


June 28, 2023

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees
FROM: Dr. Radenka Maric 
RE: Naming Recommendation for Susan V. Herbst Hall

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees rename Oak Hall on Storrs Campus as “Susan V. Herbst Hall.”

BACKGROUND:

Susan V. Herbst served with distinction as UConn’s President from 2011 to 2019. Her tenure was defined by growing academic and research strength, investments in faculty and student support, ever-increasing rates of student success, a rising national reputation, dramatic increases in applications and student enrollment, increased diversity within the student body, philanthropic success, investments in campus facilities and the opening of important new facilities, major revenue growth at UConn Health, the establishment of a large and vibrant new campus in downtown Hartford, monumental investments in UConn by the State of Connecticut through NextGen Connecticut and Bioscience Connecticut, and the overall modernization of the university and many of its operations, to name only a few.

Hers was one of the most eventful and consequential presidencies in the University’s history.

Though she had numerous senior administrative appointments in her career and generated the accomplishments to match, President Herbst always remained, at her core, a professor. Even with the myriad responsibilities of being a president crowding her schedule day and night, she still found the time to teach undergraduate courses at UConn during multiple semesters during her tenure. She returned to being a full-time scholar and teacher after stepping down as president and continues to teach, mentor students, and produce new scholarship.

As both a faculty member and as president, President Herbst placed enormous value on the role of American colleges and universities in our free and democratic society and on the importance of academic life and achievement among both faculty and students – always defined by exploration, discovery, and innovation.

President Herbst relishes the intellectual give-and-take found in a classroom (or in any venue), spirited debate, posing challenging questions and leading discussions designed to provoke truly thoughtful interactions, and the process of pushing students to strive, grow, and achieve academically and personally.

Oak Hall opened in August 2012, and sits in the historic core of UConn's Storrs campus. The 132,197 GSF square foot building is comprised of 30 classrooms and 97 faculty offices and is home to many of UConn's social sciences and humanities departments. This vast and modern space greatly enhanced student and faculty life and UConn and generations of Huskies will walk through its halls and learn in its classrooms in the decades to come.

In recognition of President Herbst's distinguished service and proud record of accomplishment as President; her highly successful academic and institutional leadership; her actions and decisions made in support of our students, faculty, staff and all of UConn Nation; and her tireless work to ensure that UConn is home to exceptional facilities on beautiful campuses, we recommend that Oak Hall be renamed "Susan V. Herbst Hall."

The Institutional Advancement Committee approved this recommendation on June 12, 2023.