



BOARD MEMBER RUTH V. WATKINS, PhD

Dr. Ruth V. Watkins joined the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation's Board of Directors in 2018.

Board Member Ruth V. Watkins began serving as the 16th president of the University of Utah on April 2, 2018. Prior to that, she served as the U's senior vice president for academic affairs. In that role, she provided leadership for the university's academic mission, guiding the campus on matters related to faculty, staff, and students. She also helped set the U's strategic direction and align its resources with academic priorities. Ruth is an advocate for advancing the success and impact of the U as a top-tier research university, including enhancing student success through degree completion and expanding research and creative activity.

Ruth came to Utah in 2013 from the University of Illinois, where she spent 20 years in leadership and faculty roles, including associate provost for undergraduate education, vice provost and chief of staff, and dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She began her academic career at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her scholarship focuses on communication development and disabilities in young children.

Ruth's research and training endeavors have been funded by the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Education, as well as Lumina Foundation. She also has a certificate of clinical competence in speech-language pathology. In 2003, she was named a fellow of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Ruth has received recognition for excellence in teaching; her scholarship has been widely published in journals and books.

Ruth graduated with highest honors from the University of Northern Iowa with a Bachelor's degree in speech-language pathology. She earned a Master's degree and a Doctorate in child language at the University of Kansas.

