



Press Release

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Serving Modesto Junior College & Columbia College

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Yosemite Community College District Board of Trustees Selects Dr. Lena Tran as Chancellor

Following Her Successful Tenure As Interim Chancellor, Dr. Tran Will Lead YCCD Into A New Chapter of Student Success, Innovation and Regional Opportunity.

MODESTO, Calif. — The Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) Board of Trustees has selected Dr. Lena Tran as Chancellor, effective November 1, 2026. Approved at the Board's October 14, 2026 meeting, her appointment follows a comprehensive search process with participation from faculty, staff, administrators, community members and trustees representing Columbia College, Modesto Junior College and the District.

"On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who participated in this search process. Our faculty, staff, students, alumni, community members and friends of the District generously shared their time, perspectives and commitment to YCCD's future. Their thoughtful input played an important role in this process and reflects the deep investment our community has in the success of our colleges and students." shared Dr. Milton Richards, President of the YCCD Board of Trustees.

Dr. Tran has served as Interim Chancellor since May 2025, bringing collaborative leadership, a clear commitment to students and a strong vision for the District's future. During her tenure as Interim Chancellor, Dr. Tran has advanced initiatives that expand student access and achievement, strengthen regional workforce pathways and extend educational opportunities to rural and underserved communities. Her leadership centers on the role of YCCD's colleges as engines of opportunity, preparing students for meaningful careers while supporting the region's economic vitality.

"Dr. Tran has demonstrated exceptional leadership as Interim Chancellor, as President of Columbia College and throughout her career in higher education," said Dr. Milton Richards, President of the YCCD Board of Trustees. "Through our collaborative search process, she emerged as the leader to move YCCD forward with purpose and vision. Her ability to bring people together, expand educational opportunity and build meaningful workforce and community partnerships will strengthen our colleges and the communities we serve."

Previously, as President of Columbia College, Dr. Tran expanded workforce training opportunities, strengthened industry and community partnerships, and advanced student support programs. Before joining Columbia College in 2022, she held executive leadership positions at San Jose City College and Evergreen Valley College. Throughout her career, she has been recognized for innovative program development, collaborative leadership and strong partnerships with employers and community organizations.

"I am deeply honored by the Board's trust and grateful for the dedication of our faculty, classified professionals, administrators and community partners," said Dr. Tran. "Our students are at the heart of everything we do. Together, we will build on the strengths of Modesto Junior College and Columbia College to open more doors, strengthen pathways to meaningful careers and ensure that opportunity reaches every community we serve. I am excited to lead this next chapter, one grounded in collaboration, driven by innovation and focused on helping our students and our region thrive."

As Chancellor, Dr. Tran will lead Modesto Junior College in Modesto and Columbia College in Sonoma. Her priorities include expanding educational access throughout the District's vast service area; strengthening workforce and industry partnerships; preparing students for emerging industries and the evolving needs of a modern workforce; and securing state and federal resources to enhance facilities, infrastructure, academic programs and student support services.