



16 May 2023

Mr. Jee Hang Lee, President and CEO
Association of Community College Trustees
1101 17th St. NW, #300
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Lee:

Please accept this letter as evidence of the [REDACTED] Board of Trustees' strong and unwavering support for the nomination of [REDACTED] for the Association of Community College Trustees' Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Officer Award.

[REDACTED] has demonstrated an unparalleled and peerless commitment to advancing the community college movement through her tireless work as President of [REDACTED]. Her focus on creating a "culture of care" for all members of the [REDACTED] community is evident in the actions she has taken over the past ten years as president. She believes that community colleges are colleges of choice by offering high-quality, open-access education at an affordable price. She has been a leader in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts as demonstrated by [REDACTED]'s participation in Achieving the Dream. She has supported the creation of an Office of Student Support to help students access wraparound services, brought a primary care facility to campus to provide students and employees with wellness and health support, championed trauma-informed practice at the college to ensure that every student and employee is treated with dignity and respect, brought fresh and healthy food to the campus through a partnership with The Abilities Connection (TAC Industries) that also trains people with disabilities, and established three Bachelor's degree programs in workforce fields to close the skills gap in our region. Additionally, [REDACTED]'s strategic leadership has resulted in an increase in state support of 63%, and has brought in more than \$20 million in capital improvement funds from the State of [REDACTED] and \$18 million in grant funds that support workforce and program development, youth programming, and the performing arts. The [REDACTED] Foundation has grown from \$13 million to more than \$27 million during her time at [REDACTED].

Her leadership as [REDACTED] Board of Trustees, her service to the American Association of Community College Board of Directors, and her work as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] of the National Council for Workforce Education have positioned [REDACTED] as a national leader in student success and workforce development. [REDACTED] has published widely on issues facing community colleges and is a thought leader on the new landscape of workforce credentials and ensuring that these credentials add value for students and employers.

I have been proud to serve on the Board of Trustees and as its chair, and honored to work with [REDACTED]. I truly believe that she is an excellent candidate to receive this award, and I thank you for your consideration. Please contact me with any questions.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

CEO Award Nomination for [REDACTED] – Criteria Responses

What has the CEO initiated or helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?

[REDACTED] is a national leader student success and equity of student outcomes. Under her leadership, the college has developed three comprehensive strategic plans (2022, 2018, and 2014) through an all-inclusive process that engages employees and students. Strategic planning is a proven strategy under her leadership, as [REDACTED] has increased its State Share of Instruction in a 100% performance-based funding model by 63% under her direction. [REDACTED] created a nationally-recognized mentorship program for employees, entitled SOAR, and selects three faculty and three staff to participate each year. At the end of the year, these employees develop a new idea to implement at [REDACTED] College. The program is beginning its seventh year, and the participants have created projects that have benefited students, such as Wraparound Services/Support, Self-Care and Wellness, and a repurposed Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), which is an engine for the culture of care and learning on campus.

As a member school of Achieving the Dream, [REDACTED] is committed to equity of student outcomes through a three-tiered approach: student recruitment and retention, faculty and staff hiring and evaluation, and Board of Trustees' support. Equity and diversity goals are included in the Strategic Plan, and the Board has set both high-level diversity goals for the college and embedded diversity targets in [REDACTED]'s incentive plan. [REDACTED] works closely with the Diversity Committee, Human Resources, Institutional Research, the CTL, and Faculty, Staff, and Student Senates to ensure that the shared governance system recognizes, reinforces, supports, and implements these goals at all levels. [REDACTED] has increased degree and course completion for racially diverse students from 59% to 68%, and increased representation among the student body from 15% to 25%. Overall course completion has improved from 70% to 81% in 2023.

One of the hallmarks of [REDACTED]'s leadership is a recognition that the health and wellness of the college community is paramount to the growth of the workforce and future of the region [REDACTED] serves. She has championed healthcare as a workforce issue, acknowledging that it can be a barrier for employment/productivity to students, employees and community members alike. In order to address this need, she collaborated with Mercy Bon Secours to bring a full-service primary care health clinic to the college. Students overwhelmingly supported the establishment of a health care fee (\$25/semester) by a vote of the student body. Students can access the health clinic for six clinic visits, a wellness check annually, flu shots, pregnancy tests, immunizations, and more.

