

Community reflects on Book

Many members of the Elon community happy with incoming president

Margaret Malone
News Editor | @megretjeane



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I AM EXCITED TO SEE A NEW PRESIDENT IN ACTION. I HOPE SHE ADDRESSES ISSUES REGARDING ... MINORITY STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

ZEKE GONZALEZ
FRESHMAN



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KNOWING THAT [BOOK] HAS HISTORY WITH THE SCHOOL MAKES ME SURE THAT SHE KNOWS THE ENVIRONMENT AND STUDENT VALUES

NOAH DYSON
FRESHMAN



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I HOPE [THE NEW PRESIDENT DOES] SOMETHING ... ABOUT THE LACK OF DIVERSITY ON ELON'S CAMPUS

JACOB HAYWARD
FRESHMAN



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[BOOK] TRANSCENDS GENDER AS AN ISSUE, AS AN ADMINISTRATOR AND AS A PERSON. SHE IS THE BEST PERSON FOR THE JOB REGARDLESS, IN ALL KINDS OF WAYS

THOMAS ARCARO
PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY



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SHE IS THE RIGHT PERSON REGARDLESS OF GENDER, BUT SHE ALSO BRINGS GREAT HISTORY AND CONTEXT

GLEN SCOTT
ASSOCIATE COMMUNICATIONS PROFESSOR



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MOST OF OUR STUDENT BODY IS FEMALE, SO THIS WILL GIVE ELON WOMEN A VERY STRONG ROLE MODEL, SOMEONE TO LOOK UP TO

CLAUDINE MOREAU
LECTURER IN PHYSICS

Though Elon University students and faculty prepare for a tearful farewell when President Leo Lambert departs in March 2018, his replacement, incoming president Connie Ledoux Book, has pacified many of their fears.

The Elon University board of trustees announced Monday morning, Oct. 9, that Book would step into Lambert's shoes March 1, 2018 as Elon's ninth president. Students and faculty are most excited to see the university appoint the first female president in its 128-year history.

Senior Rachel Tinker is one of the students excited to see a woman fill a historically male role.

"I think that'll bring a new perspective to Elon that we haven't had with our past eight presidents," Tinker said. "But I think she's going to also continue leading Elon with the great integrity the rest of them have."

Book steps into this position during a time when less than half of university and college presidents are women. According to the American Council on Education, just 30 percent of college and university presidents in the United States are female. Out of 130 college and university presidents in North Carolina last year, only 23 percent were women.

Claudine Moreau, a lecturer in physics, said she relates to Book in regards to working in a male-dominated field.

"As a female in a field where there are not many women, it is really great to see Elon's first female president and seeing women making their mark," Moreau said. "For me it is something to look up to."

Moreau said she hopes female students will have similar feelings.

"Most of our student body is female, so this will give Elon women a very strong role model, someone to look up to," Moreau said.

Junior Anthony Chatman said the board of trustees' election of Book was a demonstration of how Elon's community is taking a step in the right direction.

"I'm very excited for the new president [and] that they found somebody sooner rather than later," Chatman said. "I'm excited that she's a woman — that's very progressive. [And I'm] very proud of Elon for going in that direction."

Thomas Arcaro, a professor of sociology, said he thinks others will be similarly impressed with the trustees' decision.

"In terms of our national reputation, it will be an absolute plus," Arcaro said. "If we had had another white male as president, there would have been some eyes rolling. ... I can't read what the newspapers have said yet ... but I can't see it being seen as anything other than a total plus."

"[Book] transcends gender as an issue, as an administrator and as a person. She is the best person for the job regardless, in all kinds of ways. I feel very positive about [Book]."

Book comes to Elon from The Citadel where she has served as provost for the past two years, but this will not be her first time on campus. Book was a member of Elon's faculty from 1999-2015.

She began her career at Elon as a communications faculty member and was later promoted to associate professor and department chair, then again to associate dean of the School of Communications.

