

May 23, 2023

Professional Board Staff Member Award Committee
Association of Community Colleges Trustees (ACCT)
1233 20th Street NW, Suite 301
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Distinguished Committee Members:

On behalf of the [REDACTED] Board of Trustees, this letter is to nominate and support [REDACTED] for the Professional Board Staff Member Award. [REDACTED] truly embodies the exemplary service to a board that ACCT seeks to recognize. She has been a dedicated employee at [REDACTED] for 38 years and she has served as the Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees at [REDACTED] since 1995—the same year I became a trustee. For the 28 years I have served on the Board, I have experienced firsthand the extensive role [REDACTED] has in a multitude of management and administrative support functions. She is a pivotal and dynamic liaison between college administration, the college president and the Board of Trustees.

From working with trustees, administrators, faculty members and students to legislators, community members and business leaders, [REDACTED] successfully builds partnership and demonstrates her role as a service leader. Others speak of her with respect, admiration and describe her extraordinary talents and trustworthiness. Her skill set is extremely diverse and her actions effectively support countless college management and administrative support; she coordinates all Board Meetings and is the recording secretary for the Board of Trustees; she is the District's Election Coordinator for county-wide Trustee elections; she works with legislative delegations; and these are just a few of her current duties. In addition to her day to day responsibilities, [REDACTED] has also taken leadership roles on institutional projects, professional development and community activities.

[REDACTED] is a true champion of [REDACTED] who has a tremendous work ethic. She is dedicated and passionate about being a part of the college's efforts to provide innovative opportunities in higher education. She is hardworking, meticulous and has superior organizational and communication skills. While her job is one of the most complex at the college, because of her level of skill and her positive disposition, she makes it seem easy. She is an instrumental force to our Board of Trustees and our College who works hard and is inspiring to those around her.

It is with great pleasure that I nominate this dedicated individual for this distinguished honor. [REDACTED]'s guidance, support and enthusiasm is unmatched. Because of her vast knowledge, extraordinary commitment and demonstrated performance throughout her nearly four-decade career, [REDACTED] is an excellent candidate for this award. The enclosed nomination packet describes her qualifications and achievements in greater detail. She is held in high esteem at our College and I recommend her without reservation.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBER AWARD—ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES
2023 NOMINATION FOR [REDACTED], EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT & BOARD OF TRUSTEES

In what ways has this staff member demonstrated a service leadership role towards the members of the board of trustees, administrators, faculty, students and the community?

Since starting her career at [REDACTED] in 1985, [REDACTED] progressed rapidly to higher levels of authority and responsibility becoming the Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees in 1995. As she retires after 38 years at [REDACTED] in December of 2023, [REDACTED] will leave a lasting legacy of service and impact. Throughout, [REDACTED] has consistently demonstrated a service leadership role towards members of the Board of Trustees, the President, faculty, students and the community.

[REDACTED] is described as doing this with grace, consistency and efficiency. She embodies the notion of service leadership due to her innate desire to serve. She is focused on the growth and well-being of the people and community she serves. As a result, regardless of whom she is working with, while others are being served by her, they are also led to become engaged, wiser, more autonomous and more like themselves to become servant leaders. [REDACTED] always puts the needs of others first and uses her skills to help those around her develop and perform as highly as possible.

The [REDACTED] Board of Trustees adopts strategic policies, priorities and plans to direct the operation of the college based on community and workforce needs. Because of [REDACTED]'s organization and attention to detail, the Board of Trustees is able to concentrate their limited time focusing on student success and making community impact. Throughout her nearly three decades serving as Executive Assistant to the President and Board of Trustees, she has been an instrumental force ensuring the board is up-to-date and well-informed about relevant issues. "[REDACTED] is able to work with and manage diverse personalities. She is calm, can be gently stern when needed and is knowledgeable about the type of materials and data trustees need, which she shares clearly," [REDACTED] Board Chair, Mr. [REDACTED] said. "Well informed trustees help the college stay ahead and ensure that students and taxpayers get the best bang for their buck—[REDACTED] makes that happen!"

She has also made outstanding contributions to her profession through her service on the Professional Board Staff Network (PBSN) where she has regularly participated since 2013. In 2016-17 she served as [REDACTED], became [REDACTED] in 2017-18, was [REDACTED] in 2018-19 and served as [REDACTED] in 2019-20 and 2020-21 during the COVID pandemic. During her board terms she chaired committees and participated in planning each of the annual congresses, including being part of the planning for the virtual meeting held in the pandemic. In 2017, she increased PBSN engagement and member participation by proposing the idea of and collecting door prizes to encourage attendance. She worked with the Executive Committee to meet the professional development needs of members by planning a second day of workshops in addition to the business meeting.

How does this staff member demonstrate performance in support of the board/CEO team?

[REDACTED] has worked with five presidents, three interim presidents and more than 20 different members of the Board of Trustees. She has assisted presidential search committees, has helped each new president with his or her transition and they all speak highly of her. "[REDACTED] is committed, passionate and is highly effective. She is known for her professionalism, trustworthiness and dedication to the college," [REDACTED] President [REDACTED] said. "The number of Presidents and Trustees she has worked with are testament to her ability. She is passionate, energetic and goes the extra mile to support me and serve the trustees."

