

December 10, 2012 | For Immediate Release

**Kathleen McCartney, Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Named 11th President of Smith College**

NORTHAMPTON, Mass. — Kathleen McCartney, dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) and an internationally recognized authority on child development and early education, has been selected as the 11th president of Smith College.

A graduate of Tufts and Yale universities, McCartney is a Tufts trustee and represents Harvard on the founding board of edX, the online education consortium founded by Harvard and MIT. In her seven years as the head of HGSE, the school has raised $162 million, including two $10 million gifts in support of pioneering programs that have brought the university’s schools of business and government into partnership with the education school to prepare the next generation of education leaders.

In making the announcement, Elizabeth Mugar Eveillard, chair of the Smith College Board of Trustees, described McCartney as “an exceptional leader who understands Smith and the importance of women’s education in a resonant way.

“Kathy is a leader who inspires respect from everyone with whom she engages — students, staff, faculty, alumni,” Eveillard said. “As we got to know her, we quickly realized why she is held in such esteem by peers and colleagues at every level.”

Trustee Louise Parent, who chaired the search, said, “Kathy McCartney is a preeminent scholar, a nationally recognized leader in education, a proven innovator and a woman for the world.

“When we think about the future of Smith, we believe that its next decade will be its best decade,” Parent continued. “With Kathy leading Smith, we are putting a strong foundation in place to achieve this aspiration for our students and the entire Smith community. I couldn’t be more pleased that she will be our next president.”

“I am so proud to be appointed the 11th president of Smith College,” McCartney said. “While other colleges boast of naming a first woman president, Smith today announces its fifth. I am humbled to follow a group of remarkable leaders: Jill Ker Conway, Mary Maples Dunn, Ruth Simmons and Carol Christ, as well as Smith’s early presidents who believed so strongly in the rights and privileges of women. I look forward to building on the strong foundation provided through their collective legacies.

“The value of liberal arts education has never been clearer than it is today,” she continued. “Through a Smith education, women learn to examine arguments closely, test the limit of their judgment, step forward into leadership and exceed their own expectations. They learn to connect their values with their work. There is no greater goal in life.”

McCartney’s appointment is effective July 1, 2013, with her inauguration to follow in October. She succeeds Carol T. Christ, who has served as Smith's president since 2002. McCartney sent a video message to Smith students, faculty, staff and alumnae, expressing her excitement and pleasure at the opportunity to lead what she describes as a preeminent liberal arts college with a distinguished history and important mission. Because students and faculty are in their last week of classes, she will come to campus to greet the Smith community after the spring semester begins in January; the event will be webcast live.

McCartney, who holds the title of Gerald S. Lesser Professor in Early Childhood Development, is widely respected in higher education. Under her transformative leadership, HGSE launched an innovative doctorate in education leadership, a three-year tuition-free doctoral program designed in collaboration with faculty from the Harvard Business School and the Harvard Kennedy School. In just its third year, the Harvard Ed.L.D. is attracting approximately 500 applicants for 25 slots. The strategic planning McCartney led also resulted in a Ph.D in education, the first such degree ever approved by Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

“Kathy McCartney has been a superlative leader of our Ed School during a pivotal moment in its history,” said Drew Gilpin Faust, president of Harvard University. “She has guided the launch of an imaginative new doctoral program in education leadership, oriented to practice, as well as a highly interdisciplinary new Ph.D. program in education, oriented to research. She has strengthened and energized the faculty, increased student aid, deepened the school's connections with other parts of the university, and elevated its impact on the world of education far beyond Harvard.”

McCartney was the first in her family to go to college. Educated in the public schools of Medford, Mass., she went to Tufts University, where a faculty mentor encouraged her interest in psychology. She received a master’s and Ph.D from Yale, joined the Harvard psychology faculty as an assistant professor and was later tenured at the University of New Hampshire, where she was professor of psychology and family studies as well as director of the university’s child study and development center.

