

# SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

**College of the Desert is the largest institution of higher education in the Coachella Valley.**

At College of the Desert (COD), we are dedicated to providing the tools, programs and instruction critical for student success. Our leadership continually innovates new ways to serve the needs of our region's diverse and growing population and ensure accessible higher education for all. Central to our mission are initiatives that help students overcome economic and social barriers so they can focus on their education.



## STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES

We also pride ourselves on other student success initiatives that are making a difference on our five campuses. They include resource centers for Dreamers, LGBTQ+ and Black students, foster youth and military veterans, on-campus food pantries, the EDGE/pLEDGE program, and free transportation programs, all of which help bridge achievement gaps among some of the most at-risk populations.



- The College's EDGE program, acclaimed both locally and nationally, has garnered several awards including the 2016 California Community College Chancellor's Office Student Success Award, 2018 Bellwether Award, and 2019 Innovations of the Year Award. Starting with personalized guidance on expectations and financial aid, EDGE offers a two-week summer refresher in math and English and pairs with the pLEDGE promise for two years of free tuition. Key outcomes include higher retention rates and improved college-level math and English scores among participants.
- In 2023, the District launched the Roadrunner Express which provides students free transportation between campuses. This service is especially helpful in bridging the gap for students who use Haul Pass to get to class. Haul Pass offers free unlimited transportation to COD students through the local public transportation provider, SunLine Transit Agency.
- \$5 Textbook Rentals was also launched in 2023. This program allows students to rent textbooks that are included in the program for \$5 for the entire school year; therefore, leveling a barrier to education for those who cannot afford class resources.
- As a partner campus of College Corps, College of the Desert's students are invited to apply to a program that pays students up to \$10,000 (\$7,000 living stipend and \$3,000 education grant) to do community service and gain job experience. College of the Desert is one out of less than 50 other College Corps partners.

## OUR STUDENTS

College of the Desert is a regionally and nationally recognized Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) with a student population that reflects the service area demographics. In 2023, Hispanic Outlook on Education Magazine and The Campaign for College Opportunity recognized COD as a champion of equity for underrepresented student populations.

COD ranked in the top 100 two-year colleges in the nation for enrollment of Latinx students in 2021-22. Also, the College was among the top 12 community colleges with at least 65% of Latinx students earning an associate degree for transfer.

In 2018, Coachella Valley Hispanic/Latinx populations comprised 52 percent of the service area population. In fall 2018, 81 percent of the students enrolled at the College were from communities of color, with 75 percent self-identifying as Hispanic/Latino. Only 32 percent of Coachella Valley residents aged 25 and older have a high school diploma or GED, 16 percent already have some college or postsecondary education but lack a terminal degree, and only 4 percent have an associate degree. A lot of our students are non-traditional students who come to us from all walks of life. Many of them are the first in their families to attend college and some are 4.0 high school graduates. We have single parents struggling to balance work, parenting, and education, and others who come from outside the state or country seeking better futures for themselves and their families.

We are also seeing an uptick in enrollment from high school students in our Free Early College program as student populations at local high schools are projected to increase and remain elevated for several years. Through Free Early College and other outreach efforts, College of the Desert has the opportunity to attract more traditional students and help them transfer to four-year institutions or careers with significantly reduced financial burden.



## DEDICATION TO EQUITY

College of the Desert is committed to diversity – in our student body, our faculty and our curriculum. We are an open-door institution that embraces the right of all people to have access to quality higher education in a safe environment that supports equity and inclusion.

Over the last year, the College joined the California Community College Equity Leadership Alliance, which facilitates and provides resources to address individual and systemic racism. The College also partnered with the USC Race and Equity Center to administer a survey of students on race and campus climate and is revising first responder course materials to address social justice, equity, anti-racism and community policing.



## STRONG COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND ENGAGEMENT

Since the College opened in 1962, it has been serving the local community by creating jobs and income, providing area residents with easy access to higher education opportunities, and preparing students for highly skilled, technical professions. And now, College of the Desert is experiencing one of the most exciting periods in its more than 60-year history. Local voters have approved two bond measures that total nearly \$1 billion that are being used to fund new buildings and update existing infrastructure and facilities, as well as the creation of additional class offerings in the eastern and western Coachella Valley.