Former Board Secretary, [REDACTED] said, "[REDACTED] provides valuable information to the trustees in a timely manner. She communicates effectively both on an individual and group basis. Her knowledge about trustee and president issues is most helpful and guides newly elected trustees. And her institutional knowledge about the college allows her to play an important role in assisting the Board of Trustees, not only at board meetings, but also when they are acting ambassadors to the college."

"Ms. [REDACTED] is very professional with all trustees," Dr. [REDACTED], Vice Chair of the Board, said. "I admire her ability to individualize each of our needs, make us feel comfortable and I trust her ability to anticipate our needs and wants. My experience has been that when called upon to help with anything, [REDACTED] is quick to respond and attends to any request with a high sense of urgency. I appreciate her dedication to the college and her knowledge to be able to determine who will help with any given situation. She is always most congenial, genuine and professional with each of us."

Former ██████ President ██████ worked closely with ██████ for many years. He said: "I relied on her to perform many functions and responsibilities where timelines, accuracy, dependability and confidentiality were critical. ██████ always performed beyond my expectations. She was often in contact with trustees, legislators and business leaders as well as college students, faculty and staff. She was always courteous, helpful and competent in those communications. She is an excellent communicator and is highly respected. On many occasions, I received compliments from trustees and other community members about her professional competence and attitude."

████████'s extraordinary leadership and commitment shows exemplary service to a board. Former Board Chair ██████, said, "██████'s exceptional interpersonal skills and ability to relate to diverse personalities has contributed to team-building and collaboration among boards she has worked with. Her work to make sure meetings and tasks are adequately supported, contain the necessary facts or data and are sufficiently planned ensuring that our trustees can use our time productively."

How has this staff member assisted the board/CEO team in developing or initiating innovative projects for your institution?

████████ in not just an excellent Executive Assistant, she also goes above and beyond in her role by developing board tools, including creating their website and board agenda portal and other activities in support of the strategic plan. Her longevity and willingness to share her historical knowledge at ██████ has helped to create many innovative projects at our institution. ██████ is extremely knowledgeable of the college procedures and organizational history. She is keenly visionary and able to use her awareness of the past to help influence advancements in the changing educational field. Therefore, she is a dynamic player when it comes to developing and supporting innovative projects at ██████. She has regularly been part of projects that aim to strengthen institutional resources, increase technological capability, provide improved student opportunities, enhance the image of the college and promote economic development initiatives or community partnerships.

Throughout her career, ██████ has been a key fixture in projects that support the goals described above. She has actively supported countless committees and their efforts to achieve ██████'s mission and vision. Whether arranging details, organizing material and providing logistical support or being a committee participant, she has assisted the board and president on too many projects to name individually. Some recent examples include numerous reaccreditation visits, key contact with business leaders and elected officials, redistricting and being the point of contact for a variety of trustee and presidential initiatives. Additionally, she understands the importance of collaboration and cooperation in achieving success and she has a proven track record of keeping projects on time and on task. She plays a key role in maintaining vital relationships with a variety of constituency groups. ██████ makes sure that internal and external stakeholders have important information and receive regular communication. As the official contact person for the Office of the President, she facilitates communication for all president projects. She maintains and schedules the President's complex appointment calendar, including his travel as well as speaking engagements at the local, state and national level. She works with members of the legislative delegation to organize meetings and special events with elected officials. She works with the President's Cabinet and executive leadership and coordinates events on behalf of the President's Office. She coordinates all regular Board of Trustees meetings, special meetings and workshops as well as all of their travel. And, this just summarizes a few of the areas where her exemplary leadership provides critical assistance which advances the institution.

What professional development activities at the national and/or state level has this staff member pursued?

████████ actively seeks professional training and workshops in relevant areas where she is trying to learn more or in areas that will help ██████ meet its mission and goals. She frequently participates in professional development. As described previously, she was a board member for PBSN 2016-21 where she is a ██████, participated in and assisted with their professional development activities. She has attended conferences or workshops organized by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT), Association of Governing Boards (AGB), ██████ Community College Trustees Association ██████ the ██████ Meeting of the National Association of Presidential Assistants in Higher Education (NAPAHE) and the National School Boards Association (NSBA). She has also attended more than 10 ██████ Secretary of State Election Law Seminars. Throughout the years she has participated in countless trainings, seminars and other professional development through these and other organizations. Not only does she seek out these opportunities for educational growth and development, she applies what she learns to meet goals and objectives for herself and the college. Most importantly, like a true servant leader, she willingly uses what she has learned to help enhance the potential of others. Whether it is the Board of Trustees or her fellow ██████ employees, she freely shares her educational growth and development in order to assist others.

What other continuing education activities has this staff member pursued?

████████ is a life-long learner who continually seeks to quench her thirst for knowledge. Whether she is reading an article from or contributing an article to a professional trade publication, learning to upgrade her technology skills or attending a workshop, she is

always trying to build her skillset which results in even greater efficiency. She has participated in too many opportunities to mention them all. One example is [REDACTED]'s Leadership Academy, a one-year training opportunity and program designed to enhance leadership qualities, strengths and skills of college employees. Her willingness to learn, adapt and grow are additional reasons she is such an asset.

