



Barbara O. Korner, PhD

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A national leader for the arts and leadership development in higher education, Barbara “Bobbi” Korner has consulted and coached as a planning facilitator and communications strategist for a wide range of groups in higher education. As dean of Penn State’s College of Arts and Architecture from 2007-2019, she led the development of a bustling Arts District on the northern end of campus. She directed one of the most comprehensive design, visual and performing arts organizations in higher education, with 15 different buildings, seven academic units and 20 degree programs, as well as the Center for the Performing Arts, Palmer Museum of Art, Penn State Centre Stage, and Penn’s Woods Music Festival.

During her tenure, the college expanded its research centers from two to five, encouraging interdisciplinary research, collaborative pedagogy, and arts entrepreneurship. In addition, she oversaw the opening of a renovated classroom and administrative complex, a new 375-seat recital hall, and the revitalization of the Woskob Family Gallery in partnership with the Borough of State College. She successfully launched planning efforts and commitments for a new art museum more than doubling the space of the current facility, scheduled to open in 2023.

With a strategic priority on private funding, she assisted in raising more than \$150 million for the College. The College’s total endowment more than doubled to \$82 million. She was instrumental in obtaining one of the college’s largest single donor gifts, a \$20 million commitment to name the Stuckeman School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. A focus on scholarships resulted in the college nearly doubling the amount of money available for students to more than \$1.8 million annually.

Dean Korner served as co-founder and co-director of the [Association for Theatre in Higher Education’s](#) (ATHE) Leadership Institute from 2000 to 2016, which has worked with more than 250 arts faculty and administrators. She has served on the multiple arts boards, including ATHE, Arts & Design Alumni Research (SNAAP), International Council of Fine Arts Deans (ICFAD), and was a founder and first chair of the executive committee of the Alliance for the Arts in Research Universities (a2ru). She was elected by her peers to serve as chair of Penn State’s Academic Leadership Council and chaired the University’s United Way Campaign and Forum Speakers’ Bureau.

Before coming to Penn State, she served in senior arts administrative roles at the University of Florida, Seattle Pacific University, and as chief of staff to the chancellor at the University of Missouri-Columbia. Korner holds a Ph.D. in interdisciplinary fine arts from Ohio University, where she was named a Distinguished Alumna in 2004.

Korner maintains an active role as a performing artist, is the writer and performer of *Responding to the Call: African-American Women Preachers* and co-editor (with Carla Waal) of *Hardship and Hope: Missouri Women Writing about their Lives*. In 2016, she and Mark Heckler were co-recipients of ATHE’s Career Achievement Award. They are co-editors of *Cultivating Leadership: A Primer for Academic Theatre Programs*.