

Universities Caribbean | Universidades Caribe | Universités Caraïbe

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Search and Consultation Committee 2025
University of Puerto Rico Governing Board
Central Administration Building, 1st Floor,
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Subject : Strong Recommendation for Professor Wilma Santiago Gabrielini

Dear Members of the Search and Consultation Committee,

On behalf of the President and the Executive Committee of Universities Caribbean, the consortium of Caribbean universities and research institutes, it is our distinct privilege to offer our strongest endorsement of Professor Wilma Santiago Gabrielini as a candidate for the Presidency of the University of Puerto Rico.

Pr. Santiago Gabrielini is a distinguished academic leader with over 30 years of dedicated service in higher education. Her long and accomplished tenure within the University of Puerto Rico System has been marked by visionary leadership, administrative excellence, and an unshakable commitment to educational equity and student success. She has served in a range of senior leadership roles, including Interim Rector at both the Mayagüez and Utuado campuses, Vice President of Philanthropy for the UPR System, Dean of Students and Dean of Administration at UPR-Mayagüez, and Director of both Institutional Planning and Global Alliances, among others.

Throughout these positions, Pr. Santiago Gabrielini has demonstrated a capacity to lead with clarity, integrity, and purpose. Her leadership has consistently emphasized access, inclusion and as contributed to the internationalization of higher education. She is a tireless advocate for ensuring that all students—especially women and those from underserved communities—have equitable access to transformative educational opportunities.

As a member of Universities Caribbean, Pr. Santiago Gabrielini has made meaningful contributions to advancing regional cooperation in higher education. Her active participation in our initiatives, including strategic working groups and academic partnerships, has helped strengthen ties between Puerto Rico and institutions across the Caribbean. Her leadership has been particularly valuable in promoting cross-border collaboration, student mobility, and faculty development programs that reflect the shared goals of our regional academic community.

Professor Santiago Gabrielini also brings a unique and powerful combination of academic, architectural, and philanthropic expertise. Her understanding of both academic

strategy and campus infrastructure, combined with a demonstrated ability to attract external support, makes her exceptionally well-prepared to address the complex challenges facing the University of Puerto Rico today. We see her candidacy as representing an opportunity to elevate not only the institution but also the role of women in academic leadership—something she has championed throughout her career. Her unwavering dedication to empowering others, coupled with a deep belief in the public mission of the university, make her a compelling and timely choice to lead the UPR System into the future.

The Executive Committee of Universities Caribbean offers its full and enthusiastic support for Professor Wilma Santiago Gabrielini's candidacy. We are confident that her leadership will strengthen the University of Puerto Rico and contribute meaningfully to the broader academic advancement of our region. We look forward to continued collaboration with her in this new chapter of service and leadership.

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Myriam Moïse

Executive Secretary-General

On behalf of the President, Professor Miriam Nicado, Rector of Universidad de La Habana, and on behalf of the Executive Committee of the consortium Universities Caribbean, composed of the Rectors and Vice-Chancellors of Universidad Simón Bolívar (UNISIMON), University of the West Indies (UWI), and Université d'État d'Haïti (UEH).