

Dr. Mariko Silver Appointed 10th President of Bennington College

Dr. Mariko Silver has been selected as the 10th president of Bennington College. A leading educational, public policy, and international strategist, she has held prominent roles at Columbia University, at Arizona State University, in the administration of Arizona's governor Janet Napolitano, and in the Obama administration. She will succeed Elizabeth Coleman, Bennington's president for 25 years, who retires this month.

"Mariko Silver embodies a new model for the American college president—someone who sees the world not as a set of givens but as a collection of resources to be harnessed," said Alan Kornberg '74, chairman of the Bennington College Board of Trustees. "She has an extraordinary intellectual and imaginative vitality, an outstanding track record, and a deep commitment to the College's pedagogic traditions and values. Dr. Silver's appointment also signals Bennington's ambitions to expand the influence of the College's founding ideals and contemporary practices in a world that is rapidly changing, that is simultaneously fragmented and interconnected, and that is, in every dimension, increasingly complex and global."

"I am thrilled and honored to lead Bennington, one of the nation's most innovative liberal arts colleges," Silver said. "Bennington stands as a unique and essential voice in the higher education landscape. In its emphasis on the essential role of creativity throughout the curriculum, its developing focus on public service, its commitment to the teacher-practitioner model, and through its most fundamental organizational design element, which places students—and graduates—at the center of what matters, Bennington is distinctly positioned to engage head-on many of the challenges and opportunities facing higher education in the coming decade."

Silver comes to Bennington from Arizona State University (ASU), where, as senior advisor to President Michael Crow, she was a key strategist in what Newsweek called "one of the most radical redesigns in higher learning since the origins of the modern university." She designed and led campus, community, and international initiatives focused on student engagement and accomplishment, on cutting-edge science, and on economic development. Silver also served as Professor of Practice in ASU's School of Politics and Global Studies and established international research and teaching partnerships, including the international University Design Consortium.

"Mariko Silver's ability to build programs and projects in collaboration with faculty, university leadership, and diverse community stakeholders is extraordinary," said ASU President Michael Crow. "Both Bennington and ASU, while obviously of different institutional scale, place extraordinary value on innovative institutional architecture, push pedagogical boundaries in service of the best educational experience for students, and pursue the best teaching and thought leadership outcomes to improve the global trajectory. Strategic, visionary, collaborative, Mariko is an innovative thinker steeped in the challenges and opportunities for organizational change in higher education and an outstanding choice to lead Bennington into the future."

Silver served in the Obama administration as Acting Assistant Secretary for International Affairs and Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Policy of the US Department of Homeland Security where she created the first department-wide international strategy, managed the Department's international engagements, and co-developed a global initiative to enhance aviation security. Prior to that, she served as Policy Advisor to Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, with responsibility for the state's public and private universities, community colleges, and vocational institutions; the

Arizona Department of Commerce; and Science Foundation Arizona. In these capacities she has worked with multiple communities and constituencies around the world and very close to home.

"Whether balancing the needs of diverse communities, championing projects that serve both public and private needs, or understanding the role that education, science, and technology play in economic development, Mariko Silver has the ability to develop and advance big ideas," said US Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano.

Silver holds a BA in History from Yale University, an MSc in Science and Technology Policy from the University of Sussex (UK), and a PhD in Economic Geography from the University of California at Los Angeles. She and her husband, musician Thom Loubet, have one child.