[REDACTED] has led the region in responding to workforce needs. [REDACTED] has been a leader in addressing workforce alignment, particularly as those needs relate to the more than 30,000 employees of nearby [REDACTED] Air Force Base or the [REDACTED] Air National Guard Base. Programs such as cybersecurity, precision agriculture, laser and material manufacturing and processing, photonics, and geospatial information systems and UAS, are aligned to the needs of [REDACTED] and the region. She is constantly engaging with employers and anticipating what the future workforce will look like, including the recently announced \$20 billion [REDACTED] investment in central [REDACTED]. Since 2014, [REDACTED] has been awarded numerous grants—totally more than \$18 million-- to support workforce development in manufacturing, agriculture, social work, and youth programming, resulting in 20 new degree and certificate programs, including three Bachelor's degrees: Web Development and Design, Manufacturing Technology Management, and Addiction and Integrated Treatment Studies. She also championed the creation of a Diagnostic Medical Sonography program, one of the first in the region.

[REDACTED] has also been a driving force behind battling the addiction epidemic in [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has received nearly \$2.5 million in grants to launch trauma-informed practices at the College and provide peer-to-peer recovery specialists to business and industry in the region. She has also worked with the state of [REDACTED] to develop the curriculum for peer-to-peer recovery specialists, for which [REDACTED] is the sole-source

provider. Finally, ██████'s Foundation has risen from \$13 million to more than \$27 million to support students through scholarships and to expand programming and access for all.

How has the CEO served on technical or special committees serving two-year postsecondary education, and what impact did this effort have in the community, state, or nation?

██████ currently serves as ██████ of the Board of Trustees for the Higher Learning Commission and has served on the Board of the American Association of Community Colleges. She co-chaired the AACC Commission on Institutional Infrastructure and Transformation for three years and served on the AACC Committees on Public Policy and Government Relations and Membership. She is the past president of the National Council for Workforce Education, where she helped to develop the New Professionals Institute and a Governance Committee for NCWE, and has served on the Board since 2010. She is the immediate past chair of the Strategic Council of Higher Education and recently served as a member of the ACCT Advisory Board of Presidents. She serves on the boards of the ██████ Development Coalition, ██████ Partnership, ██████ Area Chamber of Commerce, the United Way of Greater ██████, the ██████ ██████ Two-Year Colleges' Advisory Board, and is the delegate to the ██████ Association of Community Colleges' Student Success Council and has served on Executive Committee Member for the Community College Workforce Consortium through Jobs for the Future.

The impact of ██████'s national, statewide, and regional service is significant. ██████'s advocacy has led to the surfacing of the national conversation on mental health, addiction, and trauma-informed practice at the community college (recent Lumina Foundation and AACC podcasts) and has provided for a national platform for the discussion of addiction and integrated treatment programs in higher education. In fall 2022, Clark State offered the first of its kind in the nation Bachelor of Applied Science in Addiction and Integrated Treatment Studies, an innovative program that combines social work with mental health and addiction training in one degree program. ██████ was also on the original design team for the Higher Learning Commission's Assessment Academy, which helped improve assessment of student learning outcomes throughout the HLC region.

How has the CEO demonstrated a "caring attitude" toward the Board of Trustees, administrators, faculty and students?

██████'s unwavering leadership and incredible empathy for people has been witnessed in her creation of One ██████, a concept that infuses a culture of care throughout the campus—in policies for employees and students, in employee evaluations, and an emphasis on an asset-based approach to instruction, learning, and employee coaching and evaluation. The One ██████ concept is also built into the Strategic Plan. She has prioritized students' needs with a strong emphasis on employee wellness, self-care, and productivity. ██████ is constantly asking, "what more can we do to support success for students and employees?"

Her communication strategy with the Board of Trustees, students, employees, and community members has included both a more formal weekly virtual Town Hall and a less formal weekly Open Door meeting, where employees have been able to openly discuss their current situations.

