

Sarah Sweitzer | Biography

Sarah Sweitzer is the Provost and Chief Executive Officer at Touro University California. As a first generation college student, she completed two years at Solano Community College before transferring and completing her BS in Chemistry at the University of Nevada, Reno. While at the University of Nevada she was introduced to the world of research through a work study job in a campus chemistry lab. A job that literally changed and shaped her career pathway. Instead of entering medical school she decided to become a biomedical scientist and completed her doctoral studies in Pharmacology and Toxicology at Dartmouth Medical School. She then returned to the West Coast to complete a post-doc at Stanford Medical School where she filed her first patents and worked on the weekends completing preclinical studies for local biotech companies. She joined the faculty at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine and led a National Institute of health funded research program developing new medicines to treat chronic pain and identifying biomarkers in sickle cell disease. During this time she continued to work with biotech companies in the Bay Area and her first compound went into Phase II clinical trials. On the teaching front, she assisted in recruiting and training the first cohort of nurse anesthesia students that were taught via distance education methods. From there Sarah moved to Presbyterian College School of Pharmacy as the Director of Research and brought in the Colleges first federal grants and set up their research program. This is also where her research interests grew to include community and systems level public health projects with a focus on community based approaches to reduce health disparities. On the teaching side, the School of Pharmacy was pioneering the flipped classroom design in Pharmacy education. Sarah then moved to Concordia University in Portland Oregon to be the Dean of the College of Health and Human Services and to assist in development of the 3 to PhD Initiative, a unique partnership of a private university with a Portland public school to develop a safer, healthier, more educated community. In parallel Concordia University was leading the online education boom and Sarah was instrumental in launching a hybrid accelerated BS in Nursing program, a fully online BS in Health Care Administration, and a fully online BS in Long Term Care Administration. Sarah then joined Touro University California with a mission to serve, to lead, and to teach. Since being at Touro she has been committed to developing Touro as an Anchor Institution in Vallejo and the larger Solano County. She has increased grant funding by over 200% to support community engaged projects that include Drug Safe Solano (the Solano County Opioid Safety Coalition), the Kaiser-Touro PATHS high school mentoring program, development of a Mental Health App to improve access to mental health services, programs to expand access to COVID-19 vaccinations, and work to grow leadership capacity in the Black Community to name a few. An additional building is being renovated on campus to support a class size expansion in the Medical School. In addition, through a academic partnership with St. Joseph's hospital in Stockton, Touro has developed graduate medical education and a vibrant medical practice for Touro physicians in Stockton.