**INDIO CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
**COMPLETED 2023**

**INDIO CAMPUS EXPANSION PROJECT**  
**COMPLETED AUGUST 2024**

**INDIO CAMPUS RENOVATIONS**  
**IN PROGRESS – ANTICIPATED FEBRUARY 2025**

**SCIENCE BUILDING RENOVATION PROJECT**  
**IN PROGRESS – ANTICIPATED WINTER 2025**

**ATHLETIC STADIUM AND FIELDS PROJECT**  
**IN PROGRESS – ANTICIPATED WINTER 2025**

**ROADRUNNER MOTORS**  
**IN PROGRESS – ANTICIPATED SPRING 2026**

**PALM SPRINGS CAMPUS**  
**IN PROGRESS – ANTICIPATED SPRING 2027**



**EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK, YOU SEE PROGRESS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT STUDENT LEARNING AND SUCCESS.**





## MISSION

College of the Desert is an inclusive, student-centered community college providing high-quality degree, certificate, and transfer programs that are accessible, affordable, and responsive to the diverse needs of students and our community. By preparing workforce professionals and leaders, the College enhances the local economy, closes persistent equity gaps, and improves the quality of life in the Coachella Valley and surrounding communities.

## VISION

College of the Desert will provide a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice while continually improving community access to relevant training, certificates, degree programs, services, and transfer opportunities.

## VALUES

**COLLEGE OF THE DESERT IS A LEARNING-CENTERED INSTITUTION THAT VALUES:**

### **ACCESS**

To fulfill our Mission and achieve our Vision, we commit to ensuring open access to educational opportunities.

### **COLLEGIALITY**

We value the thoughts, words, and actions of our students, colleagues, and community members. We encourage open dialogue, respectful dissent, and varying opinions in an inclusive forum. We pursue broad understanding, effective dialogue, and inclusive decision-making.

### **DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND ACCESSIBILITY (DEIA)**

We embrace the diversity of our community and uphold the dignity and worth of every individual. We strive to create safe, equitable, and accessible environments so individuals can learn, grow, and complete their educational goals.

### **FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

As good stewards of the public trust, we take thoughtful, intentional, and responsible action in allocating resources to fulfill our Mission and Vision. We anticipate and respond to dynamic fiscal conditions through ongoing evaluation, effective planning, reallocating existing resources with an equity lens, and developing and seeking new funds.

### **EMPATHY**

We listen to each other compassionately, with open minds, and without judgment.

### **INNOVATION**

We create an environment of empowerment, creativity, courage, and exploration to provide a unique student-learning-centered culture that fosters innovation.

### **INTEGRITY**

We take accountability for our actions and adhere to the highest ethical standards in all our professional and personal responsibilities. We communicate openly, honestly, and with authenticity.

### **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

We commit to a fair and equal society in which all people and groups are valued and affirmed. We embrace efforts to end systemic racism. We recognize the legacy of past injustices and promote actions in support of restorative justice and full implementation of human and civil rights. (Based on: John Lewis, Institute for Social Justice.)

### **STUDENT SUCCESS**

We commit to student learning, goal completion, personal fulfillment, and lifelong learning.



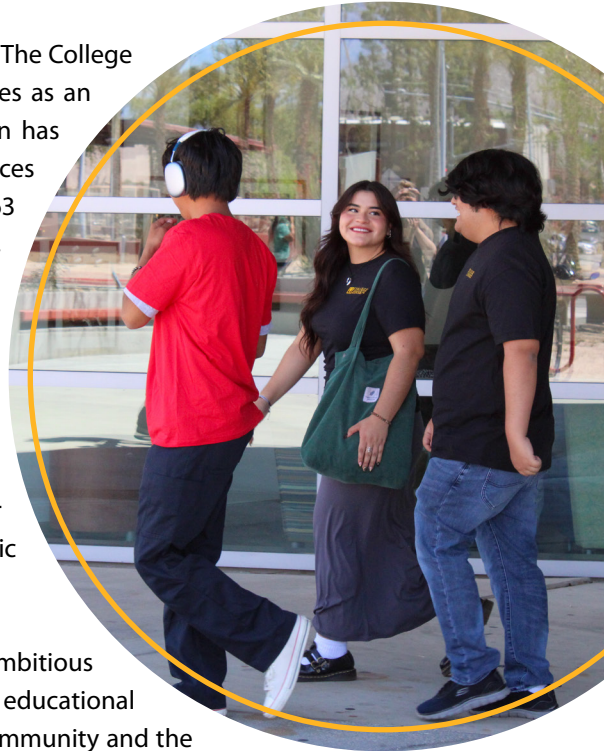
## COLLEGE OF THE DESERT FOUNDATION

The Foundation Board of Directors is the fundraising arm of the College of the Desert. The College president plays a vital role in the advancement of the Foundation's efforts and serves as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors. For over 40 years, the COD Foundation has played a transformative role, raising more than \$130 million to support student services and instruction. Presently, it manages endowments and other assets of more than \$63 million which were made possible through the generosity of corporations, foundations, alumni, parents and philanthropists.

