

BAY/STATE

Mills president lands board spot

She'll lead American Council on Education

By Jill Tucker
STAFF WRITER

Jan Holmgren's mission is simple: Clear the path to college for anyone who wants to go.

The Mills College president is gaining a national audience for that message as she takes the helm Tuesday of the American Council on Education — an association of 1,800 universities, colleges and higher education organizations, represented by their presidents and CEOs.

Holmgren will remain at the Oakland women's liberal arts college while serving the one-year term as the council's board chairwoman.

"It's a bit of a platform for me," she said. "I'm really pleased about this."

During her term, Holmgren will face a changing and challenging national scene — including proposed federal tax cuts, energy shortages, a new federal administration and a volatile economy.

Enrollment and endowments at the country's colleges and universities will likely feel the impact of this transitional period, said the council's president, Stanley Ikenberry.

"Jan turns out to be absolutely the right person at the right time," he said, adding that she brings vast experience in higher education and a "widely recognized and admired national reputation for integrity."

Holmgren became Mills'



Jan Holmgren, president of Mills College in Oakland, is becoming chair of a national committee for higher education. ARLEEN NG — Staff

president in 1991, following nearly four years as vice provost of Princeton University in New Jersey and two decades as a faculty member and administrator at the University of Maryland.

She will be the first president of a women's college to lead the council's board in 30 years.

Opening access to higher education — for a diverse population of students as well as an increased number of women faculty and administra-

tors — tops Holmgren's list of priorities.

"I believe that we have to model for the rest of higher education how to successfully incorporate women and minorities in higher education," she said. "We're concerned that every person in the United States who wishes to and able to go to college does go."

That includes increasing financial aid resources and promoting affirmative action — a policy the council has

strongly and vocally supported.

Holmgren also said she wants to push college and university leadership to play a stronger role in helping reform K-12 education, including raising the status of teaching as a career option.

"There is a reluctance on the part of students to take the road that looks a little more like social service and a little less like hitting the jackpot," she said of attitudes toward the teaching profession.