

Self-Evaluation—Bill Scroggins, September 2016

As I enter my sixth year as President of Mt. San Antonio College, my dedication to and pleasure with serving the college remains unabated. As I talk to community college presidents around the state and nation, I continue to be amazed at the ability of Mt. SAC to serve our students and community at a high level and to do so with efficient use of resources and through a campus climate of collegiality and conviviality.

The last two years have continued the period of rapid change in the California Community Colleges. Economic recovery has meant more funds available to Mt. SAC, however, these funds must be earned by enrollment growth, through competitive grants, or by meeting requirements of restricted funds such as Student Success, Student Equity, and Workforce Development. Expanded growth and added categorical programs have meant careful consideration in the hiring of faculty, staff, and managers as well as strategic use of Measure RR funds to add facilities to support this growth. Both the quality of those hired and the responsiveness of facility additions have been exceptional. Of course, the legal challenges to the growth of Mt. SAC has been an added challenge. Legal actions have had mixed results, but the college has adjusted to changing rules of the game to find alternative solutions that allow progress to continue.

That the money has come through restricted funds or as one-time allocations has made these fiscal decisions more challenging. Again, through careful leadership, Mt. SAC has been more than equal to the task. Several strategies have been implemented. Investing a reasonable portion of these monies in reducing operating costs (energy, maintenance, utilities, and staff time) has been important to keep the bottom line of the general fund healthy. Investing a reasonable portion of these monies as a hedge against future obligations (state employee retirement contribution, Mt. SAC retiree health benefits, and future site development for growth) has also been important. Investing in added instructional capacity (full- and part-time faculty, instructional equipment, and technical staff support) has enabled the college to meet the increasing demand for student enrollment and to earn the maximum available growth funding.

Investing in our employees has been a priority as well. We have provided compensation increases above COLA, greatly expanded professional development, and improved labor-management relations on all fronts. Setting the tone for this support has been a major goal of our senior management.

Leadership in the community and with our elected officials has continued to be a strong point for Mt. SAC. We have increased our connection with those in public office and continued to spread the message of the excellence and distinction of Mt. SAC. Taking a personal role in this work has been quite rewarding. This has been an area of priority for the Board, and trustees have stepped up communication and involvement with our elected representatives. These efforts have borne fruit in several ways from legislative advocacy to reducing bureaucratic red tape.

After a period of high demand for classes, the recovery in job opportunities in our region has meant that our marketing strategy has shifted to encouraging more students to enroll at Mt. SAC, stressing that seats in classes are now available, and expanding our audience to those on

social media and those for whom English is not their native language. Guiding this messaging and expanding both dedicated resources and the scope of our marketing has taken responsive leadership.

An important part of our outreach has been the work of the Mt. SAC Foundation. With a strong Foundation Board of Directors, a growing Alumni Association, targeted messaging to potential donors, and extensive follow up with existing donors, the Foundation has expanded revenue, developed sound fiscal practices, and made a considerable impact in funding specific projects and increasing student scholarships. Working directly with donors has been a pleasure for me—telling the Mt. SAC story during cart rides with donors around our stunning campus has been one of the joys of my role as college president.

The Board of Trustees has undergone transitions both in expanding from five to seven members in trustee areas and in experiencing contested elections. The Board has increased diversity and added new voices to mix with the experience of those serving on the Board for many years. A healthy adjustment to providing deeper and broader background and justification for items brought for Board approval has provided the opportunity to revisit the basis for ongoing college processes. Communication between the President and the Board continues to follow a variety of paths—weekly updates on Cabinet inner workings of the College, multiple weekly messages on confidential matters, monthly general reports on policy issues and general happenings on campus, Skype sessions with legal counsel, and one-on-one discussions both on a casual and a drop in basis—plus occasional scheduled conversations. Annual all-day, in-depth study sessions provide both a deeper dive into existing college practices and an opportunity for the Board to lay out future directions for the College and set priorities for the coming year's work.

