



Press Release

YOSEMITE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
Modesto Junior College & Columbia College

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James Houpis Selected President for Modesto Junior College

MODESTO, CA – James Houpis has accepted the offer to serve as the new president of Modesto Junior College (MJC) effective March 1, 2019. Yosemite Community College District (YCCD) Chancellor Henry Yong shared the news in an announcement to the campus. The action will be considered for ratification by the YCCD Board of Trustees at their March 13, 2019 meeting. Houpis will replace Interim MJC President Steve Collins, whose term ends February 28.

“I am excited about joining such an outstanding College and developing relationships and working with committed colleagues, faculty, staff, students, and community members toward common goals,” commented Houpis on the announcement.

Dr. Houpis is currently the Dean of Academic Support and Learning Technologies at Skyline College. His previous work experience includes serving as Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Professor of Earth and Environmental Sciences at California State University, East Bay; Dean of Natural Sciences at California State University, Chico; Professor of Applied Ecology, Pollution Ecology and Environmental Sciences at Southern Illinois University; and, Environmental Scientist and Project Leader at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. He holds a Ph.D. in Forest Science from University of California, Berkeley, a Master of Science Degree from San Diego State University, and a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Environmental Sciences from University of California, Berkeley.

According to YCCD Chancellor Henry Yong, “Jim comes with a strong background in the California State University system, where many of our students are preparing to transfer.” Yong added, “He has also been a strong advocate for sustainability and equity, as well as for increased support and development programs.”

Board Chair Leslie Beggs shares Chancellor Yong’s enthusiasm for Dr. Houpis’ valuable experience in the CSU system, and is impressed by his advocacy for faculty support and development programs. “I’m also very pleased that Dr. Houpis is planning to live in Modesto,” she said, “so that he can better connect with and appreciate the community we serve.”

According to Houpis, “I look forward to facilitating and improving the quality of our students’ educational experiences, our commitment to the health and welfare of the local and global communities, and our faculty and staff in the performance of their challenging tasks.”

Houpis’ selection comes after a nationwide search conducted by PPL, Inc. The search committee was chaired by Dr. Stanley L. Hodges who has had a long-standing relationship with the YCCD dating back to 1965, formerly serving as Interim Chancellor, along with posts at MJC, including President, Chief Instructional Officer, and work in the Agriculture Department. Chancellor Yong shared his appreciation for the efforts of the search committee expressing, “thanks to everyone who contributed to this successful search effort.” The search committee did an excellent job in moving forward four qualified candidates. Forums were held in January and the finalists were interviewed by Chancellor Yong, who also thanked Dr. Kimberly Greer, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at California State University, Stanislaus for participating in the finalist interviews.

Modesto Junior College is one of the first community colleges established in California in 1921. MJC’s fall 2018 enrollment was 19,007 (unduplicated headcount). Modesto Junior College along with Columbia College comprise the Yosemite Community College District (YCCD). YCCD is one of 73 community college districts that make up the California Community College System – the largest system of higher education in the world, serving nearly three million students each year.

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