

Assembly Higher Education Committee

October 16, 2023: Oversight Hearing Speaker Biographies

Dr. Alberto J. Román, DPA –*East Los Angeles Community College, Campus*

President - Dr. Alberto J. Román has devoted his career to public education with 20 years of experience. His experience encompasses positions in the public-school system as a classified employee, faculty member, director of human resources, and assistant superintendent. Dr. Román currently serves as the College President for East Los Angeles College, one of the largest community colleges in the state. Dr. Román's personal narrative as an immigrant and first-generation college graduate connects him to the shared experiences of the college community. He believes that colleges must unify at all levels to increase educational access and advance equity through rigorous academic programs and targeted student support services that meet the varying needs of community college students. Dr. Román is deeply committed to transforming communities and increasing social mobility through equitable educational access and student success. He is recognized by his colleagues as a collaborative and innovative leader.

Dr. Román previously worked for the Federal Government and the California State Senate where he focused on community development, outreach and resource development.

Dr. Román earned both his doctorate and master's degree in Public Administration from University of La Verne. He also earned his bachelor's degree in Political Science from the University of California, Riverside.

Panel 1 – Community College Systemwide and Regional Perspectives

- a) John Stanskas, Ph.D – *Community College Chancellor's Office, Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Support*. As the Vice Chancellor of Educational Services and Support, Dr. Stanskas manages transfer, curriculum and intersegmental work. Dr. Stanskas focuses on curriculum chaptering and approval; intersegmental coordination with California State University, University of California and private four-year institution partners; student equity programs; emerging programs and initiatives; enrollment and retention initiatives; and innovations in teaching and learning.

Dr. Stanskas has served as Dean of Science at San Bernardino Valley College and the president of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. Prior to that, he spent 25 years serving California's

Community Colleges as a faculty member. Dr. Stanskas earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry from Mary Washington College in Virginia and a PhD in nuclear chemistry from the University of Maryland.

b) Dr. Mike Muñoz, Ed.D – Long Beach City College,

Superintendent/President. As the Superintendent-President Dr. Mike Muñoz is the Chief Administrative Officer of the District and oversees the Long Beach City College (LBCC) administration. Nationally recognized as a transformational leader, Dr. Muñoz has led LBCC since March 4, 2021. He is an expert in closing racial equity gaps for students of color, creating inclusive campus cultures for LGBTQIA+ students, and efficiently executing innovative change that makes LBCC a destination college for students from all backgrounds.

A first-generation college student, Dr. Muñoz is a product of the California Community College system, attending East Los Angeles College and Fullerton College before transferring to the University of California, Irvine, where he received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and Social Behavior. He received Master of Arts degree in Counseling and his Doctorate of Education with a specialization in Community College Leadership, from California State University, Long Beach. While attending college, he experienced both food and housing insecurity — all while caring for his daughter as a single father.

Dr. Muñoz has extensive experience teaching both at the undergraduate and graduate levels in counseling and higher education. He has taught master's level courses at California State University, Long Beach, and USC, and doctoral level courses at California State University, Los Angeles. He's currently serving as an Adjunct Professor of Higher Education at the USC Rossier School of Education teaching a leadership course focused on Community Colleges. Dr. Muñoz was recognized as an Outstanding Faculty Member in 2019 by USC's Rossier Student Organization, and the 2018 Dr. Cynthia S. Johnson Award from CSULB for his contributions to higher education through exceptional student mentoring.

c) Dr. Angélica Garcia, Ed.D – Santa Rosa Junior College,

Superintendent/President. Dr. Angélica Garcia is an educational leader with a demonstrated commitment to improving access, equity, and student success in higher education. A fellow with the Aspen Institute

for New Presidents, the National Community College Hispanic Council, and the UC Davis Wheelhouse Institute, Dr. Garcia is committed to equity-minded leadership. Dr. Garcia earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership at San Francisco State University, a Master's in Social Work at San Diego State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Liberal and Civic Studies at Saint Mary's College of California.

Dr. Garcia was appointed the Superintendent/President of Santa Rosa Junior College) SRJC beginning July 1, 2023, a community college known for its commitment to students, high transfer rates, and innovative career education programs. Dr. Garcia's leadership underscores the honor and pride that SRJC has in being designated as an Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), which advances the learning and development for Latinx students throughout Sonoma County. She recognizes that this designation calls upon SRJC to serve the needs, career and academic goals, as well as create a pathway for access to higher education for diverse student populations.

