

**Candidate Statements
Board of Trustees Vacancy
February 2014**

Name: Linda Fetters

Please state (1) why you are seeking appointment to the Santa Monica Community College District Board of Trustees and (2) the skills, abilities, and experiences you bring to the work of the Board of Trustees.

Since our move to Santa Monica from Massachusetts in 2007, I have learned and become committed to community college education. I had always been committed to public education, but I knew very little about the community college system. My commitment to Santa Monica College (SMC) emerged from two sources. First, my youngest son is a 2012 graduate of SMC. Second, my husband teaches in the 10,000 Small Business Program that is delivered with faculty in community colleges throughout the United States. I have become intrigued and very impressed by the quality of faculty, students and programs in these colleges.

SMC gave our son a chance to succeed in an educational environment. This had eluded him for most of his life. The support, encouragement and enthusiasm of the faculty was instrumental in his successful completion of the program in graphic arts. He changed from a person who was uninterested in learning into a person who is excited by learning and new experiences. This was the true gift of SMC. One of his graphic arts professors helped him find his first job and they have remained in contact as he develops. Our family feels a tremendous debt to SMC. I would serve as a very proud, contributing member of the Board of Trustees.

I have been immersed in education for over 25 years. During that time, educational processes have emerged through technology and a learner centered focus that provides unique opportunities for learning to a wide audience of students. During this time, I developed leadership skills that enabled me to develop new programs and lead the transition from Master's education to Doctoral education as the Director of the Physical Therapy Program at Boston University. All physical therapists in the US are now educated with a clinical doctorate. In addition to an on campus program, I directed the development of a transitional doctorate of physical therapy program for physical therapy graduates with previous BS and MSPT degrees seeking a clinical doctorate. We implemented this program with a private company. This partnership of the academic and business communities gave me unique insights into the process of working with people in different contexts seeking a common goal. My initial skepticism of distance education was rapidly changed to enthusiasm after I taught my first online course. The change was a result of the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the students to this new learning environment. I learned that the standards for excellence in education were achievable in many different formats.

My transition to the University of Southern California brought new and exciting opportunities. One skill that I have nurtured is my ability to build communities of people to attain common goals. Our division brought me on faculty to develop their education and research in development and pediatrics. I have developed strong relationships with Children's Hospital of Los Angeles (CHLA) and community partners including a school system, the California Children's Services and an Early Intervention Program. USC, CHLA and our community partners now offer a post-graduate physical therapy residency in physical therapy. USC also gave me an introduction to the processes for raising funds from donors within and outside of the USC community. These efforts were successful in the creation of the first endowed chair in physical therapy at USC. I am honored to currently hold this chair.

I look forward to an opportunity to share my skills with Santa Monica College, its students, staff and faculty through participation on the Board of Trustees.

Describe the public service and community involvement you have had in Santa Monica and Malibu that would inform your work on the Board of Trustees.

I have no public service within Santa Monica or Malibu. I would like to change that through participation on the Board of Trustees. I have been in higher education, teaching and conducting research on infants, children and their families in two universities for over 25 years. I have served generously within my university but more so within the professional community of physical therapy. I am a committed educator and community citizen. We have immersed ourselves in the history and current issues in Santa Monica for our 7 years as residents. It is an extraordinary place to live and I would like to contribute to community.

What is your understanding of the mission and purpose of the California community colleges?

My own education, through my BS degree, was within the public system in Wisconsin. Wisconsin has an excellent public educational system similar to California and a major commitment to public education. The university, state college and community college systems in both Wisconsin and California have similar missions and goals. They are focused on educating people who want to learn and seek self-improvement and in many cases education toward life skills that will improve their employment opportunities. The various state educational environments including community colleges, state colleges and state universities demonstrate a commitment to a variety of learners within diverse programs throughout the state.

What is the role of the Board of Trustees in relation to its constituencies- (1) the communities of Santa Monica and Malibu, and (2) the students, administrators, faculty, and staff of the college?

I read through the many documents about the Board of Trustees, budgets, mission statements and the thorough appraisal of the actions each year that have moved SMC toward the achievement of the clear goals as stated in their mission statements through the past decade. Of all the responsibilities of the Board, I view as the most important, the responsibility for developing the educational programs of SMC. This responsibility is to the residents of Santa Monica and Malibu and the faculty and students of SMC, their communities and the state of California to provide relevant and affordable educational opportunities.

Given the Governor's proposed State budget for 2014-2015, what would be your priorities for the upcoming Santa Monica College budget?

The first priority is to maintain affordable high quality education by keeping tuition as low as possible. While I recognize that this is easy to write and believe and difficult to maintain, without affordable tuition, SMC cannot achieve its missions. This will require flexibility, compromise and building communities of trust.

What do you see as the major issues currently facing Santa Monica College?

One major issue for SMC is maintaining affordable education that is high quality and diverse. This may require consolidation or expansion of programs and methods of delivery of the educational experience. Again, unless we can keep community college tuition within the reach of those who seek education and self-improvement and the programs are relevant to the community and state, SMC cannot achieve its goals and overall mission.

Name: Robert Kronovet

Please state (1) why you are seeking appointment to the Santa Monica Community College District Board of Trustees and (2) the skills, abilities, and experiences you bring to the work of the Board of Trustees.

