Susan Madsen, Huntsman’s New Inaugural Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership, Featured in Forbes on Mistakes Even Seasoned Business Leaders Make

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Excerpt from Forbes – “When business leaders decide they know everything, they stop learning and their effectiveness immediately decreases…Leaders who are open to coaching typically want to learn more about themselves.” Read Forbes Article

Utah State University Today
Susan Madsen, founder of the Utah Women & Leadership Project, has been appointed the inaugural Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership at Utah State University’s Jon M. Huntsman School of Business. She will join the university as a professor in the Marketing and Strategy Department of the Huntsman School beginning July 1, and will have a joint appointment with Utah State University Extension.

“Dr. Madsen’s is one of the leading voices in the State of Utah for women in business and higher education,” said Huntsman School of Business Dean Douglas D. Anderson. “She is an extraordinary colleague, teacher, public intellectual and role model. I am confident Susan will have a profound impact at Utah State University as she has with every other organization with which she has been involved.”

Madsen joins the Huntsman School from Utah Valley University, where she was the Orin R. Woodbury Professor of Leadership and Ethics. It was there that she founded the Utah Women & Leadership Project, which she will bring with her to USU. The organization is focused on strengthening the impact of Utah girls and women by encouraging, developing and advancing women in leadership.

“I am deeply honored to be named as the Inaugural Karen Haight Huntsman Endowed Professor of Leadership and to become a faculty member in the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University,” said Madsen. “I believe
that the social change work I’ve been leading in the state for well over a decade will now be deepened and expanded with this transition. I am thrilled!

In addition to numerous consulting, research, nonprofit and international projects on women’s leadership development, Madsen has maintained a strong focus on her home state. She created the Utah Women and Education Initiative in 2009 and led a research team to investigate what might be done to get more Utah women to attend college and then graduate. She also founded the Utah Women in Higher Education Network (UWHEN) in 2010 and was recognized with special honors as she moved off the board in 2019.

“I know of no one who has been more effective as an advocate for girls and women in Utah during the course of the last decade than Dr. Madsen,” said USU President Noelle Cockett.

On Madsen’s new appointment, former Utah State Senator and current CEO of the Women’s Leadership Institute in Utah, Patricia Jones, described Madsen as “a pioneer in cutting-edge research on issues of primary importance to advancing women. [Her] influence on women’s leadership in Utah and beyond cannot be overstated.”

A. Scott Anderson, president and CEO of Zion’s Bank said he has been so impressed by the breadth and volume of research Madsen and her partners have helped produce and release.

“Her research-based resources are published online and are readily accessible to the community so that people can be better informed about these important issues,” Scott Anderson said.

Madsen has presented her research to thousands around the globe and has been heavily involved for decades in examining the lifetime development of prominent women leaders, including personally interviewing numerous women university presidents, U.S. governors and international leaders. Madsen has authored or edited six books, published hundreds of articles, chapters and reports and is a sought-after speaker in local, national and international settings.

“We are extremely excited about having Susan Madsen join our Extension team of professionals and the opportunity this will provide to develop important state-wide Extension programming that facilitates women’s leadership development,” said USU Vice President of Extension and Dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences Kenneth L. White. “Susan has a very impressive record of important contributions in this area, and partnering with our land-grant mission of directed community outreach creates an extraordinary opportunity for Utah communities.”

Madsen received her doctorate from the University of Minnesota in work, community, and family education with a specialization in human resource development. She has degrees in exercise science/wellness and speech communication education. She started her career as a middle school speech and debate teacher.