Endowment funds raised by the Foundation provide financial support for scholarships, textbooks, classroom technology upgrades, faculty positions, immersive student experiences, workforce development internships and many other programs. The Foundation helps to provide comprehensive access to education by removing logistical and financial barriers. This in turn transforms the lives of students and their families, cultivates a professional workforce and strengthens the Valley's socio-economic infrastructure.

In 2020, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation launched its ambitious "Stepping Up for College of the Desert" campaign to support students pursuing their educational dreams. The campaign has continued and, due to overwhelming support from the community and the committed Foundation Board of Directors, the campaign is just shy of reaching its goal of \$2.3 million. Embedded in the campaign is support for the Student Emergency Fund, which became a vital lifeline for students impacted by COVID-19. Since April 2020, more than \$269,000 has been awarded to more than 330 students.

The Foundation continues to seek strong community partners to join us in making a life changing impact on students and their families while advancing the economic growth of the Coachella Valley.



# SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT OPPORTUNITIES

The new **Superintendent/President** will lead the College of the Desert through new opportunities over the next several years.

## **INCREASING ENROLLMENT**

A multiyear trend of declining resident and nonresident enrollment challenges maintaining fiscal stability. Innovative ways to keep students enrolled through mutually beneficial internships and partnerships with industries are needed to address this reality. The new Superintendent/President has the opportunity to work with colleagues galvanized to increase enrollment.

## **EFFECTIVELY INTERACT WITH THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The next Superintendent/President must be attuned to the dynamics of the Board of Trustees and be an adept communicator who listens, presents detailed fact-based proposals, and is comfortable with the natural give-and-take of political discussion.

## **STRENGTHENING PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE AND IMPROVING LABOR RELATIONS**

College of the Desert has a long history of participatory governance and collaborative labor relations, which it aspires to build upon. The new Superintendent/President should bring thoughtful attention to stabilizing the priorities and building trust. The Superintendent/President must also be a skilled and confident practitioner of participatory governance and a genuine partner with full-time and part-time faculty, classified professionals, administrators, and student representatives in improving processes and ensuring good and timely outcomes.

## **IDENTIFYING A SUSTAINABLE FINANCIAL MODEL AND OPPORTUNITY TO IDENTIFY AND SECURE NEW SOURCES OF REVENUE**

College of the Desert's new Superintendent/President must bring knowledge, insight, and expertise to the complex task of identifying a sustainable financial model for the college and associated resource allocation methods aligned with student success. The Superintendent/President has the opportunity to build on College of the Desert's history, advance innovation, and strengthen its reputation to renew and expand relevant, high-quality programs and services while identifying and securing new one-time and ongoing revenue sources to support those initiatives.

## **IMPROVE TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE**

A systemwide plan for improved infrastructure, technology use, information management, and application is needed to enable improvements in marketing, recruitment, and service to students, faculty, and staff, as well as build more efficient vendor relationships and improve business efficiency. The next Superintendent/President has the opportunity to initiate an adaptive systemic technology infrastructure to enable COD to embrace emerging technologies with greater flexibility.

## **REIMAGINE WAYS TO ACHIEVE RETENTION AND COMPLETION GOALS**

College of the Desert is being challenged to respond to shifting demographics in its service area, growing income inequality, a demand for new and different approaches to preparing students for challenging and rewarding careers, and the growing realization that housing and food insecurity, and well-being issues, are significant factors confronting many COD students. The Superintendent/President has the opportunity to lead the way in modeling adaptive teaching and learning approaches, recognizing that a singular system will not work for everyone.



## SUPERINTENDENT/PRESIDENT OPPORTUNITIES (CONT.)

### **FURTHER PROGRESS ON THE COLLEGE OF THE DESERT COMMITMENT TO EQUITY**

College of the Desert aims to identify and eliminate barriers to success for students of color and other historically marginalized groups. Finding and retaining superbly skilled, highly talented, and strongly committed employees at all levels across the institution is imperative. College of the Desert's new Superintendent/President has the opportunity to champion the college's commitment to equity and effectively lead ongoing institutional change that yields continued progress and measurable equitable outcomes.

### **EXPAND RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE LOCAL AND REGIONAL COMMUNITY**

College of the Desert will expect its Superintendent/President to extend its influence and engagement more definitively with the city and the region. The Superintendent/President will have the opportunity to articulate and promote the college's strong, innovative vision to the educational, political, business, and civic leaders of the community, the state, and the nation. The focus will be on strengthening existing ties and developing new sustainable partnerships with businesses, industries, local communities, other colleges and universities, K-12 schools, and other entities.



