 30, 2011.

"During her 20 years as President, Janet Holmgren created a national model for women's education while simultaneously increasing educational opportunities for a diverse group of talented graduate women and men," says Kathleen J. Burke, chair of the Mills College Board of Trustees. "Her vision and exemplary guidance have been true assets to our College. Generations of future students will benefit from her thoughtful, strategic, and creative leadership."

Holmgren began her presidency at Mills College in 1991, one year after the historic [strike](#) that overturned the College's decision to become coeducational at the undergraduate level—a critical juncture in Mills' history. Under Holmgren's 20-year tenure, she broke all enrollment and fundraising records, expanded undergraduate academic programs and graduate education, and introduced the College's first doctoral degree—an EdD in educational leadership. In addition to building Mills into one of the top women's colleges in the nation, Holmgren was also responsible for introducing the innovative [Lorry I. Lokey Graduate School of Business](#) dedicated to preparing ethical and socially responsible organizational leaders.

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Holmgren's noteworthy achievements during her presidency also include introduction of new majors in [intermedia](#), [public policy](#), [biopsychology](#), and [environmental science](#), and the distinctive 4+1 degree programs that enable students to earn both a bachelor's and master's degree in five years. Additionally, Holmgren oversaw capital campaign improvements on campus totaling more than \$100 million, including the construction of two LEED-certified green buildings—the Lorry I. Lokey Graduate School of Business and the [Betty Irene Moore Natural Sciences](#) building, facilities to house the [School of Education](#) and contemporary housing to meet the needs of the burgeoning graduate student population. During her tenure, Holmgren oversaw the restoration of the campus historical landmark Mills Hall following the Loma Prieta earthquake, renovated the [Littlefield Concert Hall](#) and restored its nationally celebrated [Boynton murals and frescoes](#), made extensive improvements to student residence halls, and expanded the graduate art studios and facilities.

Today, Mills College is receiving the highest level of applications in its history with a 45 percent enrollment increase since Holmgren took the reins in 1991. Holmgren's untiring commitment to diversity has resulted in women of color and first-generation college students now comprising the majority of the Mills College student body. The Mills student body is comprised of 39 percent students of color, and 28 percent faculty of color, compared with 21 percent students of color, and 5 percent faculty of color in 1991. In addition to increasing faculty diversity, Holmgren expanded the size of the faculty to support innovative academic programs and recruited a diverse team of administrators to oversee the College's growth. Moreover, under her leadership, the percentage of tenured and tenure-track female faculty rose by 10 percent.

Additionally, Mills' endowment has more than doubled under Holmgren's leadership, growing from \$71.2 million in 1990 to \$175 million in 2010. Holmgren also led the College through a successful capital campaign that raised more than \$130 million—\$32 million over goal—contributing to funds for scholarships and enhancing the growth of academic programs.

Holmgren's commitment to Mills College has also extended to the city of Oakland. Working with community leaders and elected officials on issues such as educational reform, city planning, and business development, Holmgren has not only helped strengthen the ties between Mills College and the Oakland community, but also helped create a new foundation for the city's revival.

Last month, as Holmgren entered the last one hundred days of her presidency at Mills, she was already busy with city revitalization efforts as a director of the Oakland Education Cabinet, kicking off its first convening at the Lorry I. Lokey Graduate School of Business Gathering Hall at Mills. After stepping down from the college presidency in June, Holmgren intends to continue expanding her affiliations in Oakland and the state. She also plans to embark on a yearlong sabbatical to annotate her presidential archives and travel the world visiting colleagues and alumnae. She will return to Mills College in spring 2012 to pursue teaching, writing, and new avenues for women's leadership.

Holmgren will be succeeded by [Alecia A. DeCoudreaux](#), who will take over as the 13th President of Mills College beginning July 1, 2011.

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### **About Janet L. Holmgren**

Janet L. Holmgren came to Mills as one of the highest-ranking women administrators at Princeton University where she was vice provost from 1988 to 1991. Holmgren currently serves on the boards of Princeton University and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. She is also on the Executive Committee of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities where she is chairing the search for its next president. Other boards she has served on include, the Women's College Coalition, National Council for Research on Women, and chair of the board of the American Council on Education. She has also served on the Urban High School Board, the East Bay Community Foundation, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, the Bay Area Biotech Council, and the California Academy of Sciences Advisory Committee. Additionally, Holmgren chaired the statewide governance task force of the 2000–2003 Master Planning Project for the California State Legislature and has chaired numerous Western Association of Schools and Colleges accrediting teams. A 2007 recipient of the Chief Executive Officer Leadership Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education, Holmgren was also named one of the “Bay Area’s Most Influential Women in Business” by the *San Francisco Business Times* in 2010, 2009, and 2008. Holmgren has an MA and a PhD in linguistics from Princeton University (1971 and 1974, respectively) and holds the title of Susan Mills Professor for presidents who teach.

### **About Mills College**

Nestled in the foothills of Oakland, California, Mills College is a nationally renowned, independent liberal arts college offering a dynamic progressive education that fosters leadership, social responsibility, and creativity in over 950 undergraduate women and more than 600 graduate women and men. The College ranks as one of the *Best 373 Colleges* in the country and one of the greenest colleges in the nation by The Princeton Review. *U.S. News & World Report* ranked Mills one of the top-tier regional universities in the country and second among colleges and universities in the West in its “Great Schools, Great Prices” category. For more information, visit [www.mills.edu](http://www.mills.edu).

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