What recognition has this staff member received for their leadership or involvement in the college or community?

She has been recognized for her years of service to [REDACTED] where she was labeled a "friend of education" for her professional excellence and outstanding service to the college and community. The recognition described her significant contributions to the advancement of [REDACTED]. She is a past recipient of the [REDACTED] Spirit of Diversity Diamond Award for her work fostering respect as well as positive and inclusive personal opportunities. This award honored her for her commitment not only among employees, but also among our students and the surrounding [REDACTED] community. In 2013 she was nominated by [REDACTED] and given The National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) Excellence Award for her superior work leadership creativity and dedication. This prestigious award recognizes individuals for their dedication and commitment to post-secondary education. In 2015 she was awarded the ACCT Western Region Professional Board Staff Member Award.

Her service extends beyond the college into the community where she participated in and served on the PBSN Board as previously described. She served on the [REDACTED] School Board. She has served as a volunteer, past-treasurer and board member for the [REDACTED] School and [REDACTED] High School Band Boosters. She served as Secretary for the [REDACTED] Swim Club, board member for Border Swimming USA and was the Parent Volunteer Coordinator for the [REDACTED] Swimming and Diving Team. And these are just a few highlights of her contributions.

Her supervisors, peers and colleagues give her consistent accolades. [REDACTED] is always described as having excellent rapport with everyone around her. She is known throughout the college for her willingness to help out and for the efficiency for which she performs. She is well respected, has an extremely professional attitude and gets along with everyone. Additionally, she is knowledgeable about the College, higher education and does outstanding work.

What outstanding characteristics motivated you to nominate this staff member?

[REDACTED] often works behind the scenes but her impact is beyond measure. She is one of the most deserving individuals for this recognition, given that she works hard, produces tremendous results and never expects anything in return. She is one of those individuals whose work make things happen, but whose efforts go unnoticed because everything she does is completed with such precision and attention to detail that her involvement almost goes unnoticed – she is just that good! But without her, things simply would not happen or would not be as seamless.

Therefore, while [REDACTED] is frequently acknowledged with gratitude by [REDACTED], she is not truly recognized enough. Her 38-year career at [REDACTED] has made a positive impact at [REDACTED], on our students, on our leadership, on our trustees and on our community. Her efforts and contributions warrant recognition within her field nationally and regionally, not just at the local level. She deserves to be honored for outstanding work she has done and continue to do for EPCC and her long-term impact on higher education. She is a model of excellence and achievement that others can look up to and learn from her best practices. Not only does [REDACTED] get the work done and done well, she also does her work with a smile. She constantly displays sincere passion for education and as a result she is extremely enthusiastic about her work. She is outgoing and has a sense of humor. As one of her former supervisors said, "If you forget to bring your smile to work, she will give you hers." Her overall positive outlook benefits everyone around her and results in increased productivity and helps the College achieve its goals and vision.

[REDACTED], member of the [REDACTED] Board of Trustees said, "[REDACTED] has many characteristics that set her apart from all other employees at the college. She always does her work with a "passion for excellence" that exemplifies the true meaning of accountability and service. She is always prepared and ready to assist with any task we ask of her. One of her most outstanding characteristics is her love for the college and the people she serves and that is evident in all her interactions not just with the Board, but with others at the college and community and she interacts with. Another important characteristic of [REDACTED] is that she holds herself accountable to all of us and if she ever makes a mistake, she owns it and apologizes for it. She is a great employee of the college and does an excellent job supporting administrative demands with a high sense of urgency and love."

Former President [REDACTED] summarized it well, "the greatest compliment that can be paid to another person is to say that you can trust them. I have absolute trust in [REDACTED]'s judgement, decision making and discretion. [REDACTED] is an excellent team player. She understands the importance of cooperation and collaboration in achieving success and has a proven track record to show her commitment to service excellence. In addition to all these accolades, [REDACTED] has a great sense of humor."

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PROFESSIONAL BOARD STAFF MEMBER AWARD—ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES
2023 NOMINATION FOR [REDACTED], EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT & BOARD OF
TRUSTEES, [REDACTED]

NARRATIVE STATEMENT

Ms. [REDACTED] has worked 38 years at [REDACTED] and will retire later this year. Currently, she is the Executive Assistant to the President and the Board of Trustees. Throughout her nearly 30 years in this role, she has worked with more than 20 members of the board, five Presidents and three Interim Presidents and has successfully aided their transitions. From working with trustees, administrators, faculty members and students to legislators, community members and business leaders, [REDACTED] is an instrumental force supporting many of [REDACTED]'s initiatives. Because of her dynamic personality, organizational skills and attention to detail, the Board, President and [REDACTED] constituents are able to concentrate their time where it can make the greatest impact. She identifies areas for innovation and effectively assists in navigating a path to success. [REDACTED] has a tremendous love for education, demonstrates a "passion for excellence" in her work and is committed to advancing institutional achievement.