

Hara D. Charlier

BIOGRAPHY

Dr. Hara Charlier's leadership is rooted in expanding higher education access and opportunity in rural communities. Her career began in the classroom as a faculty member and grew over thirty years through academic and student affairs leadership, ensuring community colleges serve as strong, student-centered anchors of regional vitality and economic mobility.

Since 2016, Dr. Charlier has served as President of Central Lakes College, part of the 33-institution Minnesota State system. Under her leadership, the college has transformed the student experience to advance equitable success, growing enrollment, modernizing facilities, and launching more than 20 new academic programs, while prioritizing partnerships, expanding resources, and reinforcing fiscal sustainability. Dr. Charlier has intentionally cultivated a Culture of Caring centered on voice, relationships, and belonging, an approach reflected in the college's recognition as a Great College to Work For and as one of the Aspen Institute's Top 200 Community Colleges.

Previously, Dr. Charlier served as Vice President of Instruction and Student Services at Virginia Highlands Community College and held faculty and leadership roles at Blue Ridge Community College. She holds a BS in Animal Science from Cornell University, an MS in Microbiology from Miami University, and a PhD in Community College Leadership from Old Dominion University. She is a two-time Aspen Presidents Fellow and serves on the boards of national and regional economic development and philanthropic organizations.

Dr. Charlier lives in Nisswa, Minnesota, with her husband, Russ, and their three Newfoundlands, finding joy in watercolor painting and time spent in nature with her family.