



Press Release

YOSEMITE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
Modesto Junior College & Columbia College

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PHOTO ATTACHED

Contact: Chancellor's Office: (209) 575-6509, publicaffairs@yosemite.edu

Brian Sanders chosen to be MJC President

MODESTO, CA. – Brian Sanders, a longtime instructor and administrator at Modesto Junior College, has been chosen to be the campus' next President. The decision to hire Sanders was approved Wednesday night by the Yosemite Community College District's Board of Trustees.

"Dr. Sanders has lived and worked in the community for many decades and understands that the most important task for the college is always student success," Yong said. "This includes increasing completion, transfer to four-year institutions, and increasing access to Career Technical Education opportunities for the community. He will reach out to the community to build partnerships with high schools, businesses and organizations so that our diverse community can be inclusively served."

Sanders has been the Interim Vice President of Instruction at MJC since June 2022 and has served in other administrative roles at MJC and Columbia College since 2007.

"I'm excited and thrilled about the opportunity," said Sanders, who will begin his new duties Jan. 1. His current salary is \$210,823; his new salary will be determined at the board's meeting in January.

One of Sanders' first orders of business, he said, is to restore stability to MJC's leadership, which has seen frequent turnover among presidents in the recent past. Chad Redwing, who has been MJC's interim president since February, will return to the classroom when Sanders takes over.

"Our institution has been through a lot of upheaval the last couple of years," Sanders said. "We want to return to a sense of calm and trust. My goal is to listen and spread the credit where credit is due. We're doing some amazing things and the community needs to be aware of them."

Sanders began at the college as a part-time math teacher in 1994, was brought on full time a year later and spent 13 years in the classroom before becoming the Dean of Science, Mathematics and Engineering Division. He served six years as the Vice President of Instruction (VPI) at Columbia College, which also is part of the YCCD, followed by a year and half as the Interim VPI at MJC. He attended college at UC Santa Barbara, then received a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Oregon and a doctorate in educational leadership from UC Davis.

Sanders described his leadership style as "very deliberate." He has been involved in many of MJC's key initiatives recently, including the push to increase the number of dual enrollment opportunities that allow high school students in the region to take college courses.

Sanders' experience in the District and his established relationships with the staff as well as members of the community were key factors separating him from the three other finalists. He and his wife, Debbie, have lived for 30 years in the same Modesto home in which they raised their three daughters.

"Brian has deep roots in the community, which we believe will benefit him in his new role as well as the college," said Milton Richards, president of the YCCD Board of Trustees. "Brian understands and appreciates the important role Modesto Junior College plays in preparing its students to fill key jobs in our local economy."

Sanders' hiring ends a lengthy search process that began earlier this year. Three finalists were identified in June, but none was hired. Yong then formed a 19-member committee made up of community members, people representing various employee groups and a student. The panel narrowed the field of initial applicants to four finalists, who met with Yong and others on a separate hiring committee in early December. The finalists also participated in public forums where staff and community members could ask questions.

"The process was fair and transparent," said Jeffrey Lewis, President and CEO of Turlock-based Legacy Health Endowment and co-chairman of the search committee. "I'm happy for the District."

Rita Menezes, principal of Ceres High School, praised Yong for including her on the committee that interviewed the finalists.

"This is the first time a feeder high school has been invited to participate in the search process," she said. "It gave Ceres High, a partner school with MJC, the unique opportunity to weigh in on the

selection of the next president of MJC. I look forward to continuing our work with MJC to increase dual enrollment, which benefits our high school students and community.”



Dr. Brian Sanders

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