

Dr. Paula A. Johnson named Wellesley's 14th president!

On February 11, 2016, Wellesley College announced the appointment of Dr. Paula A. Johnson, a Harvard Medical School professor and advocate for women's health, as its 14th president. She will be the first African American to serve as president of Wellesley.

An internationally renowned and innovative leader, Dr. Johnson currently serves as chief of the Division of Women's Health at Harvard Medical School and Boston's Brigham and Women's Hospital, where she founded and is executive director of the Connors Center for Women's Health and Gender Biology.

Wellesley trustee Debora de Hoyos '75, chair of the presidential search committee, introduced Dr. Johnson in person to Wellesley students, faculty, and staff in a packed Alumnae Hall on the afternoon of the announcement. She said, "Even among a superb group of candidates, Dr. Johnson stood out through her record as a scholar and leader, together with her passion for women's advancement, education, and well-being, the energy and insights she conveyed in our discussions, and her enthusiasm for Wellesley."

The atmosphere was electric as the College community welcomed Dr. Johnson with thunderous applause and several standing ovations throughout her brief introduction.

According to Laura Daignault Gates '72, chair of the Wellesley College Board of Trustees, "Paula has dedicated her distinguished career to improving the health and lives of women. She not only has

Continued on back



Students enthusiastically welcome Dr. Paula A. Johnson, who will become the 14th president of Wellesley College on July 1.

“Today is a moment in time when women’s leadership is finally being recognized as being transformative to the world—to health, to economies, and to education...what an opportunity for Wellesley, given the outstanding faculty, amazing students, and staff.”

—Dr. Paula Johnson, newly named 14th president of Wellesley College

“She will inspire us.”

Dr. Johnson has devoted her life to improving the lives of women. She truly understands the issues of equity, inclusion, and well-being that are so important to Wellesley students. She will inspire us. —Charlotte Harris '16, member of the presidential search committee

“...a compelling champion for the liberal arts...”

Paula brings a strong appreciation of Wellesley's academic culture and distinctive contributions to higher education. She will be a compelling champion for the liberal arts and for the enduring value of the educational and scholarly work of Wellesley faculty and staff. Her ability to develop new academic initiatives and to inspire others to support them makes her an exceptional leader for this moment in the College's history. —Andrew Shennan, provost and dean of the College and member of the presidential search committee

“...the perfect person to steer Wellesley into the future.”

As the College approaches its 150th year, we are steadfast in our mission to provide an excellent liberal arts education for women, because it is clear that the liberal arts and the concept of a women's college are as important and as valid today as they have been at any time in the past. Paula Johnson is the perfect person to steer Wellesley into the future. —Laura Daignault Gates '72, chair of the Wellesley College Board of Trustees





Students Shivani Kuckreja '16 and Charlotte Harris '16, both members of the presidential search committee, interview Dr. Paula A. Johnson, the first true introduction as the next president of Wellesley. Watch the video at www.wellesley.edu/news/14thpresident/studentinterview.

Continued from front

applied her deep intellectual capacity and medical training to these issues, but has led others in creating innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to addressing them. She will now bring her talents, courage, grace, and lifelong commitment to women to Wellesley College as we prepare our students to thrive in a rapidly changing and more complex world, and as we strive and work with others to create more opportunities for women.”

In a *Boston Globe* article, Dr. Johnson says she “felt a special responsibility as the college’s first African American leader and believes that student diversity is one of Wellesley’s strengths.” She said she would “work to not only strengthen and deepen that diversity, but also ensure that our residential experience is taking full advantage of that diversity, that our young women are really experiencing all the richness that that diversity brings on campus.”

Jeremy C. Fox, “Wellesley names its first African-American president,” *Boston Globe*, February 11, 2016.

The Wellesley College Board of Trustees, advised by a search committee that included trustees, alumnae, students, faculty, and staff, unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Johnson. The extensive, eight-month search process that led to her selection began when H. Kim Bottomly announced that she would step down as Wellesley’s president in the summer of 2016, after serving for nine years.

“My life has been devoted to women, to their health, to their education, and to their development, and really that is what calls me to Wellesley.”

I am honored and humbled to be asked to serve as Wellesley’s president. It could not be a more exciting time for Wellesley, and the opportunity to help guide Wellesley into the future, building on its mission, vision, and resolve, is one that I find deeply inspiring.

—Dr. Paula Johnson, newly named 14th president of Wellesley College

Dr. Paula Johnson’s Background

A native of Brooklyn, NY, Dr. Paula Johnson says she grew up on “the non-fancy side of Prospect Park.” Her mother, a school secretary, found the best public schools for her daughters, and her grandmother’s depression motivated her to become a doctor.

Dr. Johnson attended Harvard and Radcliffe Colleges, and she received her MD and MPH degrees from Harvard. She trained in internal and cardiovascular medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital.

Dr. Johnson was elected to the National Academy of Medicine, one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine. She has also been recognized as a national leader in medicine by the National Library of Medicine, was a 2015 honoree of the International Women’s Forum, and is the recipient of innumerable awards recognizing her ground-breaking

achievements on behalf of women.

She has also studied and created new models of leadership and has developed the training to educate the next generation of global leaders in the field of women’s health research and clinical care. In her 2013 TED Talk, “His and Hers Healthcare,” which has had over one million views, she says, “Women’s health is an equal rights issue as important as equal pay.”

She has served as chair of the board of the Boston Public Health Commission (Boston’s board of public health) and as a member of the National Institutes of Health Advisory Committee on Research on Women’s Health, in addition to serving on many national and international nonprofit boards.

Currently she lives in Brookline, MA, with her husband, their son and daughter, and a Havanese puppy.