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College of the Desert Board of Trustees Selects Val Martinez Garcia as New Superintendent/President

PALM DESERT, CA (May 14, 2025) – The College of the Desert Board of Trustees has selected Val Martinez Garcia as the 9th Superintendent/President of College of the Desert. The Board voted 3-2 to approve Val Martinez Garcia's appointment during their special meeting. Contract details are being finalized and will be presented for formal approval at the Friday, May 16 Board of Trustees meeting.

Martinez Garcia, will now lead the college permanently after an extensive nationwide search.

"In Mr. Val Martinez Garcia, we have a leader who deeply understands both the challenges and opportunities facing College of the Desert," said Dr. Joel Kinnamon, Chair of the College of the Desert Board of Trustees. " His collaborative approach and commitment to educational excellence will help us build on our strengths and address the evolving needs of our students and community.

The selection follows a comprehensive recruitment process conducted in partnership with AGB Search, LLC, a national firm specializing in higher education leadership searches. The college received 73 qualified applications from across the country, from which four finalists were selected to advance to public forums and final interviews.

Martinez Garcia brings over two decades of leadership in higher education to his role. At College of the Desert, he has served as both Vice President of Instruction and Vice President of Student Services, overseeing programs and services for more than 14,000 students. His accomplishments include expanding the dual enrollment program and leading the development of the Educational Strategic Master Plan.

He has contributed to major facilities projects including the Indio Campus Expansion and Palm Springs Campus Design. Martinez Garcia currently

serves as Regional Representative for the Chief Student Services Officers Association. Martinez Garcia holds an M.S. in School Counseling and a B.S. in Sociology from the University of La Verne and is pursuing an Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership.

For more information, please visit www.collegeofthedesert.edu.

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