

DAVID ADAMANY

b. September 23, 1936

d. November 10, 2016

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT

**David Adamany
was the first openly
gay university
president.**

“You have to drive for higher standards, because it’s good for students and it’s good for society.”

David Adamany was the first openly gay president of an American university. He served as president of Wayne State University in Detroit and Temple University in Philadelphia. He was nationally recognized as a leader in higher education.

Born to a Lebanese family in Janesville, Wisconsin, Adamany earned his bachelor’s and law degrees from Harvard University and his master’s and doctorate degrees in political science from the University of Wisconsin. He was named a special assistant

to the attorney general of Wisconsin and pardon counsel to the state’s governor. At 27 he became the youngest person appointed to Wisconsin’s Public Service Commission.

During the 1970s, Adamany was named special advisor to Wisconsin Governor Patrick J. Lucey and later served as Wisconsin’s secretary of revenue. He subsequently taught at Wesleyan University, California State University at Long Beach and University of Maryland.

In 1982 Adamany was named president of Wayne State University. He served longer than anyone else to hold the position. During his 15-year tenure, he helped transform the university into a premier research center. The undergraduate library was named in his honor.

In 1999 Adamany was appointed as the interim executive officer of the Detroit Public School District, where he advocated for educational reform. From 2000 to 2006, he served as the president of Temple University.

At Temple, Adamany added a new general education curriculum. He expanded enrollment by one-third, while improving SAT scores by more than 60 points and increasing the university’s honors program. He advocated for LGBT civil rights and offered benefits to the same-sex partners of university employees. After his tenure as president, he became a chancellor and taught at Temple’s James Beasley School of Law and in the Political Science Department.

In 1997 the University of Wisconsin’s Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Alumni Council honored Adamany with its Distinguished Alumni Award. In 2000 the Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services named him Arab American of the Year.



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