



Press Release

YOSEMITE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
Modesto Junior College & Columbia College

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dr. Joan Smith Named YCCD Interim Chancellor

MODESTO, CA – Dr. Joan E. Smith, current President of Columbia College, was selected by the Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) Board of Trustees at their Special Board Meeting on July 1, 2010 to be the new YCCD Interim Chancellor effective approximately August 1, 2010. YCCD Board Chair added that contract language will be finalized next week.

“I am very excited to be selected for this position and I look forward to working with MJC and YCCD staff, as well as my colleagues at Columbia College,” said Dr. Smith, who has served as Columbia College’s President since January 1, 2007.

YCCD Board Chair Pat Dean stated “Dr. Smith’s proven leadership the past 3 ½ years has prepared her to take the lead role at the District.” According to Board Vice Chair Desirree Abshire, “We are very pleased that Dr. Smith has accepted the position. We are also thankful that we could choose from highly qualified internal staff.”

“We are very fortunate to have Dr. Smith take on this leadership role. The Board and District looks forward to her bright leadership and staff and students will certainly benefit from her tutelage,” added Chair Dean.

Smith, replaces retiring Chancellor Roe Darnell. Darnell announced in June that he would be stepping down due to personal and family issues that could not easily be resolved.

Smith has served as Columbia College’s President for over 3 ½ years. Prior to taking over the presidency at Columbia College, she served as Ventura County Community College’s Executive Vice President of Student Learning (2002-2006) and held a variety of positions in the Ventura District, gaining instruction and administrative experiences throughout her career.

At Ventura College, she also served as the Dean of Business, Industry, Technology and Off-Campus Programs (2000-2002). Prior to that, she held various positions at Oxnard College in Oxnard, California for a period of 20 years. Her most recent position at Oxnard (1997-2000) was as Dean of Institutional and Student Services. She began at Oxnard College as an instructor/counselor (1980 to 1992) then held several administrative positions.

Smith is a proven leader in instruction, student services and economic development. She served as an instructor and/or counselor for 17 years and has a wide breadth of experience from economic development to establishing and running off-campus programs.

Smith received her Ed.D. in Higher Education (1988) from Nova (Southeastern) University in Florida. She received an M.S. degree from University of Wisconsin-Stout in Vocational Rehabilitation (1983) and B.S. degree in Psychology, Sociology and Anthropology from University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point (1975).

She becomes the seventh YCCD top administrator since MJC and Columbia College merged to form the district in 1968. The first superintendent was Dr. J. Kenneth Rowland (1968-1976), who was followed by Dr. Tom Van Groningen (1976-1992), Dr. Pamila Fisher (1992-2004), Dr. James Williams (2004-2006), Dr. Stan Hodges (Interim: 2006-2007), Dr. Roe Darnell (2007-2010), and now Dr. Joan Smith (Interim 2010)

“It is an honor and privilege to have been selected as the Interim Chancellor. I look forward to serving YCCD, students, Faculty and staff, and the community we serve. These are challenging yet exciting times for higher education, and the YCCD is poised to be very successful,” said Dr. Smith.

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