



## MILLS COLLEGE

Mills College Commitment Statement in support of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

April 5, 2019

The National Academies report on [\*Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine \(2018\)\*](#) found that between 20 and 50 percent of women students and more than 50 percent of women faculty and staff experienced sexually harassing behavior while in academia. Research demonstrates that sexual harassment undermines women's professional and educational attainment and their mental and physical health. It also shows that these consequences are not limited to those experiencing it directly. Bystanders who experience ambient harassment in their work or education environment are also affected, and this in turn affects organizations as employees disengage, withdraw, and leave their work so as not to become the next target. The *Sexual Harassment of Women* report concludes that system-wide changes to the culture and climate in higher education are needed and provides a roadmap for higher education to make these changes.

Mills College has been breaking barriers since 1852, when it first opened its doors, the very same year that the Town of Oakland was incorporated in the State of California. Rooted in Oakland and buoyed by the environment, culture, and economy of the greater San Francisco Bay Area, Mills offers an accessible, transformative education to women and gender non-binary undergraduates and to graduate students of all genders. Gender and racial justice matter at Mills, where global learning, real-world skills, and academic excellence are affordable and accessible across historic barriers of race, class, and gender. Our commitment to inclusive excellence and gender and racial justice means that every student at Mills has access to a high-quality, future-oriented education characterized by individualized attention and rich faculty-mentored experiences.

Mills' mission can be fulfilled only if we actively create and sustain diverse, inclusive, and respectful environments that reject sexual harassment and mitigate or eliminate factors that contribute to its occurrence. To advance efforts to prevent and respond to sexual harassment, Mills College is joining other institutions and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine in an *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*. This Action Collaborative will facilitate partnerships and joint action. Together, with the other institutional members of the Action Collaborative, we aim to achieve targeted, collective action toward evidence-based policies and practices at the individual and systems levels for addressing and preventing all forms of sexual harassment and promoting a culture of civility and respect.

The four goals of the Action Collaborative are to:

- Raise awareness about sexual harassment and how it occurs, the consequences of sexual harassment, and the organizational characteristics and recommended approaches that can prevent it.
- Share and elevate evidence-based institutional policies and strategies to reduce and prevent sexual harassment.
- Contribute to setting the research agenda, and gather and apply research results across institutions.
- Develop a standard for measuring progress toward reducing and preventing sexual harassment in higher education.

**Mills College hereby commits to support the goals of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine *Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education*.**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth L. Hillman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Elizabeth L. Hillman  
President