Dr. Garcia's experience as an educator, social worker, adjunct faculty, and administrator has afforded her the opportunity to develop the leadership and community-building skills needed to impact institutional change. She is committed to leading with integrity from a student-centered framework and building collaborative relationships across instructional and student services divisions to meet the needs of students. Her experience as a first-generation college student, and as a student of color, informs her teaching and leadership lens.

Dr. Garcia is an equity-minded educator who leads with integrity, purpose, and commitment to students. Her roles in higher education include being among the ranks of faculty, staff, and administrators. She is known for her inclusive leadership which centers participatory governance for institutional change efforts, such as the implementation of Guided Pathways, expanding Dual Enrollment, creating programs for adult learners, and implementing capital improvement and bond projects.

Dr. Garcia's involvement in statewide issues includes being appointed by the Speaker of the Assembly to serve as a member and Vice Chair of the Student-Centered Funding Formula Oversight Committee.

Additionally, as a former member of the statewide CCC Guided Pathways Advisory Committee, Dr. Garcia has advocated for increasing input from students, classified professionals, and faculty from the colleges, as well as

sustaining an equity-minded perspective in the implementation effort. She is a founding board member of COLEGAS, a statewide organization focused on advocacy and development of Latinx professionals in higher education and serves on the Puente Project Advisory Board. In 2023, Dr. Garcia was appointed to President Biden's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (PCAH), which provides cultural policy recommendations to the President and the heads of the National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Dr. Garcia is a second-generation born Chicana of the Central Valley. She lives in Santa Rosa, CA, with her wife, two daughters, and their dog Esperanza.

d) Brent Calvin, Ed.D – *College of the Sequoias (COS), Superintendent/President.*

President Brent Calvin works with students, faculty, staff, and other administrators to start programs ensuring that students and their communities are provided with the course work and materials they need. Prior to being Superintendent and President, Dr. Calvin was the Vice President of Student Services, working directly with counselors, financial aid consultants, admissions offices, and other student support services offered here on campus.

Dr. Calvin accredits his 'return' to COS as the athletic director in 2002 as one of the most notable moments in his career, as well as his first step towards being inspired to help the students as superintendent and president.

"I was a student and had been a student athlete, so to be hired back as the athletic director was a big day." stated Dr. Calvin, "Anytime you stay in an organization as long as I've been here, you pick things along the way that you want to be done a little bit differently, like more opportunities for students and improved facilities." Dr. Calvin states that his favorite part of the job is having the opportunity to work with students. "It's the reason I've stayed here for 20 years, to be honest. Without students and that interaction, my job would be just like any other office job."

Panel 2 – Workforce Partnerships – Fostering Productive Relationships

- a) Javier Rodriguez, MSW – *Rising Scholars Network, Network Regional Coordinator, California Community College Chancellor’s Office*. Javier Rodriguez is currently the Regional Coordinator for the Rising Scholars Network at the California Community College system. He partners with college campuses across his region and provides support to college programs serving students impacted by the criminal justice system. Before joining Rising Scholars, Javier earned his Masters of Social Welfare from the Luskin School of Public Affairs at UCLA. During his time at UCLA, he co-founded the Underground Scholars Initiative (USI) UCLA Chapter.
- b) Kurt Norwood, MPA – *Rio Hondo College Fire Academy, Fire Academy Director and Fire Chief, City of Arcadia (Retired)*. Chief Norwood began his career as a full-time firefighter with the Arcadia Fire Department in 1987 and he became a licensed paramedic in 1990. Over the course of the next 30 years Chief Norwood worked varied assignments and divisions and ultimately rising to the rank of Fire Chief in 2014, a position he held until his retirement from the City of Arcadia in 2016. Since his retirement from Arcadia he has also served as Fire Chief for the cities of Montebello and Sierra Madre.
Chief Norwood has an Associate’s Degree in Fire Technology from El Camino College, a Bachelor’s Degree from CSU Los Angeles in Fire Protection Administration, and a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from CSU Los Angeles. Chief Norwood is a graduate of the Rio Hondo College Fire Academy.
Chief Norwood has an extensive background in training and education. He has been a part of the Rio Hondo College Adjunct Faculty since 2002 and is certified to teach various California State Fire Marshall courses in Command, Operations, Management and Leadership and other areas. Currently Chief Norwood is the Director of the Rio Hondo Fire Academy and Fire Technology/EMT programs.
- c) Dr. James Lancaster, Ed.D – *Los Angeles Community College District, Vice Chancellor of Workforce Development*. The Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) Board of Trustees appointed Dr. James Lancaster

as the new LACCD Vice Chancellor of Workforce Development. Dr. Lancaster's tenure began on September 1, 2023.