Book became associate provost for academic affairs in 2010 and managed numerous academic programs while also leading the creation of the Student Professional Development Center and the residential campus plan.

"Knowing that she has history with the school makes me sure that she knows the environment and student values," said freshman Noah Dyson.

Junior Jessica Pusch agreed that her previous experiences — at Elon and elsewhere — have prepared Book for this role.

"She's a really qualified

woman for the job," Pusch said. "I think it's going to bring a lot to the university at a time a lot of changes are going on. We need someone that's really stable and has a lot of experience."

Glenn Scott, associate professor of communications, said he thinks Book is the right person for this position.

"She is the right person regardless of gender, but she also brings great history and context," Scott said.

Scott said Book's father left a big impression on his daughter. He told her "that she could do whatever she wanted and she didn't have to let gender have any effect on that," Scott said. "She has carried that message through in her life, and I think it is a timely and great message to share with all of our students."

Freshman Jacob Hayward said he hopes Book's familiarity with the Elon community combined with her experiences at other universities will help her to make progress on issues weighing on students' minds.

"I hope they do something, and I know they're kind of starting touching on this, about the lack of diversity on Elon's campus," Hayward said. "That's something that could always use improvement."

Freshman Zeke Gonzalez expressed a similar optimism.

"I am excited to see a new president in action," Gonzalez said. "I hope she addresses issues regarding low income students [and] minority students on campus in general."

"I know this campus is predominantly affluent and caucasian ... I know Elon has a long history with a little bit of tension between different ethnic and minority groups ... I am looking forward to a president who will address those issues in particular."

Dyson said it is important to remember that the promotion of inclusivity goes beyond facts and figures.

"Inclusivity. I think we can always grow in that area, not just with numbers and not just diversity numbers, but actually building a community where empathy and understanding of others is important, where it is encouraged," Dyson said. "And there are platforms set aside to build that within the community here at Elon."

Alexandra Roat and Jared Mayerson, contributors, Alexandra Schonfeld, lifestyle editor, and Anton L. Delgado, assistant news editor, contributed reporting.

SPDC looks forward to Book's return to Elon

Connie Book was a pivotal part of the SPDC's redesign

Deirdre Kronschnabel
Contributor | @kronchid

Incoming president Connie Ledoux Book was a member of Elon University's faculty for more than 16 years before serving as provost of The Citadel, and one department in particular holds her in a special place of reverence, pride and friendship.

During Book's tenure as professor and associate provost for academic affairs in 2010, her responsibility extended to overseeing Elon Core Curriculum, the Elon Experiences and student engagement. This included, among other initiatives, fostering student professional development.

"She was able to turn career services upside-down," said Kim Giles, Student Professional Development Center (SPDC) communications manager. "She actually tapped me to lead the team of student ambassadors for the new career services offices, and I felt very privileged to be put in that position. With her guidance, we were able to really become a premiere department on campus. And not only on campus, but also known throughout the United States."

Book completely redesigned career services with the establishment of the SPDC, and this contributed to her achievement as a recipient of Elon's Ward Family Excellence in Mentoring Award in 2009 for a "sustained commitment to undergraduates."

Thomas Brinkley, executive director of the SPDC has known Book since she joined the Elon community six years ago.

"I always enjoyed her support in the Provost Office and missed her energy and enthusiasm for the past 2 1/2 years," Brinkley said. "I'm delighted that she has returned to Elon."

The sentiment is shared throughout the SPDC office.

"This morning when I came into work I heard cheers in the office, and that was when I realized that Connie Book was going to be Elon's next president," Giles said.

The SPDC faculty know what Book is capable of and are excited to see where she takes the university.

"Connie will be a fantastic president at Elon," Brinkley said. "She is approachable, listens to and evaluates ideas as well as anyone I've worked with, and empowers people to act for the betterment of Elon."

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THOMAS BRINKLEY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF STUDENT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER