

## Ralph W. Kuncl Bio

### July, 2021

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**Ralph W. Kuncl is President Emeritus of the University of Redlands.** He joined the University in 2012, having served before as Provost, Executive Vice President, and chief research officer at the University of Rochester in New York, and before that as Provost of Bryn Mawr College.

Since joining Redlands, he led the largest comprehensive campaign in the University's history, nearing completion of its goal of \$200 million. He sought and obtained its largest-ever single gift of \$35 million and nurtured that donor's personal giving of nearly \$75 million. He conceived and led the acquisition by Redlands of the 150-year-old San Francisco Theological Seminary, a pristine 20-acre campus in Marin County, with its complementary intellectual asset of nine fully-endowed faculty chairs, its integral partnership with a major consortium of seminaries and UC Berkeley called the Graduate Theological Union, and an endowment and real estate assets worth ~ \$100 M. Through the decade, he envisioned a 35-acre private partnership development as a mixed-use "University Village" surrounding a new train station on the University of Redlands campus, now completed.

His early faculty career was spent at The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, where he served as professor of neurology, pathology, and cellular and molecular medicine and taught undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows in those departments. He received international recognition in the study of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease, for laboratory discoveries of important disease mechanisms that helped rationalize its first effective treatment, and he was the man on the Baltimore Orioles' infield on September 6, 1995, accepting a \$1.3-million endowment from Cal Ripken Jr. the night Cal broke Lou Gehrig's "Iron Man" record. While at Hopkins, he was appointed as the University's founding Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education. As a scholar and medical scientist, he has authored over 160 peer-reviewed publications, is in the top 2% of cited scientists in the country, and was an editor of the most-cited clinical neuroscience journal in America.

At Bryn Mawr College, he was a champion of the liberal arts and was fortunate to be able to hire a third of its faculty, through which he emphasized diversity. More than half of those he recruited were women, and a third under-represented minorities, therefore changing the face of the college's faculty for decades to come. He achieved significant funding from the Mellon Foundation in collaboration with Swarthmore and Haverford Colleges to further establish shared tri-college East Asian Studies and Islamic World Studies Programs.

On a broader stage, he has provided leadership at the national level in higher education reform and college affordability, currently serving as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Tuition Plan Consortium (sponsor of the Private College 529 Plan), with over \$400 million in assets under management. He currently serves on the corporate Board of Directors of three+one, a national start-up corporation in financial services, liquidity analysis, and banking RFPs.

Known for his extensive professional support and development of those with whom he has worked, Dr. Kuncl has mentored not only his administrative and faculty colleagues but dozens of undergraduates, medical students, postgraduate clinical or research trainees, and Fellows of the American Council on Education who have gone on to become chairs, deans, provosts, and college presidents.

He is a musician and community builder at heart, having had oversight at Redlands of California's second oldest School of Music, and as liaison/major supporter of the Redlands Symphony Orchestra, a regional professional symphony receiving financial and practical business subvention from the University for over 30 years. He was considered by music faculty and visiting artists of the School as the University's "biggest fan and supporter of music."

President Kuncl's 23 years as a vocal performer in the Baltimore Choral Arts Society (BCAS) continues to propel his interest in musical performance. The BCAS, as a thriving major mid-Atlantic arts group with a subscription series and many run-out concerts and educational outreach gigs, gave him the developmental opportunity to be a frequent performer with the Baltimore Symphony and the Washington National Symphony under internationally renowned conductors. He appeared with BCAS as a chorister in 11 CD or TV recordings (one, Emmy-nominated), including the recording of Dave Brubeck's *Gates of Justice*. Dr. Kuncl joined the University of Redlands choirs in a performance of Mozart's *Requiem* in 2013 at Carnegie Hall and again with Verdi's *Requiem* in Hollywood to benefit the Wounded Warrior Project in 2014. Perhaps the most fun in his amateur musical career were the chances to conduct the combined University orchestra and chorus in Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus* in the 67<sup>th</sup> annual Redlands *Feast of Lights* in 2014, and then to conduct Met Opera Soprano Angel Blue and the Redlands Symphony Orchestra in 2018 in a jazzy improvisation of the National Anthem. He has been a philanthropist of the arts wherever he has lived.

Through the breadth and depth of his diverse career, Dr. Kuncl has become accomplished as a leader and an administrator. Interesting and notable highlights of his career include:

- Created the University of Redlands University Distinguished Fellows program designed to bring public intellectuals into campus residence. Recent Fellows have included nation-leading journalists James and Deborah Fallows, foremost digital historian and NPR personality Ed Ayers, international scholar of diplomacy with Russia Larry Caldwell, musicians and radio personalities Tom Hall and Peter Dubois, and American Council on Education government relations expert and public affairs advocate Terry Hartle .
- Established a University-wide Council on Inclusiveness and Community in response to national conversations on race and religion.
- Restructured and rebuilt the University of Redlands presidential cabinet into a diverse, high-functioning leadership team.
- Launched several new initiatives to build and enhance comprehensive internationalization, online learning and digital media, college affordability, and environmental sustainability at the University of Redlands.
- Created of a three-way corporate-university-governmental alliance among IBM, the State of New York, and a consortium of more than 400 scientists in the schools of Arts & Sciences, Hajim School of Engineering, and the School of Medicine and Dentistry to establish a nation-leading Health Sciences Center for High-Performance Computational Innovation at the University of Rochester.
- Created the first-ever mission statement in 161 years for the University of Rochester: Designed and led the creative and consultative process leading to an authentic, signature mission statement of only 10 words that also served as the rhetorical basis for a comprehensive campaign: "Learn, Discover, Heal, Create — And Make the World Ever Better."
- Tripled federal research funding at Bryn Mawr College, while preserving academic programs, controlling academic expenditures, decreasing the size of the central

administration, and helping create new multidisciplinary and consortial programs in East Asian Studies, Arabic and Islamic World studies, and Geoarchaeology.

- Established a distributed function of diversity leadership at Bryn Mawr College; hired more than one-third of entire faculty, with 63 percent of hires women and 36 percent persons of color.

- Established the first-ever provost-level portfolio for undergraduate education at Johns Hopkins University. Conceived and led its Commission on Undergraduate Education in strategic re-envisioning: raising the value of undergraduate education; increasing the diversity of students and curriculum; integrating the intellectual and social lives of undergraduates; improving and rewarding undergraduate teaching, especially TA training and assessment; and enhancing international dimensions of undergraduate education.

- Created and led the first undergraduate Enrollment Management Team at Johns Hopkins University Homewood Campus to lead admissions, financial aid, and the deans of engineering and arts & sciences in enrollment policy and practice.

Dr. Kuncl earned the A.B. from Occidental College, magna cum laude and with election to Phi Beta Kappa; Ph.D. in experimental pathology at the University of Chicago, Division of Biological Sciences; and M.D. at the University of Chicago's Pritzker School of Medicine.

He lives in historic Annapolis, MD.