Overlaying much of these college activities is the leadership that Mt. SAC faculty, staff, students, managers, and Board members provide at the regional, state, and national level. Mt. SAC is truly a leader in creating innovative, practical, scalable, inspiring solutions to problems faced by community colleges at all levels. It has been my pleasure to be one of those voices but also to support the many other Mt. SAC luminaries in their involvement through advice, mentoring, advocacy, and communication. (See the appendix for examples.) This work is beneficial in several ways. Effective practices at Mt. SAC are shared with others, new ideas are brought back to the College, and the reputation of Mt. SAC is enhanced. After all, leadership is a team sport!

My work beyond the college walls enables me to both be aware of and occasionally to shape state community college policy. Community connections provide venues for me to promote Mt. SAC and to be one of the leaders providing direction to higher education in the San Gabriel Valley. Briefly, the highlights of that involvement are:

- **Workforce.** I am a member of the Chancellor's Workforce & Economic Performance Advisory Committee (WEDPAC), co-chair the LA/Orange County CTE Regional Consortium, was a member of the Community College Board of Governor's Strong Workforce Task Force—which wrote 25 recommendations and produced \$200 million in state funding—and I am providing statewide training on how to implement the Strong Workforce Initiative (co-chairing a state summit, a delivering a set of webinars, and providing several conference presentations).

- **Technology.** I have, for more than fifteen years, co-chaired the Chancellor's Telecommunication & Technology Advisory Committee (TTAC). Projects for which I have been centrally involved in planning and overseeing include Common Course Identifier (C-ID), eTranscript, Online Education Initiative, Educational Planning Initiative, Common Assessment, Cyber Security, and CENIC Fiber Optic Build Out.
- **CEO Leadership.** I serve on the CEO Board of the Community College League of California (CCLC) being centrally involved in committees on legislation, professional development, and accreditation. I serve as a mentor to several new CEOs.
- **Student Success.** I served on the Commission on the Future, a systemwide group formed by the Community College League of California whose 2010 *Vision 20-20* report spawned the Board of Governor's Student Success Task Force. In subsequent years I served on a number of implementation groups for the Student Success Act of 2012.
- **Accreditation.** During five years at Mt. SAC I have chaired three accreditation visiting teams, one of which resulted in a Show Cause Order and required my leadership over a two year period to assist that college in restoring full accreditation. I serve the Accreditation Commission on the Annual Conference Planning Team, and I serve the CEO Board as a member of the Accreditation Workgroup which is charged with aligning the work of the two WASC higher education commissions: ACCJC which accredits two-year institutions and SCUC which accredits four-year institutions. See footnote¹ for acronyms.
- **Foundation.** Working with not only with the Mt. SAC Foundation but also with the national Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) provided the opportunity to participate in national forums and conferences and to author a chapter entitled "Getting to the Next Level" in the CASE 2015 book, *Opportunity Knocking*, giving guidance to community college presidents on involvement in philanthropy and foundations.
- **San Gabriel Valley Economic Partnership.** I have served on the SGVEP Board of Directors for the last four years providing guidance on legislation and public policy issues related to higher education, workforce, and governmental relations.
- **Regional Memberships.** I am a member of the Oversight Boards of the Successor Agencies for the cities of Baldwin Park, La Puente, and Irwindale (chair), the San Gabriel-Foothill Association of Community Colleges, the Convergence Health Careers Pipeline Executive Committee, and the Covina Rotary Club.

This involvement has enabled me to provide effective insight and leadership to Mt. SAC in these critical areas of the evolving community college role in our state and region. Looking down the road, this innovative and challenging work will continue at Mt. SAC. This coming year sharpens our focus in several areas.

We are completing the Accreditation Self Evaluation, and my meetings with each of the Standards Writing Teams plus providing input to the penultimate draft of the report has been a labor of love during these turbulent and ever-changing times for our dear Accrediting Commission. These labors will continue as we progress toward the finish line of our Evaluation Team Visit this coming March.

¹ WASC = Western Association of Schools and Colleges; ACCJC = Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges; SCUC = Senior College and University Commission

Mt. SAC's participation in the national AACC Pathways Project has been amazingly rewarding in the teamwork shown to create new ways for our students to experience community college learning. The project will continue—with an added twist. Bakersfield College President Sonya Christian and I have taken fledgling steps to create a California version of Guided Pathways. The endeavor will be another avenue pursued in this coming year.