McCartney’s research concerns early experience and development; she has published more than 150 articles and chapters on childcare, early childhood education and poverty. A 1998 paper she co-authored with a national childcare research network provided compelling evidence that early childcare does not disrupt the mother-child bond.

Recruited from the University of New Hampshire to Harvard in 2000, she was tapped by then-president Larry Summers in 2005 to serve as acting dean of HGSE and then as permanent dean the following year. She has led a 25 percent growth in HGSE’s core faculty, a doubling of financial aid for master’s students, and a dramatic increase in fellowship support for doctoral students.

A central commitment of McCartney’s administration has been extending HGSE’s external relationships in the United States around the world. She has established a partner network of more than 30 school districts and non-profit organizations, raised funds for international faculty research, and addressed education ministries and faculties in Chile, Thailand and South Africa. Her work has been covered by *The New York Times,* CNN and *Education Week* and cited by columnist and author Nicholas Kristof.

A commitment to diversity has been a hallmark of McCartney’s deanship. Thirty-eight percent of tenure-track faculty hired during her tenure were men and women of color. She created a staff position dedicated to increasing applications from students of color; one result is that half of the students in the new Ed.L.D. doctoral program in education leadership are people of color and more than half are women. To support an inclusive learning and professional environment she convened work groups and advisory bodies around issues of equity and diversity.

McCartney is especially proud of HGSE’s engagement with national anti-bullying efforts, which included the production of one of the first videos by a college or university in support of the “It Gets Better” campaign. In early 2012, she invited singer and songwriter Lady Gaga to Harvard to speak about her experience of being bullied in high school, an event that also drew talk show host Oprah Winfrey and U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and which Gaga used to launch her anti-bullying, youth-empowering “Born This Way” foundation.

McCartney is a member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences and the National Academy of Education, as well as a recipient of the Distinguished Contribution Award from the Society for Research in Child Development. She is a Fellow of the American Education Research Association, the American Psychological Association and the American Psychological Society. *The Boston Globe* named her one of the 30 most innovative people in Massachusetts in 2011.

McCartney will be joined at Smith by her husband, Bill Hagen, who was a member of the English faculty at Phillips Exeter Academy for more than 20 years and is currently teaching at the Maimonides School in Brookline, Mass. Their four children have attended Keene State College, Middlebury College, the University of New Hampshire and Wesleyan University.

McCartney’s appointment is the culmination of a year-long international search by a 12-member committee. Elizabeth Eveillard, board chair, commended Parent for her leadership of the search and offered thanks to her fellow committee members for their extensive and thoughtful work, noting that McCartney was the committee's unanimous choice from an exceptional pool of candidates. “From the beginning, Kathy stood out as a leader who will guide Smith College to its best possible future,” she said. Referring to the college’s founder, she noted, “Sophia Smith’s legacy is in excellent hands.”

McCartney expressed gratitude to President Carol Christ and the board for astute management of the college over the last decade, a period that has presented significant challenges to higher education and to students and families seeking to afford the best education available. She commended Smith’s commitment to making high-quality education accessible to first-generation and low-income students, as well as the Futures Initiative, a far-reaching set of strategic-thinking conversations in which board members, senior administrators and faculty developed a framework to guide the college in facing risks and embracing opportunities in the coming decades.

“The Futures Initiative demonstrates how well-positioned Smith is to address the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead with respect to enrollment models, global engagement and new academic programs,” McCartney said. “Clearly, Smith is prepared to be bold in the new world of higher education.”

Founded in 1871, Smith College enrolls 2,750 students from every U.S. state and 60 countries. Its 47,000 alumnae live and work in every U.S. state and more than 100 countries. Smith is a top producer of Fulbright Fellows; second in the nation among baccalaureate institutions in the number of students studying abroad for a full year; and host to the only accredited engineering program at a U.S. women’s college. The Smith College School for Social Work is one of the country’s top-ranked programs in clinical social work, offering both the master’s and Ph.D.