On Campus

Varmus and Wattleton Are Columbia's Newest Trustees

Harold Varmus, M.D. ’66P&S and Faye Wattleton ’67PH have been elected University Trustees.

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Varmus, president and chief executive officer of New York’s Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, is one of the world’s foremost cancer researchers. He and J. Michael Bishop, M.D., shared the Nobel Prize for Physiology or Medicine in 1989 for their discovery that normal human and animal cells contain genes that can mutate to cancer genes. The achievement revolutionized cancer research, leading scientists around the world to search for the genetic origins of cancer.

Last June President George W. Bush awarded Varmus the National Medal of Science, the nation’s highest honor for achievement in science and technology.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton appointed Varmus director of the National Institutes of Health, and in Varmus’s six years in the position he is credited with reinvigorating the nation’s biomedical research enterprise. By 1999, he had sparked changes in the conduct of its intramural and extramural research programs, appointed new leaders to many of its institutes, and was instrumental in increasing the agency’s annual budget from under $11 billion to nearly $18 billion.

Varmus is the author of more than 300 scientific papers, as well as four books, including Genes and the Biology of Cancer, an introduction to the genetic basis of cancer written for a general audience.

Faye Wattleton is president and co-founder of the Center for Gender Equality, an independent research and educational institution that advances equality for women. She is one of the nation’s most influential advocates for women’s health and reproductive rights.

From 1978 to 1992, she was president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the nation’s oldest and largest voluntary reproductive health organization. Under her leadership, the organization grew to become the nation’s seventh largest charity, providing medical and educational services to four million Americans each year. It also initiated Family Planning International Assistance, which offers planning programs in dozens of developing nations.

Business Week named Wattleton one of the best managers of nonprofit organizations in America, and Money magazine selected her as one of the five outstanding Americans to project the forces that would shape life in the year 2000. She has also received the American Humanist Award, the American Public Health Association’s Award for Excellence, and the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation Humanitarian Award, as well as fourteen honorary degrees.

She currently serves on the boards of the Estée Lauder Companies Inc., Bio-Technology General Corp., Empire Blue Cross and Blue Shield, Quidel Corporation, the Eisenhower Fellowships, the Institute for International Education, Jazz at Lincoln Center, and the United Nations Association of the United States of America.



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