



News Release

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For More Information:

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Public Information Officer

College of the Desert Announces Finalists in Presidential Search Community Forums Scheduled July 6, 2021

After a nationwide search, College of the Desert is pleased to announce three finalists will move forward in the College's recruitment for a new Superintendent/President during community forums being held on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, between 9 a.m. and noon in the Pollock Theatre on the College's Palm Desert Campus.

"Our new President will need to be a dynamic leader who understands our College and our diverse community," said Interim Vice President of Human Resources Mark Zacovic, Ph.D. "These forums provide an important opportunity for members of our community, including our students, faculty and staff, to meet and hear from the final candidates before the final selection."

There will be a brief introduction of each candidate during the event, followed by individual question-and-answer sessions with each finalist. Anyone who would like to submit questions for consideration during the forums should email them to Stan A. Carrizosa Sr. of Community College Search Services at *stan.carrizosa@ccss.solutions*. All questions must be received by June 30, 2021.

The event will be open to the public and live-streamed on the College's YouTube channel. Anyone attending in person will be subject to the College's COVID-19 safety protocols, including:

1. All attendees must enter campus through the College's Fred Waring Entrance and complete a safety questionnaire as they arrive.
2. Masks will be required at all times.
3. Social distancing will be observed for seating.
4. Overflow rooms will be available.

Following is a brief bio for each of the three finalists (in alphabetical order). Full bios and additional information are available on the College's [website](#).



Dr. Monica Flores Pactol is a native of the Coachella Valley. Growing up in Palm Desert, she attended both Indio High School and College of the Desert. She transferred to New Mexico State University to earn B.A. and M.A. degrees in Communication Studies with a focus on intercultural and organizational communication. Years later she completed a Ph.D. in Community College Leadership from Colorado State University.

Dr. Flores Pactol has 29+ years of experience in community colleges. She was an adjunct faculty member in Speech Communication at College of the Desert and a full-time tenured faculty member in Communication Studies at West Valley College. At West Valley College and Folsom Lake College she served in leadership roles including Directors of Cultural Diversity, the Bay Area Faculty Diversity Internship Project, Instructional Outreach, and as Dean of Instruction. For the last 6+ years, she has served as Vice President of Instruction at Folsom Lake College.

Dr. Monica Flores Pactol's forum presentation will be held between 11:00-11:45 a.m.



Dr. Martha Garcia has been serving as a community college Superintendent/President since 2018. She previously served as Vice President for Student Services and Acting Vice President for Academic Services. Moreover, Dr. Garcia has developed a multitude of categorically funded programs that focused on serving underrepresented students. Through her successful grant writing competence, she has secured over 20 million dollars to support the creation of innovative programs and services. She has been employed in a California community college since 1999 and has held several positions under Student Services and Academic Services.

Dr. Garcia earned a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership from San Diego State University, a Master's Degree in Educational Counseling from National University, a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from San Diego State University and an Associate's Degree in General Major from Imperial Valley College.

Dr. Martha Garcia's forum presentation will be held between 9:00-9:45 a.m.



Dr. Annebelle Nery is Vice President of Instruction and Acting Vice President of Student Services at College of the Desert; working successfully with colleagues to serve the Coachella Valley for over 14 years in multiple capacities in student services, instruction, and institutional effectiveness and planning. She has been an integral part of higher education for 23 years: California community colleges for 17, administration for 13, executive-level management for 8 and a faculty member for 10.

Supported by Dr. Nery, the College has received state and national recognition in recent years. Under her leadership, many innovative and effective programs were founded including the College's highly acclaimed EDGE/pLEDGE program, which is widely recognized as a best practice.

She earned her Ph.D. in sociology with emphases in statistics and organization and race, class and gender studies at the University of California, Riverside. A first-generation college student with Spanish as her first language, Dr. Nery is an equity advocate with significant work in social justice. Her guiding principle is to ensure student success is at the center of all decision-making.

Dr. Annebelle Nery's forum presentation will be held between 10:00-10:45 a.m.

The three candidates listed above have been accepted by the Board of Trustees as finalists and will now advance to individual interviews with the full Board of Trustees. Finalist interviews are set for the afternoon of July 6, 2021, with the intent to appoint/announce the new Superintendent/President for College of the Desert at the Board's regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, July 15, 2021.

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