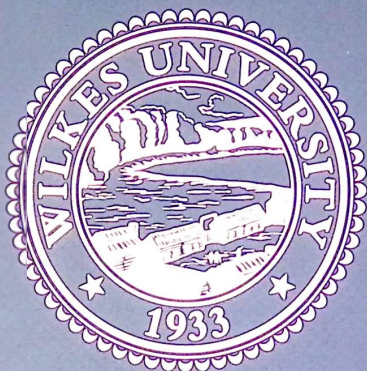




ADDRESS BY
Marcela Paredes de Vásquez
Minister of Education, Republic of Panama

10:30 a.m.
Friday, February 12
Dorothy Dickson Darte Center

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Welcome!

Wilkes University is honored to host Minister Marcela Paredes de Vázquez as we begin this historic educational partnership with Panama. We look forward to a collaboration that benefits Panama and its citizens, leverages the strengths of the University's colleges and schools and enriches the Wilkes educational experience for our students.

Our comprehensive partnership with Panama reflects the spirit and principles upon which Wilkes University was founded more than 80 years ago. The programs being advanced by Panama's

Ministry of Education have the purpose of providing opportunities for that country's best and brightest while at the same time giving access to higher education for more students.

During the minister's visit, we signed an agreement paving the way for educational partnerships in fields that include education and STEM fields. This agreement is in addition to our participation in the MEDUCA-Bilingual Panama initiative. We already are hosting a cohort of teachers at Wilkes for seven weeks of study. An initiative of the president of Panama, Juan Carlos Varela, and run under the auspices of Panama's Ministry of Education, the program is part of a national commitment in that country to develop bilingualism in the country's public schools.

In January, I also signed an agreement with Isabel Saint Malo de Alvarado, Panama's vice president and minister of foreign affairs, for Wilkes to provide educational opportunities for Panama's diplomatic corps. Wilkes also has signed agreements of collaboration with four Panamanian universities: Universidad de Panama, Universidad Tecnológica de Panama, Universidad Especializada de las Américas y Universidad Latina.

In establishing this historic partnership, we are building an alliance that will help us to reach the goals of our strategic plan, which call for us to increase our international engagement while at the same time furthering our mission to create one of the great small universities in the United States.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Patrick F. Leahy". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "P" and "L".

Patrick F. Leahy
President

ORDER OF EXERCISES

Welcome Dr. Anne Skleder
Senior Vice President and Provost, Wilkes University

National Anthem of Panama
 National Anthem of The United States

Remarks Mr. Christopher Hackett
Vice Chair, Board of Trustees, Wilkes University

The Honorable Anthony George
Mayor, City of Wilkes-Barre

The Honorable John Yudichak
14th District, Pennsylvania State Senate

The Honorable Wil Del Pilar
Deputy Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Education

Musical Selection Wilkes University Chamber Singers
Sicut Cervus, Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Remarks Dr. Patrick Leahy
President, Wilkes University

Awarding of Honorary Degree Dr. Patrick Leahy
 The Honorable Marcela Paredes de Vásquez
Minister of Education, Republic of Panama

“Education in Today’s Global World”

Wilkes University Alma Mater Wilkes University Chamber Singers



Marcela Paredes de Vásquez

Marcela Paredes de Vásquez is the minister of education for the Republic of Panama. Paredes de Vásquez started her career as an engineering professor and has risen in the ranks of academia to now serve under President Juan Carlos Varela, emerging as a transformative voice in education in Panama. As minister of education, she is responsible for overseeing educational initiatives and policy for all of Panama’s public and private K-12 schools and its public and private universities.

Among her accomplishments as minister of education is the development of the MEDUCA-Bilingual Panama initiative, a program of President Varela, aimed at increasing the quality of English teaching in public schools through immersion and teacher training in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. Since becoming minister, she also has set goals to improve working conditions and professional development for teachers, invest in STEM education, make investments in early childhood and elementary education and infrastructure and improve work conditions of teachers in the public school system.

Before assuming her current position in 2014, she served as the Secretary, Consejo Nacional de Evaluación y Acreditación Universitaria de Panamá. She was president of Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá, Panama’s premier technological university, from 2008 to 2013, earning her recognition from the National Secretariat of Science, Technology and Innovation as one of 10 pioneer women in science in Panama. Her other positions at the university include serving as vice president for academic affairs, provost, dean and chair of electrical potency in the School of Electrical Engineering, research coordinator, and as a tenured professor.

She has a bachelor’s degree in electromechanical engineering from Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá, where she also earned an advanced degree in potency systems, controls systems and management. She earned a graduate degree from the Instituto Argentino de Capacitación en la Rama Eléctrica, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She holds a master’s degree in electrical engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, in New York, and is a Fulbright Fellow. She has been published widely in university presses and is a member of key Panamanian and international scientific and educational committees, including UNESCO organizational bodies.

Paredes de Vásquez was presented with the Distinguished Woman award by the Panama City government. For achievements in the field of education, technological developments and contributions to the homeland, the Circle of Intellectual Women of Panama named her Woman of the Year in 2008.

She received the Managerial Excellence as President Award by the faculty of the Universidad Tecnológica de Panamá and received a recognition plaque for her merits as president of the Council of Presidents of Universities.

She was a member of the administrative council of the International Higher Education Institute for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNESCO, a founding member of Network of Women Leaders in Higher Education in Latin America, and also president of the Panamanian Association of the Advancement of the Science.

ALMA MATER

Wilkes, our Alma Mater,
we pledge our hearts to thee.
Honor, faith, and courage,
Truth and loyalty.
In our work as in our pleasure,
Guide us as a friend;
We shall always love thee,
Loyal to the end.

Thou shalt lead us onward
In search of finer things.
May we find the wisdom
That thy spirit brings.
May our deeds of love and service
Ever swell thy fame—
Wilkes, we stand to greet thee!
Glory to thy name!





WILKES UNIVERSITY

84 WEST SOUTH STREET, WILKES-BARRE, PA
www.wilkes.edu