

Honoris United Universities Announces Senior Leadership Appointments

Promotion and additions to the leadership team will contribute to Honoris' core mission of developing world-class human talent in Africa

*Laura Kakon named Chief Growth and Strategy Officer
Luis Ramirez-Alonso appointed Chief Human Resources Officer
Pepe Peran appointed Chief Business Development Officer*

Casablanca / Durban / Tunisia / Abuja, September 09, 2020 – Honoris United Universities, the first and largest pan-African network of private higher education institutions, today announced a series of significant additions to its senior leadership team as the organization expands across Africa, with Laura Kakon promoted to the role of Chief Growth and Strategy Officer, Luis Ramirez-Alonso moving from interim to permanent Chief Human Resources Officer and Pepe Peran joining as Chief Business Development Officer. The new appointments, with effect as of September 1, 2020, will all report to the Chief Executive Officer, Luis Lopez.

Taking on her new role, **Laura Kakon** is charged with identifying and steering Honoris' long-term growth strategy and driving value creation across the network through differentiation, competitive advantage and innovation. Having been at the forefront of Honoris' emergence as a pioneer in 21st century skills development across the network, Laura will continue to play a critical leadership role by spearheading the Marketing and Public Affairs function of the organization. In addition, she will now drive digital, skilling and employability initiatives that reflect Honoris' commitment to embracing the digital transformation across the student journey and its strategy to reshape and rethink education to continually improve learning outcomes and graduate readiness for the future of work.

Previously the Chief Marketing Officer of Honoris, Laura shared, *"It has been exceptionally fulfilling to serve as one of Honoris' pioneers, helping to define the mission, vision, and core values of the organization, whilst also partnering with the network's member institutions in the establishment of their respective brand initiatives. As Chief Growth and Strategy Officer I look forward to driving organic and strategic growth across the network and to making a meaningful contribution to building the next generation of African graduates equipped with the skills they need to flourish in the 21st century world of work."*

Laura has more than 20 years of experience in senior executive positions. Previously, Laura served as VP of Marketing and Sales at Laureate International Universities (LIU) where she successfully participated in the launch of a multi-disciplinary university in Morocco, the first country-level greenfield for LIU. She also spent 11 years within the L'Oréal Group where she held several global management positions covering USA, Europe and Asia – where she developed a high agility to work across markets, and to grow her brand building and customer acquisition expertise. She also serves as a board member of non-profit organizations, focusing on youth mental health and is involved in international initiatives to promote women empowerment and leadership.

The Honoris senior leadership team is also enhanced by the appointment of **Luis Ramirez-Alonso** as Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). Ramirez-Alonso brings 30 years of experience in Human Resources from an extensive career in international organizations, including the last 13 years in the higher education sector. Most recently, he served as Vice President of Human Resources, Financial Services Vertical at Adtalem Global Education (ATGE).

Press Release

Date: 09/09/2020

Ramirez-Alonso commented, *“My work in aligning human capital strategies with Honoris’ long-term objectives will contribute enormous value to students and the organization as a whole. It is a very exciting, newly created role that will enable me to call upon my past experience in order to provide strategic leadership in all people-related initiatives which will generate positive impact, fuel growth, and increase engagement and commitment among colleagues.”*

Prior to joining the network, Ramirez-Alonso worked at Laureate International Universities in various leadership roles, most recently as Vice President Human Resources, Europe, Middle East, Asia & Africa and also worked at Motorola, Inc (MSI) for 13 years.

The latest addition to the Honoris’ senior leadership team is **Pepe Peran**, who has assumed the position of Chief Business Development Officer. Peran has 20+ years of experience in senior executive positions in Business Development, Finance and Operations, including Mergers & Acquisitions Lead, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operations Officer and Chief Strategy Officer at an international level.

Peran will be at the forefront of evaluating new markets, segments and geographies, whilst building new strategically important relationships as well as developing new expansion initiatives to bring into the network. Commenting on his appointment, Peran said, *“This is an incredibly exciting time to join Honoris as its network expands across the region. I look forward to working alongside the talented Honoris team as I develop its expansion strategy in current and new geographies as well as identify new investments and partnerships in order to secure the best opportunities to drive financial performance and accelerate innovation throughout the network.”*

Peran has previously spent 15+ years in the higher education sector focusing on profitable growth and transformational initiatives, as well as acquisitions and digital transformation in large multinational organizations. He has also served as a board member for profit and non-profit institutions.

Commenting on the move to enhance the senior leadership team, **Luis Lopez, CEO of Honoris United Universities** said, *“I welcome Laura, Luis and Pepe to their new roles; their significant track-record will accelerate our prospective plans and execution. Honoris’ Executive Committee now stands stronger, with the expanded leadership team prepared for new opportunities to grow and to enable world-class African human talent.”*

About Honoris United Universities

Honoris United Universities is the first and largest pan-African private higher education network committed to educating the next generation of African leaders and professionals able to impact regionally in a globalized world. Collaborative intelligence, cultural agility and mobile mind-sets and skills are at the heart of Honoris’ vision of higher education. Honoris United Universities joins the expertise of its member institutions to develop world-class African Human capital that is competitive in today’s fast-paced, demanding and increasingly digitized labour and start-up markets.

Honoris United Universities gathers a community of **45,000** students on **60** campuses, learning centres and via on-line, in **10** countries and **32** cities. The network counts **11** institutions: multidisciplinary universities, specialized schools, technical and vocational institutes, contact, distance, and online institutions. Students have an opportunity to experience exclusive partnerships and exchange programs in more than **60** universities across Europe and the United States. Over **280** degrees are offered in Medicine, Health Sciences, Engineering, IT, Business, Law, Architecture, Creative Arts and Design, Media, Political Science and Education.

www.honoris.net



Press Release

Date: 09/09/2020

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