



## **Ball State University President Jo Ann M. Gora Biography**

Jo Ann M. Gora has served as Ball State University's 14th president since 2004. She quickly demonstrated her commitment to putting students first by declining an inauguration and instead establishing a scholarship fund for 25 high-achieving students. She has led the development of the university's Education Redefined strategic plan, which is in its final year of implementation. The cornerstone of that plan is making immersive learning opportunities available to every student.

In the first four years of strategic plan innovation, more than 12,000 students completed more than 750 immersive learning projects in 70 Indiana counties under the mentoring of faculty from every university academic department. Gora has increased Ball State's commitment to emerging media, campus diversity, and developing nationally ranked academic programs. The strategic plan was the basis for the university's successful capital campaign, Ball State Bold: Investing in the Future, which topped its \$200 million goal by more than \$10 million. The university celebrated its conclusion by introducing 55 Bold Celebration Scholars in March 2011 at the Indiana Statehouse, repeating the successful model of the scholarships awarded at the beginning of her presidency.

Gora was one of the 12 charter signatories to the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment in 2006. In May 2009, Gora and other officials broke ground on the largest geothermal district energy system in the United States, and Phase One, which will allow Ball State to shut down two coal-fired boilers, will be dedicated in March 2012. When Phase Two is finished, the system will heat and cool more than 45 buildings on Ball State's campus, saving the university \$2 million a year while reducing its carbon footprint by nearly half. For its sustainability commitment, the university has been ranked in The Princeton Review's Guide to 311 Green Colleges, and has earned a Second Nature Climate Leadership Award. In 2010, Ball State was named the Technology Innovator of the Year by the Hoosier Environmental Council.

In May 2009, Gora received the Mira Trailblazer Award from TechPoint for her significant and lasting contributions to technology innovation in Indiana. Among Ball State's many recent technological achievements was its 2005 designation as the nation's top wireless campus by Intel and the university's Emerging Media Initiative, to which Ball State is dedicating more than \$25 million. Announced in late 2008, the initiative funds more research in emerging media, assists Ball State faculty and students in launching new businesses, and helps companies, especially those in Indiana, to improve their emerging media capabilities.

Forty Ball State programs have been nationally recognized since 2007, including accounting, architecture, the online master's program in business administration, educational leadership, graduate programs in education,

insurance and risk management, landscape architecture, music, nursing, sales, and the master's program in urban and regional planning. Leading the way in national recognition is undergraduate entrepreneurship, which has been ranked in the U.S. News & World Report top 15 every year since 1999.

Since Gora's arrival, approximately \$418 million of completed or current construction and renovation has changed the face of Ball State's campus. Notable new buildings include the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, the Music Instruction Building, the Student Recreation and Wellness Center, Kinghorn Residence Hall, Park Residence Hall, and the Marilyn K. Glick Center for Glass.

President Gora began serving a four-year term on the American Council on Education's Board of Directors in 2011. She is a member of the Association of Governing Boards' Council of Presidents and is on the advisory committee of the Association's executive search arm. She was a charter member of The New York Times/Chronicle of Higher Education higher education cabinet. She chairs the Mid-American Conference Presidents' Council and co-chairs the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership, where she previously chaired the governance committee. She serves on the boards of First Merchants Bank, Ball Memorial Hospital, and the Indiana Chamber of Commerce.

Gora was named one of 2007's most influential women in Indiana by the Indianapolis Business Journal and one of 15 "Women of Wonder" in the spring 2008 issue of Indiana Minority Business Magazine. In 2005, she received a Torchbearer Award from the Indiana Commission for Women for her commitment to higher education. The award is the highest honor given by the state of Indiana to Hoosier women who have overcome or removed barriers to equality or whose achievements have contributed to making the state a better place in which to live, work or raise a family. She also received a Sagamore of the Wabash, Indiana's highest civilian honor, in 2005. In 2008, she was awarded an honorary doctorate from Yeungnam University in South Korea.

Gora came to Ball State from the University of Massachusetts Boston, where she had been chancellor since 2001. Previously, she served for nine years as provost and vice president for academic affairs at Old Dominion University in Virginia. She earned her bachelor's degree in political science from Vassar College and master's and doctoral degrees in sociology from Rutgers University. She has published two books, *The New Female Criminal: Empirical Reality or Social Myth?* and *Emergency Squad Volunteers: Professionalism in Unpaid Work*, as well as numerous articles in the fields of criminology, medical sociology, and organizational behavior. She has recently co-authored two book chapters on campus sustainability initiatives.