

William D. (Bro) Adams

Chairman, National Endowment for the Humanities



Bro Adams is the tenth chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. As former president of Colby College in Waterville, Maine, and a committed advocate for liberal arts education, he brings to the Endowment a long record of leadership in higher education and the humanities. Adams earned his undergraduate degree in philosophy at Colorado College; Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Cruz; and studied in France as a Fulbright Scholar.

He began his career in higher education at Santa Clara University in California and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill before serving as vice president of Wesleyan University and president of Bucknell University. In each of his professional roles, Adams has demonstrated a deep understanding of and commitment to the humanities as essential to education and to civic life. As senior president of the prestigious New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC), Adams has been at the center of the national conversation on the cost and value of liberal arts education. “I see the power of what is happening on our campuses and among the alumni I meet across the country and around the world...” he says. “I am convinced that this kind of study is not merely defensible but critical to our national welfare.”