



From the Office of the President

John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J.

REGIS UNIVERSITY | DENVER, COLORADO

Regis University Announces New Chief Academic Officer

Office of the President

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After a national search, Regis University has named Karen Riley, Ph.D., as its new provost, effective May 1. In this role, Riley will serve as the chief academic officer and oversee Regis' three colleges and enrollment management.

Riley has served as dean of the Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver since 2014. She also serves as the university's strategic director for health initiatives, an effort to nurture signature research programs.

Regis President the Rev. John P. Fitzgibbons, S.J., said Riley brings to Regis a record of achievement in student success, academic research, attracting talent and providing visionary leadership.



“Regis University is very excited about Dr. Riley becoming our Provost. Her academic prowess, leadership skills, strategic thinking, and commitment to our core values will serve our university very well.”

As dean, Riley was successful in doubling the college’s grants, increasing scholarly productivity by 150 percent, and achieving a 30-position rise in U.S. News rankings.

“I am excited to join Regis, a university that is committed to making a difference in the lives of its students, and where there is a true sense of living the Jesuit and Catholic mission,” Riley said. “Throughout my career I have assumed leadership roles during times of significant transition and instability, though none as daunting as a pandemic. I look forward to helping guide Regis into the post-pandemic era and prepare our students for great success this new world.”

Riley is an internationally recognized expert in neurodevelopmental disorders, and her scholarship focuses on interdisciplinary and intersystem approaches to addressing the complex issues of today’s society and improving the lives of children and families affected by Fragile X syndrome and Down syndrome.

A lifelong Coloradan, Riley graduated from Lutheran High School in Parker before earning a bachelor’s degree in psychology at Colorado State University. She earned both her master’s degree in early childhood special education and her doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Denver. She also completed a two-year, post-doctoral fellowship at the Children’s Hospital in Denver in the Fragile X Treatment and Research Center and subsequently worked at the Child Development Unit within the hospital.

Riley began her career by serving 11 years as an early childhood specialist and an early childhood special education coordinator in the Adams 12 School District based in Thornton.

She succeeds Janet Houser, Ph.D., who is retiring after serving as provost for five years. Following a sabbatical, she will return to teaching at Regis. Houser has served Regis for more than 20 years and has held several academic and leadership roles at Regis including academic dean of the Rueckert-Hartman College for Health Professions.

[Regis University | Provost-designate Announcement \(youtube.com\)](#)