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The Hertz Foundation Announces Robbee Baker Kosak as New President *Will Lead Foundation into New Era of Growth and Promote Science Education*

Livermore, CA – The Fannie and John Hertz Foundation, known for its commitment to providing fellowship support to top PhD students in the physical, biological and engineering sciences, today named Robbee Baker Kosak its new president. Under Kosak’s leadership, the Hertz Foundation is poised to enter a new era of philanthropic leadership as its community of Hertz Fellows grows in size and impact. She is the first woman to be named president by the Foundation and is deeply committed to its mission to support the education of preeminent scientists and engineers.

Kosak, former Vice President of University Advancement at Carnegie Mellon University, has been a leader in expanding the field of global philanthropy in higher education and has more than 35 years of experience in developing philanthropy and partnership networks on behalf of the scientific community.

“Robbee is a visionary leader with decades of experience building philanthropic partnerships and other strategic relationships,” says David J. Galas, PhD, Hertz Fellow, Chairman of the Fannie and John Hertz Foundation Board of Directors, and a preeminent leader in biology and medicine. “Her relationships with major international philanthropists, foundations, businesses, in the science and technology fields will prove incredibly valuable for the Foundation and our Fellows. She is the right individual to lead the Hertz Foundation into a new era of increased global impact, as more Hertz Fellows fuel important scientific discovery,” he added.

While at Carnegie Mellon, Kosak helped position the university as a pioneer among United States research universities as it grew its footprint around the world. She created successful strategies for building philanthropic investment, engaging alumni and global institutional partners and marketing the university’s programs in the Middle East, East and South Asia, and Africa. Her efforts expanded the university’s reputation in parts of the world in great need of higher education opportunities, especially in science and technology. During her tenure, she led the university’s successful \$1 billion fundraising drive.

“I am honored to be named president of the Hertz Foundation. It is a privilege to carry forward the vision of Fannie and John Hertz and leaders like famed 20th century scientist Edward Teller, a friend of John Hertz, who believed deeply in the importance of scientific exploration,” said Robbee Kosak. She added, “We undoubtedly are at a key point in our nation’s history. The global leadership position of the U.S. in science, technology and innovation must remain strong. Yet given the pressure today on government funding, philanthropy must step in

and fill this void if we are to continue to educate and prepare a robust pipeline of exceptionally talented leaders in these arenas. The Hertz Foundation plays a vital role in funding the education of these future leaders and we are unabashed about our goal to increase the number of fellowships that we provide. The world faces immense challenges—disease eradication, cybersecurity, environmental health, and quality of life across the years, are but a few. Supporting the education of our most talented scientists and engineers is one of the most important investments that we can make today to ensure the quality of our future.”

Along with positioning the Foundation for fiscal sustainability and growth, Kosak plans to continue to strengthen the community of Hertz Fellows. Moreover, she notes that the United States continues to lag far behind other countries in education spending, especially in the STEM disciplines. Joining with the influential members of the Hertz Community, as well as other government, philanthropic and private sector leaders, she is anxious to address this deficit.

“Our Hertz Community now exceeds 1,100 Fellows – these are leaders who are paving the way for monumental discoveries,” adds Kosak. “The future is science-based. Government, business, academia, and philanthropy all need to work together to nurture brilliant minds. Yet, in 2014 our federal government allocated only [4 percent of the federal budget](#) to education, well behind the average 9 percent of the 30 OECD countries. We have to increase this number if the United States is to successfully compete in tomorrow’s marketplace of ideas and discoveries. We all benefit when our best young talent is challenged to push even farther and if they are well supported throughout their careers.”

“Robbee is a wonderful choice for President of the Hertz Foundation,” adds Dr. Edward H. Frank, Hertz Fellow, founder and CEO of CloudParity, former executive at Apple, and life trustee of Carnegie Mellon University. “She has the vision required to transform the Foundation as she deeply understands the need for greater investments in the sciences and has the expertise to identify and implement the strategies to bring that funding to bear.”

Since 1963, the Hertz Foundation has awarded \$200 million (present value) for the graduate education of over 1,100 Fellows in science and engineering fields. Alumni of the Hertz Fellowship include two Nobel laureates—John Cromwell Mather, a Nobel laureate for his work on the Cosmic Background Explorer Satellite, and Carl Wieman, a Nobel laureate for his work in the production of the first true Bose-Einstein condensate. Alumni also include a Fields Medal recipient (awarded to two to four mathematicians under 40 years old at the International Congress of the International Mathematical Union, which convenes every four years), and a National Science Medal recipient. Fellows have gone on to found more than 200 companies, register over 3,000 patents, head major universities, teach in academia, lead in key positions at National Laboratories, and command senior positions in the United States Military.

Key to its mission, the Hertz Foundation gives Fellows the freedom to innovate in their doctoral studies. They are not bound by traditional research funding restrictions or the funded projects of any faculty member. Hertz Fellows are able to pursue their own ideas with complete financial independence, under the guidance of some of the country’s finest professors and mentors.

Kosak’s Extensive Experience

Before joining Carnegie Mellon, Kosak served as the Vice President for Institute Advancement at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, where she was responsible for the university’s global activities related to marketing and media relations, alumni relations, and fundraising. Prior to joining Rensselaer in 1994, she served as Vice President for University Relations at Bucknell University, Executive Director of the Campaign for Illinois Institute of Technology, and Assistant Vice President of Development at Northwestern University. Kosak began her career

in university administration at Carnegie Mellon, where she served as Associate Director of Alumni Relations and Director of Foundation Fundraising.

Along with her new role at the Hertz Foundation, Kosak is a member of the prestigious International Women's Forum and serves on the board of trustees of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and the American Middle East Institute (founding board member). She is a summa cum laude graduate of the Pennsylvania State University, and attended the Harvard University Institute for Educational Management. Mrs. Kosak will relocate to the Bay Area from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with her husband, Thomas, an award-winning graphic designer.

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About the Hertz Foundation

For over half a century, the Hertz Foundation has selected and supported the best and brightest graduate students in the applied, physical, and biological sciences. These select leaders drive scientific discovery, fuel technical innovations across disciplines and industries, and make breakthroughs that positively impact our country – and the world. Hertz Fellows pursue a PhD in the STEM fields and follow their academic curiosity with greater financial independence. These students are chosen for their intellect, their ingenuity and their potential to make scientific advancements for the public good. They join the vibrant and supportive Hertz Fellows Community, which gathers the Fellows together at annual workshops and retreats to inspire and learn from one another across disciplines and generations. For more information visit www.HertzFoundation.org and follow the Foundation on [Facebook](#).