

Laurie Leshin, Ph.D.
President
Worcester Polytechnic Institute



Laurie Leshin is the president of Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), in Worcester, Massachusetts. She is committed to elevating WPI's impact in communities worldwide, a theme developed in WPI's strategic plan which aims to strengthen WPI's already-distinctive undergraduate programs and advance graduate education and research.

Leshin brings to WPI more than 20 years of experience as a leader in academia and government service, and an accomplished record as a space scientist. Prior to joining WPI, Leshin served as the dean of the School of Science at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York. While at Rensselaer, Leshin continued her work as a scientist for the Mars Curiosity Rover mission and was appointed by President Obama to the Advisory Board for the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum.

Prior to joining Rensselaer, Leshin spent six years at NASA in several senior executive roles, including the deputy director of NASA's future human spaceflight program. Before joining NASA, Leshin was the Dee and John Whiteman Dean's Distinguished Professor of Geological Sciences at Arizona State University (ASU). While at ASU, President Bush appointed Leshin to serve on the Commission for the Implementation of United States Space Exploration Policy.

Leshin serves on a number of boards and commissions, including the Massachusetts Governor's STEM Advisory Council Executive Committee; the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Massachusetts; the National Academy of Science's Government, University, and Industry Research Round Table; For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology (FIRST); the Association of American Colleges and Universities; and John Wiley and Sons Publishing Company, among others.

Leshin received a B.S. in chemistry from ASU and a Ph.D. in geochemistry from the California Institute of Technology. She is married to Dr. Jon Morse, an astrophysicist who is chief executive officer of the BoldlyGo Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing space-based science and discovery.