

# Prof./Dr. Susan R. Madsen

*Inaugural Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership*

*Founding Director, Utah Women & Leadership Project  
Visiting Fellow, Faculty of Economics and Business (University of Zagreb, Croatia)*



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Professor Susan R. Madsen is the Inaugural Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership in the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University. Prior to this, she spent 18 years as the Orin R. Woodbury Professor of Leadership and Ethics in the Woodbury School of Business at Utah Valley University. She is also a Visiting Fellow of the Faculty of Economics and Business at the University of Zagreb (Croatia), a former Fellow of The Leadership Trust Foundation in Ross-on-Wye England, and a former Distinguished Fellow in the School of Management at Lancaster University in the UK. Dr. Madsen has been heavily involved for decades in researching the lifetime development of prominent women leaders and has personally interviewed a host of women university presidents, U.S. governors, and international leaders. She also studies other aspects of women and leadership more broadly. Overall, Dr. Madsen is considered one of the top global thought leaders on the topic of women and leadership, has authored or edited nine books, and has published hundreds of articles, chapters, and reports. She was also the lead series co-editor for the Women and Leadership Book Series and co-edited the first three volumes: *Women and Leadership in Higher Education* (2014), *Women as Global Leaders* (2015), and *Women and Leadership around the World* (2015). Her latest scholarly book, *The Handbook of Research on Gender and Leadership, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* (Edward Elgar Publishing) was published in January 2024, with the first edition known as a seminal work on women and leadership worldwide. She has been the editor of special journal issues on the topics of work-life integration and women's leadership in higher education. Dr. Madsen's research has been featured in the *U.S. News and World Report*, *The Atlantic*, *The New York Times*, *Parenting Magazine*, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, *The Washington Post*, and she is a regular contributor to *Forbes*.

Dr. Madsen is a sought-after speaker in local, national, and international settings. She has presented in NGO sessions at the United Nations (New York and Geneva) and has also presented in such places as the *New York Times*, Argentina Parliament Palace, House of Commons in England, Lithuania President's Palace, Costa Rica Parliament, U.S. State Department, USAID, and in many countries around the world. In addition to a host of speaking engagements in Utah and the U.S., she has given keynotes and presentations in Ireland, Costa Rica, Argentina, South Africa, Slovenia, India, China, Korea, Croatia, Austria, England, Estonia, Lithuania, Germany, the Czech Republic, Australia, South Africa, Costa Rica, New Zealand, Canada, Norway, Switzerland, France, Italy, Scotland and the United Arab Emirates. She has conducted research in China, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe and has facilitated women's leadership development programs and seminars with women leaders from over 50 countries.

Professor Madsen thrives on being a change agent in her own state of Utah. In 2009, she created the Utah Women and Education Project and led a research team to investigate what might be done to get more Utah

women to attend college and then graduate. In 2011-2012, she worked with the Utah governor and his staff to create the Utah Women's College Taskforce that resulted in a report to the state calling for change. Then, in 2013, she founded the Utah Women & Leadership Project (UWLP), which is focused on strengthening the impact of Utah girls and women. As part of that work, she has overseen the production and release of public research (accessible to the general population as well as policy makers, educators, and other stakeholders) including research and policy briefs, research snapshots, research summaries, "What Can I Do?" idea sheets, policy white papers, and impact reports assessing the status of Utah women in key areas and making recommendations for social change. In addition, her team creates and produces a variety of resources (e.g., podcasts, infographics, videos, curriculum, and handouts) and hosts or co-sponsors 20-30 events annually. These events are attended by many thousands each year, and others in Utah are influenced via speeches, press coverage, social media, and monthly newsletter listserv contacts. Madsen's leadership efforts reach and influence tens of thousands of individuals annually. She has just launched "A Bolder Way Forward," which will more powerfully shift the work in Utah toward ensure that more girls and women thrive.

Dr. Madsen founded the Utah Women in Higher Education Network (UWHEN) in 2010 and was recognized with special honors as she moved off the board in early 2019. In addition, she created the International Leadership Association's (ILA) Women and Leadership Affinity Group and the Academy of Human Resource Development's Leadership Special Interest Group. In 2013 and 2015 she chaired a global women and leadership conference for the ILA, which led to the publication of a seminal document that she compiled titled, "The Asilomar Declaration & Call to Action on Women and Leadership." In 2014 she also organized and hosted a colloquium for 70 scholars from around the world, titled "Advancing Theories of Women and Leadership" and continued this work for over five years; this gathering is still applauded as the genesis for the influx of rigorous women and leadership theorizing since that time. She also led discussions related to public policy changes.

Professor Madsen serves on or advises many nonprofit and community boards, including the Utah Governor's strategic initiatives on girls and women, Envision Utah, South Davis Communities that Care, Utah Financial Empowerment Coalition, Women's Work Utah, and more. She has also been an advisor or trainer on women's leadership to national organizations and associations like the American Council on Education, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, and American Association of University Women.

Widely recognized for her work, Dr. Madsen has most recently received the following awards and honors: 2023 Common Good Award, Envision Utah, 2023 Impact Award, Women Tech Council, 2023 Award Winner, Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault, 2022 Heart of an Advocate Award, Saprea; 2022 Dean's Award for Excellence & Impact, Huntsman School of Business; George Washington Honor Medal, Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge; 2020 Utah Business Woman of the Year Honoree; Honorary Member Recognition Medal, Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters; 2019 Utah Girl Scout Champion Award—Life Skills, Utah Women in Higher Education Network's 2018 Distinguished Service Award; Envision Utah's 2017 Common Good Award; the Laura Bierema Excellence in Critical HRD Award 2017 from the Academy of Human Resource Development; the 2017 Influential Women in her 50s by the Utah Valley Magazine; 2016 Distinguished Alumni Award, College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota; 2016 YWCA Utah Outstanding Achievement Award in Education; Community Legacy Impact Award from People Helping People; 2016 "Distinguished Woman of the Year" by the Wasatch Chapter of AAUW; 2016 honoree of the Sundance Film Festival's Utah Women's Leadership Celebration; the 2014 "Women and Leadership Scholar of the Year" for the International Leadership Association; one of the 2014 Fabulous Forty in Utah Valley Magazine; one of the 2013 "30 Women to Watch" in Utah Business Magazine, and is a 2012 Salt Lake Chamber Pathfinder Awardee.

Dr. Madsen received her doctoral degree in human resource development from the University of Minnesota and has other degrees in exercise science/wellness (Portland State University) and speech communication education (Brigham Young University) and started her career many years ago as a middle school speech and debate teacher. She and her husband Greg have four adult children (and six grandchildren), and she enjoys hiking, golf, traveling, and beautiful sunsets.