

New VVC board president has big plans

Brady says he will tackle college's structural deficit



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VICTORVILLE — Joseph W. Brady will begin his one-year term as president of the Victor Valley College Board of Trustees tonight and he said Monday he intends to do everything he can to put students first.

The meeting will begin with closed session at 5 p.m., followed by open session at 6 p.m. It will be held in the college's Student Activities Center and also will feature the swearing in of new trustee Marianne Tortorici and recognition for the VVC football and women's volleyball teams.

“What can we do to make this a better environment for students? They're our stakeholders, stockholders and shareholders — without them we don't have a job,” Brady said.

Topping Brady's agenda is resolving Victor Valley College's probationary status and solving the community college's \$4.5 million structural deficit.

"One of the biggest problems is people think this probation is behind us," Brady said. "If we don't convince the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in March that we have a plan ...

"We're down to fourth-and-five and we have to get the ball across the goalline. We've run out of timeouts. We have to change the internal communications and how we communicate and create a platform where people trust each other."

Brady said he believes VVC can come up with a plan that satisfies the ACCJC. The reason for his confidence? Superintendent/President Roger Wagner, who took over in July.

"We have a superintendent/president who can see both sides of all the issues, with a fresh set of eyes," Brady said.

Once VVC's probationary status has been settled, Brady said he wants to create synergy with school districts and businesses in the High Desert, and really start selling the college to students, parents and business owners.

"You can't sell a secret," Brady said. "I really want to reach out to our students, our employees, the taxpayers and engage the other school districts. We have multiple unified school districts that serve as feeders to us and we never interact with them.

"As a businessman, you can't operate in a silo. You have to get out there and make things happen. I also believe that the college could be a facilitator for a lot of issues of importance to the High Desert. I would love to see a meeting with all the city councils in the gym with 3,000 people and talk about all the reasons that people are moving (out of the area)."

Perhaps the area that most excites Brady is the potential to connect students with employers.

"What do our employers need?," Brady asked. "What do we need to do to reverse roles, where we have students who go to school here, stay here, get a job, and buy a house? That's how you grow your economy.

"I think we need to do a better job of telling people who we are and what we do."

Brady said he would like to have monthly luncheons with different business clusters, from aviation and home builders to from real estate and transportation.

"We have 9,000 businesses in the High Desert and 4,000 that gross over \$150,000 a year," he said.

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