



# PRESS RELEASE

Contra Costa Community College District  
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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Contra Costa Community College District Announces Four Finalists for LMC President

**MARTINEZ, California** – The Contra Costa Community College District (District) announces the selection of four finalists for the position of President of Los Medanos College. The finalists are: Matthew Kritscher, Ed.D., Claire Oliveros, Ph.D., Pamela Ralston, Ph.D., and James E. Todd, Ph.D.

Four separate in-person forums have been scheduled for May 11, 2023, on the Los Medanos College Pittsburg campus. Employees, students, and community members are invited to attend the forums, which will last 60 minutes each, beginning at 11:30 a.m., and will be recorded. A detailed public forum schedule, recordings of each forum, and an online survey to provide feedback on the candidates will be available on the District website at [www.4cd.edu](http://www.4cd.edu).



Dr. Kritscher has dedicated his career to advancing student diversity, equity, inclusion, access, and social justice serving diverse communities in public higher education in

California Community Colleges and Universities for over three decades. As an educational leader including eleven years as Dean and almost ten years as Vice President of Student Services at Chabot College, Dr. Kritscher is passionate about eliminating student equity gaps, and providing support for students who are farthest from opportunity. Dr. Kritscher holds a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership from San Francisco State University. He graduated from the first cohort of the university's inaugural doctoral program. He also holds master's and bachelor's degrees from California Polytechnic State University in education and recreation. Dr. Kritscher conducted applied research on "How peer mentors affect the persistence of community college students of color" as a participant researcher at his own institution to better understand the live experiences of the students he serves and how to best support them.

In the community, Dr. Kritscher served as a founding member on the Governing Board for the Mid-Alameda County Consortium of Adult Education Programs, and across the District as President Emeritus of the Chabot-Las Positas Community College District Administrators' Association. He is also a President Emeritus of the statewide California Community Colleges Student Success and Support Program Professionals (Matriculation) Association that conducted legislative advocacy, professional development, and liaison services to the California Community College Chancellor's Office. Dr. Kritscher has received numerous awards for his work with supporting student access, equity, social justice, and success in public higher education including a Chancellor's Award, several Unity Awards, Chabot College Striving Black Brothers Coalition Award, and an Educator of Excellence Award from the African American Regional Education Alliance.

To enhance equitable transfer student pathways, Dr. Kritscher is a founding Co-Principal Investigator of the East Bay College Agile Network (EBCAN), a regional partnership between Chabot-Las Positas Community College District and California State University, East Bay. This regional collaborative leverages external and internal resources as well as policy and practice transformation to eliminate barriers to student transfer.

Dr. Kritscher has served as the Principal Investigator and Project Director on numerous federal, state, and private grants, strategically advancing integrated projects toward institutionalization in support of increasing diversity, access, equity, and success. Dr. Kritscher has also led numerous capital projects to better meet the needs of diverse student populations and facilitating student retention and success.

Dr. Kritscher and his wife, Susan Truong, grew up in the bay area, and have championed support for students farther from opportunity through partnership with non-profit organizations where they have mentored low-income, first generation foster youth to attend and complete college. They love gardening, outdoor activities and supporting their communities through volunteering.



Dr. Claire Oliveros is a social justice educator, scholar, and equity practitioner with over 28 years of professional experience in higher education. Claire is the inaugural Vice President of Institutional Equity & Research and Planning at Cosumnes River College (CRC), a designated Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) and Asian American, Native American-Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) located in Sacramento, CA. She oversees the division for college planning, and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Antiracism (DEIA) strategic initiatives. Claire manages a multi-million-dollar budget which includes the departments of HSI and AANAPISI federally funded grant programs, Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Research and Planning, Center for Professional Development, Center for Inclusion & Belonging, Hawk Cares Center for Basic Needs and Housing Resources, Student Life, and Title IX/Equity Compliance. Prior to this role, Claire served as Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management at CRC.

Before relocating to California, Claire was the Assistant Provost for Student Success Initiatives at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in Blacksburg, VA, and the Executive Dean of Student Development and Learning Resources at Chemeketa Community College in Salem, OR. Claire served in various leadership positions at Portland Community College including the Director of TRIO Student Support Services, Interim Director of the District Office of Equity, and Inclusion, founding Coordinator of the Multicultural Center, adjunct Women's Studies Faculty, and as a part-time Academic Advisor.

