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Sept. 21, 2009

Media Web site: <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

France A. Córdova Appointed to the Smithsonian's Board of Regents

France A. Córdova, president of Purdue University in Indiana, has been appointed a member of the Smithsonian's Board of Regents. President Barack Obama signed the resolution appointing her as a citizen regent, effective Sept. 21. Córdova's six-year term begins immediately.

Córdova, 62, joins the 17-member Smithsonian Board of Regents, which includes nine citizen members, three members of the House of Representatives and three members of the Senate, as well as the Chief Justice of the United States and the Vice President, both ex officio voting members. The Board of Regents is the governing body of the Smithsonian Institution.

Córdova was named president of Purdue in 2007. As president, she oversees a university system with five campuses across the state, with more than 70,000 students, 18,000 faculty and staff members and an operating budget of more than \$2.1 billion.

Before joining Purdue University, she served as chancellor at the University of California, Riverside, from 2002 to 2007, where she also was a distinguished professor of physics and astronomy. From 1996 to 2002, she was vice chancellor for research and a professor of physics at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Before that, she was chief scientist at NASA from 1993 to 1996, serving as the primary scientific advisor to the NASA administrator and principal interface between the agency's headquarters and the broader scientific community.

From 1989 to 1996, she was a professor of astronomy and astrophysics at Pennsylvania State University. From 1989 to 1993, she was chair of the university's department of astronomy and astrophysics. She was a member of the staff of the Space Astronomy and Astrophysics group at the Los Alamos National Laboratory from 1979 to 1989, where she also served as deputy group leader.

An internationally recognized astrophysicist, Córdova's contributions to science have been in the areas of observational and experimental astrophysics, multi-spectral research on X-ray and gamma

ray sources and space-borne instrumentation. She has published more than 150 scientific papers and is a co-principal investigator for an experiment flying on the European Space Agency's X-ray Multi-Mirror Mission. She is the winner of NASA's highest honor, the Distinguished Service Medal, and was recognized as a 2000 Kilby Laureate for "contributions to society through science, technology, innovation, invention and education."

She was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and is a National Associate of the National Academies. She is a member of the National Science Board, the 24-member governing body of the National Science Foundation, and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Association for Women in Science. She began a six-year presidential appointment to the National Science Board in November 2008.

In September 2007, Córdova was named to the board of directors of BioCrossroads, Indiana's initiative to grow the life sciences through a public-private collaboration. She also was named to the board of trustees for Mayo Clinic in May 2008.

Córdova received her bachelor's degree in English from Stanford University. She received her doctorate in physics from the California Institute of Technology in 1979. In 1997, she received an honorary doctorate from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. In 2005, she received an honorary professorship from China Agricultural University.

She succeeds Eli Broad, who retired from the board April 6.

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