## DESIRED LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES

The next Superintendent/President for College of the Desert will be a visionary, collaborative leader who is student-centered and embraces the community college mission. The most competitive candidates will possess the following desired attributes:

- An understanding of the changing landscape of and funding implications for community colleges in the State of California; the capacity to implement sustainable change, support innovation, and take calculated risks to meet the community educational needs of diverse populations in the Coachella Valley.
- Demonstrated experience with strategic planning and the capacity to create strong collaborations and shared goal setting across all organizational units of a multi-campus district.
- The capacity to advance strategic enrollment management across the college district to attract more students to the college, improve student retention and success, and increase college completion while maintaining academic excellence.
- A collaborative, inspirational leadership style, demonstrated through the ability to communicate, be visible, and actively engage with all stakeholders to create a stronger sense of community.
- The ability to build trust and respect across multiple stakeholders (students, alumni, faculty, administration, trustees, community and strategic partners).
- A track record of successful and collegial working relationships with governing boards.
- A deep knowledge of collective bargaining and demonstrated experience in developing productive working relationships with governance and labor groups.
- Exceptional skill in building strong diverse teams to achieve institutional success and in holding individuals accountable for their respective areas.

## DESIRED LEADERSHIP ATTRIBUTES (CONT.)

- The ability to support, develop, and recognize faculty and staff to enhance individual growth potential and nurture a positive work environment.
- Evidence of a commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and key work that yielded successful results.
- Demonstrated experience in building and nurturing strong relationships with the community; actively serving as a community leader and the spokesperson for a college to expand the institution's presence and garner support for educational opportunities that benefit students and the community.
- A track record of developing and sustaining relationships with donors to advance a culture of philanthropy and planned giving.
- Exceptional skill in creating successful partnerships with community organizations, other educational institutions, and businesses and industries to build sustainable support for diverse student populations, workforce development program offerings, and the overall college mission.
- The ability to advocate effectively for the college and garner support and resources from elected officials, policy holders, and government agencies at the local, regional, state and national levels.
- Demonstrated skill in financial planning and stewardship; the ability to lead effective solutions that optimize resource allocations, foster financial transparency, and chart the course toward long-term fiscal stability and sustainability of an institution.
- Effective and clear oral and written communication skills, including the ability to listen to different groups and communicate effectively with a wide range of stakeholders.
- Strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills, and the ability to make well-informed decisions with the support of quantitative and qualitative data.
- High emotional intelligence and compassion for colleagues to support the institution's organizational health and development, initiate and manage change effectively, and resolve conflicts and issues; ability to achieve consensus but be bold and decisive when appropriate.
- A working knowledge of technology and infrastructure to support academic, student learning, and administrative applications sufficiently.
- Professional and personal integrity and ethical conduct.



## REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Master's degree
- Five years of senior management experience with significant decision-making responsibility
- An understanding of sensitivity to and respect for the diverse academic, socioeconomic, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, disability and sexual orientation of community college students, faculty and staff

## PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- Relevant advanced degree
- Teaching or student services experience at the secondary or post-secondary level
- Experience working with a board of trustees or similar governing body such as a university or college board of governors or board of regents or a corporate or nonprofit board of directors
- Demonstrated knowledge of instructional and student services programs; knowledge of the complexities of, and experience in, administering public higher education funding and budgeting; substantial leadership and management experience





## NOMINATIONS AND APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications should be received by March 3, 2025, **for full consideration**. The committee will review application materials until the position is filled. The application must include a cover letter, current resume, and contact information for five recent professional references and be sent to [CollegeDesertPresident2025@agbsearch.com](mailto:CollegeDesertPresident2025@agbsearch.com).

For further information and instructions to applicants, please review the prospectus available above.

All inquiries, nominations, and applications will be held strictly confidential; references will not be contacted without the applicant's permission. Inquiries and nominations should be sent to [CollegeDesertPresident2025@agbsearch.com](mailto:CollegeDesertPresident2025@agbsearch.com) or directed to:

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College of the Desert is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages applications from all persons. We do not discriminate on the basis of ethnic group identification, race, color, national origin, religion, age, sex, physical disability, mental disability, ancestry, sexual orientation, language, accent, citizenship status, gender identity, transgender status, parental status, marital status, economic status, veteran status, medical condition, or on the basis of these perceived characteristics, or based on association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics.

If you require an accommodation associated with application process, please contact our office at (760) 773-2529 at least five business days prior to the application closing date.

College of the Desert reserves the right to close, extend, cancel, postpone, or repost a recruitment at any time. Timely submission of application materials is the responsibility of the applicants.