



PRESS RELEASE

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DVC Administrator Chosen for National Presidential Fellowship for Community College Leaders

[Martinez], May 4, 2020 – The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program today announced that Mary Gutierrez, Vice President of Instruction at Diablo Valley College (DVC), is one of 40 leaders selected for the 2020-21 class of the [Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship](#). This highly respected national leadership program prepares the next generation of community college presidents to transform institutions to achieve higher and more equitable levels of student success.

The [Rising Presidents Fellows](#) will embark on a 10-month fellowship beginning in July 2020. Delivered in collaboration with the Stanford Educational Leadership Initiative, the fellows will be mentored by esteemed current and former community college presidents who have achieved exceptional outcomes for students throughout their careers, and will learn strategies to improve student outcomes in and after college, lead internal change, and create strong external partnerships with K-12 schools, four-year colleges, employers, and other partners.

“Evidence shows that substantial improvements in student success are achieved only when presidents have the commitment and skill needed to lead change within their institutions and through partnerships in the community,” said Josh Wyner, executive director of the College Excellence Program. “These fellows have been chosen because they embody that commitment and, we believe, will build their skills even further to become transformational presidents.”

“We are thrilled the Aspen Institute has chosen Mary for this national leadership program,” says DVC President Susan Lamb. “She is smart, passionate about student success, and is already

a tremendous leader. There is no doubt in my mind this fellowship program will increase her skills and experience to be a great future community college president.”

The Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship responds to the growing need for a new generation of leaders well-equipped to meet the challenges of the future. Nationally, nearly 80 percent of sitting presidents plan to retire in the next decade. While the traditional pathway to the presidency has excluded women and people of color, the incoming class of Aspen Rising Presidents Fellows is composed of 70 percent women and 61 percent people of color and represents institutions of varying sizes and locations. For a list of the 2020-21 class of the Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship visit <https://highered.aspeninstitute.org/risingpresidents/>.

“This is a wonderful honor and opportunity to continue my growth as a community college administrator,” says Gutierrez. “I want to thank President Lamb and the DVC community for their support in applying for this professional development.”

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Diablo Valley College is a large suburban community college, approximately 25 miles east of San Francisco in Contra Costa County. One of three colleges in the Contra Costa Community College District, DVC enrolls approximately 20,000 students, about 40% who come from groups historically underrepresented in higher education. DVC ranks consistently as one of the most successful transfer institutions in California and also offers a wide range of highly respected occupational programs leading to certificates or degrees. The faculty is known for its intellectual vitality and deep commitment to the success of its students.

The Aspen Institute College Excellence Program aims to advance higher education practices and leadership strategies that significantly improve student outcomes. Through the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence, the Aspen Presidential Fellowship for Community College Excellence, and other initiatives, the College Excellence Program works to improve colleges’ understanding and capacity to teach and graduate students, especially the growing population of low-income students and students of color on American campuses. For more information, visit highered.aspeninstitute.org and follow us on Twitter at @AspenHigherEd.

Stanford Educational Leadership Initiative (SELI) strives to help education leaders further develop their ability to transform education systems and drive meaningful change. SELI programs bring together the strengths of Stanford Graduate School of Education and Stanford Graduate School of Business, as well as additional Stanford faculty and resources, to offer multidimensional and immediately impactful professional development programming for practicing leaders in PreK-12, higher education, and policy. By fostering collaboration and building relationships between existing colleagues and among new peers, SELI programs create networks supporting participants’ continued learning and organizational improvement. For more information, visit <https://seli.stanford.edu/>.

The Aspen Institute is a global nonprofit organization committed to realizing a free, just, and equitable society. Founded in 1949, the Institute drives change through dialogue, leadership, and action to help solve the most important challenges facing the United States and the world. Headquartered in Washington, DC, the Institute has a campus in Aspen, Colorado, and an international network of partners.