In the be-careful-what-you-ask-for category, the Strong Workforce Task Force Report has led to both legislative “guidance” and an ongoing state appropriation of \$200 million to strengthen our CTE programs. The time and energy devoted to serving on the Task Force, being CEO co-chair of the LA/OC CTE Regional Consortium, and playing a key role in state level implementation of the program has consumed major amounts of time, energy, and, well, to be honest, my patience with the system. The recent allocation to Mt. SAC coupled with the great work of our CTE deans and faculty has refilled my tank!

As if accreditation, pathways reform, and workforce development was not enough, we have started an Educational and Facilities Master Planning effort. With the help of the Board of Trustees, we have assembled a Community Facilities Plan Advisory Committee that will provide input to the process, aid in sharing the message of our goals for the future, and build momentum for our next facilities bond campaign. Taking a personal role in this community involvement is one of my favorite exercises—I love talking about the greatness of Mt. SAC as well as hearing the poignant and laudatory stories of those in the region who have had their lives transformed by our college.

As with any endeavor that involves climbing mountains, there have been “lessons learned” over the past couple of years.

Relations with the City of Walnut deteriorated rapidly after some residents of the Timberline neighborhood protested our plans for a parking structure on north Lot A. It was naïve on my part to assume that our informal arrangement with the City of Walnut for approving Mt. SAC facility projects could continue unchallenged. Even though the City signed off on the parking project, this was not sufficient to protect the college. Our legal defense to the challenge in court was not as strong as it could have been—perhaps contributing to the unfavorable outcome of a restraining order. With strong legal counsel and with our investment in extensive surface parking in lot M, we have staved off further negative legal outcomes—and provided a short-term solution for the needed parking. However, while waiting for the eventual outcomes of the court case, we are left with a residue of difficult working relationships with Walnut City Council members and the prospect of a difficult negotiation with the City over the approval of future parking facilities. As we move into planning additional facilities for the college, it has been my direction to the college team that we have an open, transparent, Board-supported outreach and communication strategy with the residents of our district—and especially of Walnut—about future construction on our campus—particularly for parking.

Steady progress in almost all areas of the campus have added particular frustration to the struggle to improve leadership and productivity in Human Resources. Potential transformation of

HR processes and innovative strategies, although developed through thoughtful and practical methods, were stunted by lack of leadership at the Vice President level. Despite my continued efforts to assist our former Vice President in his growth and development, lack of progress led to a mutual agreement on a parting of ways. Hope springs eternal, and we have a new, experienced VP of HR with a great track record.

Then there has been the distraction of my seeking the position of state Chancellor. Frankly, I entered this fray with mixed feelings—the opportunity to match my skills with the needs of our system at a critical juncture juxtaposed with my rewarding work—present and future—here at Mt. SAC. Not only the time but the psychic energy needed was a strain—and pulled me away from my usual laser focus on the advancement of Mt. SAC. With the Chancellor issue resolved, I have been surprised with my uplifted spirit of adventure and promise for a continued role in the future of Mt. SAC.

So beyond goals for leading Mt. SAC as articulated above, I would say that I have a list of personal and professional goals for the coming year or two.

Presidencies are short-term ventures in comparison to the career investment of the vast majority of our faculty, staff, and managers. So it has always been my goal to think about the long term improvement of Mt. SAC so that future presidents will enjoy the positive experience I have had and that growth and development of the college can take place with a minimum of future challenges to overcome. Such is the nature of my continued goal to make decisions that brighten future prospects of the college.

Mt. SAC's real strength is its people. A central personal and professional goal of mine is to develop talented colleagues, mentor those with potential, and provide opportunities for professional growth and advancement across the board. Because much of this is one-on-one experiences, most of you are not much aware of my endeavors in this arena. Nevertheless, the fertilization of future leaders of our college and our system remain one of my highest goals.

From the first, I have believed that the excellence at Mt. SAC was not sufficiently recognized by nor adequately influencing those in community colleges across our state and nation. This has been a long term goal that I knew going in would take time. As the years have passed, gains have been made in getting the bright light of Mt. SAC out from under the basket. The next few years offer increasing opportunities to stoke that flame even more. Such is my renewed and reinvigorated goal.

