



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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YCCD Chancellor Announces Retirement

MODESTO, CA – Dr. D. Roe Darnell, chancellor of the Yosemite Community College District (YCCD), announced his retirement today and will work through July 31, 2010. Dr. Darnell will have served the college district for over 3 years, capping an end to a 43 year career in higher education administration.

Dr. Darnell cites personal and family difficulties that cannot easily be solved. According to Darnell, these difficulties will continue for an extended time and will require his attention and dedication to the point that he will be unable to adequately lead the district through the uncertain future it faces.

YCCD Chair Pat Dean, reacted by stating that “Change is always hard and it takes a great deal of strength to put your family first when you really love your job and recognize that is what drives you to this decision.”

Some of Darnell’s accomplishments while at YCCD include a priority to ensure the district’s \$324 million bond Measure E projects are completed efficiently and stay on schedule and addressing a potentially significant increase in benefit costs in a way that actually decreased costs and improved benefit coverage to district employees.

However the most significant accomplishment from Darnell’s perspective is that although the district has experienced a dramatic reduction in state funding, it has been confronted without resorting to dismissing staff. “During this time the colleges have continued to support the student learning process and have served students to a degree that is well beyond the state provided funding level,” a fact that Dr. Darnell is significantly proud of.

YCCD Chair Pat Dean agrees, “There are so many accomplishments during Dr. Darnell’s tenure, the one that stands out most in my mind is that in these tough economic times, no one at YCCD (both Modesto Junior College and Columbia College) have lost their jobs, had their hours reduced or had to take furlough days. Even though everyone has worked harder to meet our student’s needs we have seen everyone rallying around Dr. Darnell to keep our students first.”

According to the retiring Chancellor, the district is facing a challenge that many community colleges face today. "The need for people in the community to acquire job skills, prepare to transfer to four year college programs and to gain the basic skills necessary for success has never been greater. At the same time the financial support needed to provide these services is, and will be for several years, at an all-time low. I wish the district the best in supporting administration, faculty and staff as they address this contradiction of purpose and resource."

"I have enjoyed my time with the District and am honored to have worked with a district office and two excellent colleges which include an outstanding cadre of administration, faculty and staff dedicated to serving students in the best way possible. I know that our community and our state will continue to be well served by Columbia College and Modesto Junior College."

Dr. D. Roe Darnell began his tenure at YCCD in July 2007. Darnell replaced then Interim Chancellor Dr. Stan Hodges, who had a long history in the YCCD dating back to 1965 and took the interim position in August 2006 until a permanent Chancellor was hired. Darnell had provided administrative leadership as President of Cerro Coso Community College and as Superintendent/President of Taft College.

Darnell's educational philosophy is inherent to the mission of the community college, which is "the commitment to accept any student at any point in their life and help them move to wherever they wish to be."

The Board of Trustees will discuss plans for appointing an acting chancellor and for starting a search for the Chancellor's replacement in a future meeting.

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