WOMEN'S NONPROFIT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

For Institutions of Higher Education

Model Letter to be sent using actual names of those holding these offices: Board Chair,College/University President, President of Alumnae/i Association, woman trustee.

Dear (fill in appropriate name and or title):

I'm writing as a concerned *college/university name* (pick one: alumna/us, employee, student, donor) to share a study focused on strategies to improve board diversity, an important pre-requisite to achieving true institution-wide diversity, equity and inclusion. I realize that these are challenging times in higher education, and I appreciate the fact that trustees must make difficult decisions to insure the institution survives and thrives.

In that spirit, I looked at the composition of our board of trustees and was surprised/troubled to see how few women and people of color are represented, in spite of the increasingly diverse makeup of the staff and students, who also face the challenges of succeeding in an ever more diverse nation.

Recent national research supports the value of and need for board diversity among higher education and healthcare organizations and offers clear strategies for making change. Based on in-depth interviews with women and men who serve on university and healthcare boards, this study reveals the obstacles women and people of color encounter in becoming board candidates and effective board members and provides clear recommendations for change. *Increasing Gender Diversity on the Boards of Nonprofit Eds and Meds: How and Why to Do It* can be found here:-https://www.wnli.org/studies

I hope you will read it and share it with key trustees if not the entire board.

For President of the Alumnae/i Association, add the following paragraph:

Since ____college/university depends on its alums for many kinds of support, I believe its leaders would be interested in and influenced by an alumnae/i association that expressed its views on the importance of a more diverse board.

Sincerely,

Your Name

www.wnli.org