In addition, frequent social media engagement through Twitter, blogging, email, campus walk-arounds, and open door meetings have been mainstays of her leadership style.

██████ was awarded the ██████ Excellence Award for Board of Trustees/CEO Relations in 2018, which is a strong testament to the relationship that has been cultivated between the Board and President. ██████ has advocated for robust Board professional development, and board members regularly attend ACCT and AACC Events. Board members ██████ and ██████ have both served on the ACCT Finance Committee, and ██████ the immediate past Trustee Chairman of the ██████ Association of Community Colleges. During ██████'s tenure, policy governance, transparency in finances, accountability, and collegiality have been at the forefront of the Board's actions.

How has the CEO been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary education associations?

██████████ serves as ██████████ of the Higher Learning Commission, representing the needs and perspective of community colleges on an accreditation board that serves both two- and four-year institutions. Her work on accreditation and the landscape of credentials has been presented at national conferences as well as in publication. Prior to being elected to the HLC Board, ██████████ served for twelve years as a peer-reviewer, a developer of HLC's Assessment Academy, and as a member of the Institutional Actions Council. As a member of the ACCT Advisory Board, ██████████ actively contributes to the important conversations regarding the future of community colleges and governance, and has been a panelist in many ACCT presentations and pre-conference sessions, and presented as part of the keynote panel on accreditation at the 2022 Leadership Congress. She has also presented numerous times at AACC and National Council for Workforce Education, including serving on their boards and as President of NCWE.

She works closely with the ██████████ Association of Community Colleges. As a member of the ██████████, ██████████, the Board of Trustees, and her executive team have been active and influential participants in providing direction on the higher education funding formula as well as many policy decisions, including advocacy for ██████████ College Opportunity Grants and increased higher education and capital bill funding. She is the immediate past chair of the ██████████ Council for Higher Education, a regional consortium of 22 higher education institutions with diverse missions. Finally, she has presented to state organizations, such as the Illinois Association of Community Colleges, on the adoption of Applied Baccalaureate degrees at two-year colleges and serves as a consultant to colleges on these types of degrees.

What has the CEO published in the area of two-year postsecondary educational concepts?

██████████ co-authored a paper for the Higher Learning Commission, published in April 2022, entitled ██████████, "██████████," with several national leaders, and contributed a chapter on mentoring for the book ██████████ and has spoken on this topic at national and regional conferences. She has written or co-written numerous articles that have appeared in many higher education publications, including several on the pandemic on ██████████ in *Community College Daily*. She has also written several blog posts for the National Council for Workforce Education regarding workforce development and alignment. She regularly contributes to the national conversation regarding higher education. ██████████ is currently working on a book on leadership through mentoring at the community college level.

What awards or honors has this CEO received in recognition of leadership in the college, community, or nation?

- Please see attached resume

What outstanding characteristics of the CEO motivated you to nominate him or her?

██████████'s strategic, holistic, and sustained approach to student success is the motivation behind this nomination. Her recognition and subsequent actions demonstrate that support of healthy communities (both internally and externally) is necessary for workforce and economic development. These actions have positioned ██████████ College as a national leader in degree alignment and offerings, innovative programs, and expanding definitions of student success to include the wellness of students, employees, and communities.

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**Association of Community College Trustees' Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Officer
Award Narrative Statement— [REDACTED] College**

[REDACTED] is a national leader in student success, workforce development, and equity, and has demonstrated an unparalleled and peerless commitment to advancing the community college movement through her tireless work as President of [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]'s strategic leadership has resulted in an increase in state support of 63%, more than \$20 million in capital improvements from the State of [REDACTED], and increase from \$13 to \$27 million for the [REDACTED] Foundation, and \$18 million in grant funds that support workforce and program development, youth programming, and the performing arts. Her leadership roles in national organizations, including as Chair of the Higher Learning Commission, Past President and current board member for the National Council for Workforce Education, past AACC Board member and ACCT Advisory Board member, have raised the profile of [REDACTED] and all community colleges.