

Victor Valley College Trustee Joseph Brady on the State of the College and the Future

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By Nolan P. Smith

Staff Reporter

(Victorville)— Joseph Brady, who many know for being a local business owner and leader in the High Desert for years, is seeking re-election to the Victor Valley College Board of Trustees, a position he has held since 2011. Brady has seen the ups and downs of the community college, and wants to continue to see the college and community thrive.

Brady was originally appointed out of 23 candidates in February of 2011, filling the position formerly held by Angela Valles, making the position available when she became one of the councilman for the City of Victorville. He ran again as a regular trustee in 2012, garnering a little over 46,000 votes, setting a record. This is when Brady began to see the help our community college was in need of.

“Between the time I was appointed and probably a year later, I really realized that VVC had not only structural problems; we had a structural deficit of 3.5 million dollars a year, we had a budget that was not really in balance,” said Brady in a phone interview. “I did not vote for

the first three-year budgets I was presented at VVC because I didn't believe in them. We had numerous accreditation problems, were put on probation, and during about a 10 year period of time, the accreditation commission was taking very close looks at VVC and we were in big trouble. We were in big trouble because we didn't have the right leadership at the top, and quite candidly, in hindsight, we didn't have the right board of trustees at the time. I think that until the board got kind of its lowest point, probably two and a half years ago, we were not going to move the college forward because if the leadership is not strong, you can't lead by example."

The leadership at the college would change, which led the Board of Trustees on an extensive search, which led them to hiring Dr. Roger Wagner from Copper Mountain in July 2014. Wager, who had his contract extended to three years. Brady credits Wagner for helping to guide VVC down a path that has led to the college receiving full accreditation and more. "I think he has brought a renewed hope, he's brought the leadership, he's brought the communication skills," said Brady. "We get a report every Friday night without fail: what he did during the week, who he met with, what he's accomplished, what he is going to do the following week."

Being a part of the board of trustees is something Brady takes very seriously. As any board does, there are issues from time to time, but the ability to recognize and work with everyone's strengths and weaknesses is something that has Brady excited to be part of this group once again. "I'm excited on where the college is going and excited for what we are doing, because VVC is our last hope to educate students from the High Desert region, give them an opportunity to come back to the valley, become employed, go create some type of economic opportunity, live here, buy a home here, join the country club, shop here, etc."

Make sure to check back for part 2, as we discuss Victor Valley College's various programs with Mr. Brady, as well as the college's renewed effort to inform elementary and high school students of what the college has to offer.