



Venture Dallas

2025 Annual Conference



Jay C. Hartzell

President
SMU

Jay C. Hartzell proudly serves as the 11th president of SMU. A visionary and nationally renowned leader, with an extraordinary record of accomplishment inside and outside academia, President Hartzell was appointed by the SMU Board of Trustees, beginning his tenure June 1, 2025. He leads the University during an unprecedented era of opportunity and momentum, inspiring the future direction of SMU.

President Hartzell is charting the course for SMU, building on a generation of remarkable success for the University that includes recognition among Research One institutions in the Carnegie Classification with the highest level of research productivity, membership in the Atlantic Coast Conference and the successful conclusion of a multi-year \$1.656 billion comprehensive campaign. The University continues to dramatically expand its reach and reputation both nationally and internationally, attracting excellent faculty and enrolling increasingly high-achieving students from all 50 states and 86 countries.

His bold vision for the future will further cement and expand SMU's position as a premier student-centered University while elevating its national and global influence. He is powering new paths for education, research and community while enhancing the University's relationship with, and dynamic impact on, the vibrant Dallas economy.

A respected scholar, his research centers on corporate finance, corporate governance, and real estate. He has published articles in top journals, such as the Journal of Finance, Journal of Financial Economics, The Review of Economics and Statistics, and Real Estate Economics.

Before joining SMU, President Hartzell served as president of The University of Texas at Austin, where he oversaw all-time highs in applications, enrollment, graduation rates, research expenditures and philanthropic support. Prior to that, he served as dean of the McCombs School of Business, one of the nation's largest and most prestigious business schools, where he served as a faculty member for more than 20 years. He started his academic career as an assistant professor of finance at New York University's Stern School of Business.

Beyond campus, President Hartzell serves on the board of MGIC Investment Corporation. He has been a board member for Austin Habitat for Humanity and the American Real Estate and Urban Economics Association. President Hartzell brings professional experience outside of academia as a former consultant with Hewitt Associates.

He earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration and economics (cum laude) from Trinity University and a Ph.D. in finance from UT Austin. He is married to Kara Hartzell, a licensed clinical social worker with a private practice, and they have two adult children. The Hartzells are proud to call Dallas home.