None of this could take place without the support and encouragement of all of you—community, Board, faculty, staff, management—and our students whose lives we transform.

Bill

Appendix: Team Leadership at Mt. SAC

Faculty, Staff, and Vice Presidents

Below are just a few examples of the contribution of Mt. SAC leaders from the ranks of faculty, classified staff, and vice presidents to advance our profession and our community. Many, many more have served with excellence and distinction.

- Our Faculty Association (FA) president and vice president both serve on the California Teachers Association (CTA) Community College Association (CCA) Board of Directors. FA President Eric Kaljumagi, Professor of Mathematics, is CTA District J Director.
- Faculty Association Vice President Joan Sholars, Professor of Mathematics, is a CTA Political Action Committee Director as well as serving on CTA's State Council of Education.

Through the powerful CTA, their advocacy for legislative action benefitting community college is essential.

- Bill Rawlings, our Mt. SAC CSEA Chapter 262 President, is Chair of the California School Employees Association (CSEA) Legislative Committee, previously a member of CSEA Board of Directors, and a member of Board of Directors of Watchmen Arts Association. As a recognized state union leader, Bill is not only on top of union issues around the state, but he is influential in legislative matters of importance to community colleges.
- Dr. Irene Malmgren, Vice President of Instruction, is Past President of the California Chief Instructional Officers representing VPs of Instruction around the state and sitting on the Chancellor's Consultation Council—thus greatly influencing state instructional policy and procedure.
- Dr. Audrey Yamagata-Noji is an influential leader professionally and in the community. She is President of the Board of Directors of Asian Pacific Islanders in Higher Education (APAHE) and is a trainer for Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics (LEAP). She served for twenty years on the Board of Trustees for the Santa Ana Unified School District. Audrey and her team are regular presenters on student success and student equity around the state and nation.
- Mike Gregoryk is active professionally and in the community. He is a recognized expert on college business operations, particularly investment strategy. He is valued as a foundation board member for his administrative and financial skill. His involvement statewide and nationally includes Past President of the National Council of Community College Business Officials and of California Community Colleges Association of Chief Business Officials and the Alliance of Schools for Cooperative Insurance Programs (ASCIP). Within the Mt. SAC district, Mike is on the board of the Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center Foundation and the Sung Tien Collaboration (STC) Foundation. He is past president of the San Gabriel Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce. Mike is also a member of the Oversight Boards of the Successor Agencies for the cities of Industry, West Covina, and Pomona Redevelopment Agencies.

Board of Trustees Members

- Trustee Dr. Manuel Baca is Immediate Past President of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors. He served on the California Community Colleges System Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Student Success Task Force. Currently, Dr. Baca is a member of the advisory committee for Wheelhouse, The Center for Community College Leadership and Research at UC Davis, and Vice Chair of the Foundation for California Community Colleges.
- Trustee Rosanne Bader previously was a member of the California Community College Trustees Board. She is a member of the Board of Directors of Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center and serves as a member of the hospital's Foundation Board. She also presides over the Pomona Rotary Board.
- Trustee Jay Chen previously served on the Board of Education for Hacienda La Puente Unified School District.
- Trustee Judy Chen-Haggerty is a member of the Association of Community College Trustees' Diversity Committee and serves on the Community College League of California's Advisory Committee on Education Services which provides conferences and workshops to trustees around the state.
- Trustee Dr. David Hall is Chair of the Industry Manufacturers Council Human Resources Committee, Vice President of the Regional Chamber of Commerce—San Gabriel Valley, Board Member of the San Gabriel Valley Civic Alliance, Board Member of the San Gabriel Valley YMCA, and Vice Chair of the Oversight Boards of the Successor Agencies for both the Covina and San Dimas Redevelopment Agencies.
- Trustee Robert Hidalgo previously served on the Rowland Unified School Board of Education. In addition, he has served on the Executive Board for the California Latino School Board Association, Los Angeles County School Trustees Association, and the La Puente Valley Regional Occupational Program.
- Student Trustee Elizabeth (Betty) Santos was just elected as student member to the California Community College Trustees (CCCT) Board.
- Trustee Laura Santos previously served on the Basset Unified School District Board. In addition, she serves on the Los Angeles County School Trustee Association's Community College Subcommittee.