

Laurie Stenberg Nichols, Ph.D.
University of Wyoming President



Dr. Laurie Stenberg Nichols is a native of Colman, South Dakota and received her B.S. in Home Economics Education from South Dakota State University. Advanced degrees include a M.Ed. in Vocational and Adult Education from Colorado State University and Ph.D. in Family & Consumer Sciences Education/Family Studies from Ohio State University.

Dr. Nichols has taught at the secondary and post-secondary levels in South Dakota, Colorado, Nebraska, Ohio, Idaho and Iowa. She has received numerous teaching and research awards for her innovative teaching including her involvement in the creation of a 10-state, collaborative, on-line program called the Great Plains IDEA. From 1994-2009 she served as Dean of the College of Family and Consumer Sciences at South Dakota State University. In this capacity, Dr. Nichols provided campus leadership on several initiatives including diversity, academic advising, and strategic planning. She has secured numerous grants to collaborate with South Dakota tribal colleges in the areas of curriculum development, and articulation.

Dr. Nichols was an American Council on Education (ACE) Fellow, class of 2006-2007 where she spent fall semester on the campus of California State University at Fresno under the mentorship of President John Welty. From August 1, 2008 through mid-June, 2009, Nichols served as Interim President at Northern State University in Aberdeen, South Dakota. On June 22, 2009 she returned to her home campus at South Dakota State University as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

On May 16, 2016, Dr. Nichols became the 26th President of the University of Wyoming, and the first woman to hold this post. Despite assuming the Presidency in the midst of significant budget reductions, President Nichols effectively embraced her new role, encouraging a collaborative approach to budget reductions while keeping the university's core missions at the forefront. Further, she galvanized campus support to embrace change and begin developing a comprehensive strategic plan to guide the university for the next five years.

Dr. Nichols is a member of the Board of Trustees for the Barry Goldwater Scholarship. She is past-chair of South Dakota Voices for Children, a political advocacy group, and was a founding member of the Board that created the Brookings Boys and Girls Club. She also served on the Brookings Chamber of Commerce Board and the Planning and Zoning Commission for Brookings County.

Nichols is passionate about working with young people in solidifying educational and career goals and developing leadership skills.