As a recognized and valued campus leader, Dr. Lancaster most recently served as the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Los Angeles City College. He also served as the Vice President of Instruction at Los Angeles Trade Technical College and the Dean of Curriculum, Career/Technical, and Continuing Education at Citrus College before coming to LACCD. Early in his career he graduated with an Associate Science (AS) degree in Automotive Technology from Cerritos College and worked in the automotive industry as a Master Chevrolet Technician. He returned to Cerritos College as an adjunct faculty member and Advanced Transportation Center Coordinator before taking a full-time teaching position at Citrus College, where he held several faculty leadership roles, including president of the faculty association.

In addition to his AS degree from Cerritos, he holds a Bachelor's degree in Vocational Education from CSU, Long Beach, a Master's degree in Industrial and Technical Studies from CSU, Los Angeles, and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership: Community College Specialization from CSU, Fullerton (CSUF). He has also taught part-time in CSUF's Masters of Higher Education program.

Panel 3 – Baccalaureate Degrees – New Opportunities?

- a) Dr. Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D – California Community College Baccalaureate Degree Association, Association President and Chancellor Emeritus of the San Diego Community College District – Dr. Constance M. Carroll founded and is president and CEO of the California Community College Baccalaureate Association (CCCBA), a nonprofit that provides assistance and opportunities for the state's 116 community colleges to offer four-year degrees in fields that need more qualified workers. Before CCCBA, Carroll was San Diego Community College District's (SDCCD) longest-serving chancellor, retiring after serving 17 years as chief executive officer at the district. As chancellor, Carroll has been credited as the driving force behind the San Diego Promise, a program launched in 2016 with a cohort of 186 students. It has since expanded to help more than 4,000 students each year by providing cost-free classes and grants to help with textbooks and other materials.

Nationally, Carroll is in her 12th year of service as a contributing member of the National Council on the Humanities. She was nominated by former President Barack Obama in 2011. At the state and local level, Carroll has served on various boards, including the League for Innovation, the Community College Humanities Association, the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corp. and various committees.

After earning her bachelor's degree in humanities from Duquesne University and a master's and Ph.D. in the classics (ancient Greek and Latin) from the University of Pittsburgh, Carroll began working as assistant professor of classics and associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Maine, Portland-Gorham (now the University of Southern Maine), which was creating a two-year college in York County.

- b) Dr. Pamela T. Luster, Ed.D – Dr. Pam Luster is President Emerita of San Diego Mesa College. Dr. Luster is the President/CEO of Luster Higher Ed Group, working to bring equitable, just, and inclusive practices to higher education leaders and institutions.

She is an adjunct professor in the San Diego State University doctoral program in Community College Leadership. Along with her California Community College Colleagues, Dr. Keith Curry and Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson, Dr. Luster is a co-founder of Equity Avengers. They host a weekly program called #EquityChat on Twitter and are working with leaders to embed racial equity, critical humility, and learning across our systems. Previously, she served as the Vice President of Student Services, Interim Vice President of Instruction, and Dean of Academic Services at Las Positas College. At West Valley College, she held the Dean of Career Education and Workforce Development position and started her career as a faculty member in the Disabled Students program.

Dr. Luster's service includes membership on several local, state, and national boards, including San Diego Youth Services, San Diego Mesa College Foundation, California Community College Athletics Association, and Community College Baccalaureate Association & Bayside Community Center. She previously served on the Chief Executive Officers of California Community Colleges (CEOCCC) Board and was co-chair of the CEOCCC Task Force on Affordability, Food, and Housing.

- c) Penny C. Weismuller, DrPH, RN – *Tri-County Nursing Program, Professor and Director of the School of Nursing, California State University Fullerton*. Dr. Weismuller has decades of experience working with students in her chosen specialty area and at various degree levels. Dr. Weismuller is a firm believer of mentorship and has successfully mentored countless students; many who currently serve as nursing faculty at various institutions of higher learning. It has been said that Dr. Weismuller's greatest skill is helping students, and colleagues, figure out what they need to make decisions and complete projects; she is a mentor and a guide who has had a great an impact on the future of the nurses with whom she has come in contact and the profession of nursing as a whole. Not only that, Dr. Weismuller holds multiple degrees including a Doctor of Public Health – with an emphasis in Nursing and Health Administration from Loma Linda University, two master degrees, one in psychology from Chapman University, and one in Nursing from Loma Linda University, and a bachelor of science degree in nursing from Brigham Young University. Dr. Weismuller has written and published over 30 academic publications and her work is cited frequently in other various published works. Dr. Weismuller, the recipient of the Daisy Award for Extraordinary Nursing Faculty and other awards and accolades, is also a highly sought after presenter and clinician.

