FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wheelock College Names David J. Chard Its 14th President
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David J. Chard, Ph.D., Dean of the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development at Southern Methodist University, has been selected as the 14th President of Wheelock College.

The Wheelock College Board of Trustees, advised by a search committee that included faculty and involved extensive community wide input, unanimously approved the appointment of Dr. Chard. The search process was launched in summer 2015, after current President Jackie Jenkins-Scott announced that she would conclude her 12-year presidency at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year.

“We were fortunate to have an outstanding group of candidates, a testament to the enormous relevance of Wheelock’s mission of improving the lives of children and families. Dr. Chard stood out not only for his outstanding leadership at Southern Methodist University, but for his innovative thinking, focus on diversity and inclusion, and lifelong commitment to education,” said Kate Taylor, Chair of the Wheelock College Board of Trustees.

As the inaugural dean of the Simmons School of Education and Human Development at SMU, Dr. Chard created a strategic vision focused on undergraduate and graduate programs built on evidence-based practices. Among his accomplishments were developing a qualified and diverse faculty, strengthening interdisciplinary collaborations, building new academic programs and fostering a positive culture. During his ten-year tenure the Simmons School grew to include five departments with an operating budget of over $25 million. During Dr. Chard’s tenure more than $60 million was raised in support of the school and its mission.

“To launch a successful new school in a highly competitive and dynamic higher education market requires focus, commitment, passion and an ability to bring people together around a common vision,” said Bob Lincoln, co-chair of the Presidential Search Committee. “We are excited to see him bring that creative thinking to the Wheelock campus. I am confident that he will quickly apply his prodigious energies to assuring that Wheelock exceeds its academic and operational goals.”

“I love that Wheelock College sees diversity, access, and inclusiveness as keys to success and has combined this vision to create a culture focused on social justice through educational excellence and community engagement,” said Dr. Chard. “I am excited to grow the college’s capacity to advance the mission.”

Dr. Chard’s national reputation is reflected in his appointment by President Barack Obama to serve a three-year term on the Board of Directors for the National Board of Education. He is also a member of the International Academy for Research on Learning Disabilities

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and serves on the Board of Directors of the National Center for Learning Disabilities. Prior to his role at SMU, he served as the Associate Dean, Curriculum and Academic Programs and an Assistant/Associate Professor of Special Education at the University of Oregon. He has also held administrative and academic roles at the University of Texas-Austin and Boston University.

“During our conversations, Dr. Chard articulated a clear understanding that our efforts to train leaders with a focus on social impact continues to be critical,” said Susan Simon, co-chair of the Presidential Search Committee. “At the same time, he offered insightful ideas for new efforts to further attract faculty and students to our vibrant community.”

“David Chard has been the ideal dean to build the Annette Caldwell Simmons School of Education and Human Development as a national resource with a particular impact on our community,” said SMU President R. Gerald Turner. “He has led programs and attracted research funding that will strengthen the quality of education through evidence-based practices. He has made the Simmons school a strategic partner with the community in improving education opportunities for under-served young people. We wish him the best of success at Wheelock.”

A graduate of Central Michigan University with a BS in mathematics education and a Ph.D. in special education from the University of Oregon, Dr. Chard is a prolific researcher and scholar who has published more than 100 journal articles, monographs, book chapters, and books, including children’s textbooks in mathematics and literacy, among many other contributions to the field. He is also active in a number of community and professional organizations. Dr. Chard is the father of three adult children. His partner, Richard Lena, is an independent publisher of instructional materials and children’s literature.

Dr. Chard will begin his role as president effective July 1, 2016.

About Wheelock College

Since 1888, Wheelock College has known that improving the lives of children and families isn’t always easy – but it’s always worth it. We’re teachers, advocates, social workers, and agents of change—leaders who are committed to changing the world in the heart of Boston and around the world. We prepare students to lead change in any career they choose. We offer 21 undergraduate majors and 29 minors, 9 graduate programs and a multitude of non-degree program options – all of which prepare our graduates to inspire a world of good. For more information, visit wheelock.edu.

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