

Mary Evans Sias, Ph.D.
President, Kentucky State University
Biographical Sketch



Dr. Mary Evans Sias was selected as the 13th president of Kentucky State University in April 2004.

As president, Dr. Sias is an advocate for public higher education, especially at historically black colleges. She has a strong concern for students and community engagement and is dedicated to excellence and learning. She is committed to promoting excellence in teaching, including the continued development of a student-centered faculty, support for innovative new programs and liberal arts curricula.

In almost six years under her leadership, KSU has consistently grown its enrollment, added new student support services and graduate programs, and updated its technology and infrastructure. Currently, Dr. Sias is evolving the Land Grant Program into the School of Agriculture, Food Sciences and Sustainable Systems. KSU's Aquaculture Program is among the top five programs in the nation.

Dr. Sias possesses immeasurable executive and administrative experience in higher education. She served as senior vice president for student affairs and external relations at the University of Texas at Dallas between 1994 and 2004; there she helped grow the campus' enrollment from more than 8,000 to more than 12,000 students. This growth coincided with the university's increasing average SAT score of its incoming freshmen – more than 1,224. She also held an appointment as associate professor of sociology.

Prior to serving at UT-Dallas, Dr. Sias was the chief executive officer of the YWCA of Metropolitan Dallas for 13 years; during her tenure, the association experienced several milestones, including completing two capital campaigns, expanding program outreach and increasing the number of branches throughout the metroplex.

Throughout her professional career, volunteerism has been an integral part of her life. While in Dallas, Dr. Sias served as vice chair of a hospital board, president of the Tejas Council of Girl Scouts and vice chair of both the Dallas Foundation and the King Foundation. She also served on the Texas Bar Foundation and the State Bar of Texas as a public member. Additionally, she was a member of the Board of Oaks Bank and Trust Company. She is a graduate of Leadership Dallas, Leadership Texas and Leadership America.

Since arriving in Frankfort, Kentucky, Dr. Sias serves on the board of directors of the Frankfort YMCA, Frankfort Chamber of Commerce and Leadership Kentucky. She also is a member of the Woman's Club of Frankfort and the Frankfort/Lexington Chapter of Links, Inc.

Dr. Sias is chair-elect of the board of directors of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities and serves on the Executive Committee for the APLU Commission on Access, Diversity and Excellence. She also recently completed a two-year term as state representative to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. She currently serves as the chair of the Professional

Development Committee for AASCU, a committee that plans professional development programs for new and experience campus presidents.

In 2010, Dr. Sias joined the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education and will become a member of the board of directors of Girl Scouts of Kentucky's Wilderness Road Council. She is vice chair and audit chair of the Southern Intercollegiate Athletic Association, serves on the executive committee of the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, a legislatively appointed member of the Kentucky Agriculture Development Board and a member of the Kentucky Proud Advisory Board.

Dr. Sias has received numerous awards, including the "She Knows Where She is Going Award" from Girls, Inc. Most recently, she received the NAACP Citizenship Award and was the 2009 recipient of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund's Educational Leadership Award.

A native of Jackson, Mississippi, Dr. Sias earned her bachelor's degree in sociology from Tougaloo College, where she graduated summa cum laude. She was awarded a Ford Foundation Doctoral Fellowship and pursued her master's and doctorate in sociology from the University of Wisconsin at Madison. She also received a master's in business administration from Abilene Christian College.

Dr. Sias is married to Shadrach Sias and they have one adult daughter.