Claire is a first-generation college graduate earning a Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from Western Oregon University, Master of Science in Educational Policy, Foundations and Administrative Studies at Portland State University, and a Doctorate in Education from Oregon State University. Claire has over 20 years of volunteer experience and community involvement. She was founding chair of the Portland Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines and served as a board member of the Multnomah County Commission on Children, Families and Community. Her higher education service includes the AANAPISI Sacramento Regional Cooperative, Community College League of California, and American Association of Community Colleges.

Claire is a dedicated educational leader with a deep commitment to equity-mindedness and servant leadership. Claire enjoys spending time with her family, attending her son's soccer games, listening to podcasts, and exploring new restaurants.



Over the course of a two-decade career in public higher education, Pamela Ralston has been dedicated to the powerful transformation that community colleges provide students, faculty, and the communities we serve. She is committed to working with faculty, staff, and administrators to improve student success and student equity through the creation and support of strong, innovative programs and a rewarding working environment. Dr. Ralston has served as the Interim President at Los Medanos College, President at Santiago Canyon College, and Executive Vice President of Educational Programs at Santa Barbara City College, where she led the academic and student services programs.

Dr. Ralston also served as Vice President for Student Learning at College of the Desert, in Palm Desert, CA. Prior to that, she enjoyed eight years as Dean of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo. Before moving into administration, Dr. Ralston was faculty member and division chair of English and Written Communications at Tacoma Community College, where she taught composition, American Ethnic Literature and developmental studies in writing and reading. Before joining TCC, she served as lecturer at the University of Washington in American Ethnic Studies.

Pamela Ralston has her bachelor's degree in English from the University of Oregon and her Master of Arts and doctoral degrees from the University of Washington in Comparative Literature, where she taught as a graduate student in the Comparative Literature, English and American Ethnic Studies Departments. She has earned excellence in teaching awards from both Tacoma Community College and the University of Washington, and she was honored with a Fulbright fellowship for doctoral research at the Royal Library and University of Copenhagen in Denmark.

A passionate advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion in education, Pamela Ralston has worked to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students, with special attention to the strengths that their cultural backgrounds and ethnic identities bring to their college experiences. Over the course of her career, Dr. Ralston has participated in and led numerous, successful change efforts, working to increase the access and achievement of first-generation students of color by working to make colleges ready for all students. She has led curricular redesign, student services program innovation, strategic enrollment, new facilities design, and fund-raising campaigns and grant applications. Deeply invested in the connections between Los Medanos College and the cities it serves, Dr. Ralston is committed to civic engagement.

She seeks to deepen relationships and partnerships with school districts, non-profit organizations, civic organizations, and industry across East Contra Costa County.

Pamela lives with her wife, Chris, an attorney, in Pittsburg and Morro Bay, CA. They're fond of walks along central coast beaches, reading, cooking and are active in their church and community organizations.



Dr. James Todd has over 15 years of experience in instruction and student services in California community colleges. He has held a variety of positions, including Professor, Academic Senate President, Accreditation Liaison Officer, Chief Student Services Officer, and Chief Instructional Officer. He has also served as an elected faculty representative on the statewide Executive Committee for the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, and he maintains a strong commitment to participatory governance and an inclusive style of educational leadership. James is currently the Assistant Superintendent and Vice President of Student Services at Sierra College. He was previously the Assistant Superintendent and Vice President of Instruction and Planning at San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton and the Vice President of Student Services at Modesto Junior College.

James is a transformational leader who grounds his philosophy and practice in principles of equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion. He is passionate about fostering access and opportunity for underserved populations, meeting the needs of local communities, facilitating student success and completion, building public and private partnerships, and ensuring equitable post-graduation outcomes for students. He has participated in national reform movements, such as Achieving the Dream, to improve student equity and institutional outcomes, and he has been involved in leading efforts on local campuses to enact Guided Pathways and student-centered strategies for student success.

James graduated with an Associate of Arts degree from Brevard Community College in Florida and went on to pursue a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology and International Relations from New College of Florida, a Master of Arts degree in Anthropology at The George Washington University, and Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Cultural Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

James has recently completed the Aspen Institute College Excellence Presidential Fellowship Program, the Harvard University Institute for Educational Management, and

the California Education Policy Fellowship Program at the Education Insights Center (CSU Sacramento).

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*The Contra Costa Community College District (4CD) is one of the largest multi-college community college districts in California. The 4CD serves a population of 1,019,640 people, and its boundaries encompass all but 48 of the 734-square-mile land area of Contra Costa County. 4CD is home to Contra Costa College in San Pablo, Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, Los Medanos College in Pittsburg, as well as educational centers in Brentwood and San Ramon. The District headquarters is located in downtown Martinez. For more information visit [www.4cd.edu](http://www.4cd.edu).*

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