

Donna Marie De Carolis, Ph.D., is the founding Dean of the [Charles D. Close School of Entrepreneurship](#) and the Silverman Family Professor of Entrepreneurial Leadership at [Drexel University](#) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Her career itself is entrepreneurial – one of reinvention from high school history teacher to consultant to professor and university dean. She characterizes her strong motivation in both her personal and professional life as “small acts of entrepreneurship” – those decisions that require a leap of faith onto a new path.

As founding Dean of the Close School, the nation’s first stand-alone, degree-granting school of entrepreneurship at a university, De Carolis initiated a pioneering approach to entrepreneurship education. Her vision is to empower all university students with the mindset that they can be entrepreneurs – by broadly defining entrepreneurship as an attitude that incorporates innovative thinking and doing in all facets of life, career and profession.

De Carolis has been a champion of entrepreneurship education in her various roles as Associate Dean and Management Department head at Drexel’s LeBow College of Business, and as Associate Vice-Provost for Entrepreneurship Education at Drexel University.

De Carolis’ research has appeared in journals such as the *Strategic Management Journal*, the *Journal of Management*, and *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*. She is the recipient of the prestigious *Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching* and the Distinguished Teaching Excellence Award from Executive MBAs. She frequently speaks to companies about leadership and innovation.

Well-known throughout the Philadelphia region as a lecturer and media personality, De Carolis contributes weekly commentaries to *KYW Newsradio*. In addition, her commentary has appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Philadelphia Business Journal*, and *Forbes On-line*.

De Carolis was the 2015 recipient of the *Distinguished Iris Newman Award* from the [Alliance for Women Entrepreneurs](#), given each year to a woman business leader who has demonstrated a strong commitment to helping advance women entrepreneurs. De Carolis is a current member of Drexel University’s Biomedical Engineering Community Advisory Board of the School of Biomedical Engineering, Science and Health Systems, advising on translational research, medical device development and entrepreneurship.

De Carolis is also a board member of [Entrepreneurship and Innovation Exchange \(EIX\)](#), which provides entrepreneurship resources to colleges and universities. She is an executive board member of the [US Association of Small Business and Entrepreneurship \(USASBE\)](#), in addition to being a member of the Board of Directors for the [Barra Foundation](#), AIM Academy and [Faith In the Future Foundation](#), making a highly positive impact on local communities.

Prior to coming to Drexel, De Carolis served as a strategy consultant and lobbyist. She earned her doctoral degree in strategic management from Temple University and holds an MBA from Villanova University.

*She is the mother of two wonderful sons, one amazing daughter, and Louie, the sweetest Scottish Terrier.*