As a Real Estate Broker & Property Manager, and the Chairman of the Pico Improvement Organization, my staff and I have brought merchants, homeowners, tenants, and customers together to organize positive local activities and build a safer community. The need for thoughtful growth for SMC . My request to join the Santa SMC board member is a natural and fitting step for me and allows the residents of Santa Monica to benefit from a real street knowledge, and an awareness of how the decisions of the board are made

Describe the public service and community involvement you have had in Santa Monica and Malibu that would inform your work on the Board of Trustees.

As a member of the board I bring over 25 years of honest dealing with landlords, developers, elected officials, and tenants. The goal of wise municipal growth is to generate quality homes for our residents and create a sense of civic pride--growth based on wise comprise. As a licensed and trained Real Estate professional I bring to the table an understanding of management and finance that will lift the entire city of Santa Monica.

Those who know me can expect fair and even dealings with all involved. I have raised my kids here and will keep making Santa Monica a successful city. This is not just a tag line--this is my way of life. Finally, as a former member of SM Rent Board I represented over 15,200 voters in Santa Monica; I believe these voters are entitled to a place at the table.

What is your understanding of the mission and purpose of the California community colleges?
To offer advanced education to all Americans at a price and payment terms that make sense.

What is the role of the Board of Trustees in relation to its constituencies- (1) the communities of Santa Monica and Malibu, and (2) the students, administrators, faculty, and staff of the college?
As a homeowner in Sunset Park as well as a business owner on Pico, Kronovet will be the great voice of the people. What's good for SMC is good for Sana Monica and what's good for Santa Monica is good for America

Given the Governor's proposed State budget for 2014-2015, what would be your priorities for the upcoming Santa Monica College budget?
More hands on classes, like shop, car mechanics. webdesign, nursing, plumbing, building, real estate, health care. More career building choices.

It's the job of SMC not to get students job but build careers.

What do you see as the major issues currently facing Santa Monica College?
Parking, Safety, student success. SMC has been a good neighbor and I will see to it that this continues. Finishing our construction projects

**"The investment in education yields the highest interest."
Ben Franklin**

Name: Maria L. Loya

Please state (1) why you are seeking appointment to the Santa Monica Community College District Board of Trustees and (2) the skills, abilities, and experiences you bring to the work of the Board of Trustees.

I am seeking to serve our community as a member of the SMC Board of Trustees to work collaboratively with my colleagues on the Board and the staff to expand access and opportunity to a world class institution providing advancement through education and training for all students. I have committed my life to advance the plight of low income youth and their families and I feel that I can bring a unique perspective to the governance team. I bring 20 years of public policy development & advocacy, non-profit management and community leadership on a range of issues including: public school funding, youth services, immigrant rights, bilingual education, worker's and woman's rights. Throughout my many years of activism and public service, I have worked tirelessly to address issues specifically affecting youth and families in the area of public education & student success through public policy & advocacy campaigns. My commitment to strengthening public education has been demonstrated in the work that I have done in Texas and California. While in Texas, I led an organizing effort in the state legislature to stop the elimination of bilingual education. Once I arrived in California my commitment has continued. As a PNA Board member, I played a leadership role in advocating and securing the first public library in the Pico Neighborhood. My advocacy also has included working to reform student discipline policies with the purpose of closing the achievement gap. I have extensive experience in public policy development and implementation. Through my position as Campaign Director at LAANE I played a leadership role in developing worker policies such as the living wage. I also led a negotiating team that resulted in securing \$500 million in environmental and job training benefits for residents affected by the expansion of LAX. It remains the largest benefits agreement ever approved, and has helped create safer schools and neighborhoods to hundreds of thousands of people living near one of the country's largest airport. As part of the management team at LAANE, my responsibilities included managing an annual budget of 3 million and setting budget priorities. I also bring experience in the area of student success. I am a former Board member of the Pico Youth & Family Center (PYFC), a leading nonprofit organization providing services to 16-24 year olds in our community. My volunteer at the PYFC has focused on supporting student success through mentorship and assisting them to be college ready by helping with their personal essays, scholarship and financial aid applications. As a former community college student & the first generation of my family to attend college, I bring a personal connection to the students we serve. I understand the important role Community Colleges play in preparing students to be successful as they pursue higher education and enter the workforce. Currently many of our students attending SMC aren't academically prepared to succeed. Once on the SMC Board of Trustees, I want to work towards ensuring that policy programs and procedures are in place to address the issue of student success. Furthermore, I want to ensure that we are thoughtful on our approach to improving our student retention & transfer rates while working to prepare our students to graduate and successfully enter the workforce.

The people I have worked with have taught me that our community is diverse and with that comes diverse life-long learning needs. For instance

- Our seniors from both Santa Monica and Malibu depend on Emeritus College, to provide continued education.**
- Recent immigrants and international students who come from abroad look to SMC to learn English and begin their journey of integrating into our great nation.**
- Students coming from throughout LA County looking for training to start or enhance their career aspirations.**

My experience in the area of public policy development & advocacy and non-profit management has prepared me to assume the position of Board of Trustee if I am appointed.

Describe the public service and community involvement you have had in Santa Monica and Malibu that would inform your work on the Board of Trustees.

I have more than 20 years of public service and community involvement that will help inform my work on the Board of Trustees. I have served on the Steering Committee of SMRR for 9 years advocating for affordable housing and youth services. I currently serve as Vice Chair of the Pico Neighborhood Association (PNA) representing more than 12,000 residents living adjacent to Santa Monica College. The Pico Neighborhood is the City's most diverse resident demographic and is home to the highest concentration of youth, low income residents, and also has the lowest educational attainment rates in the City. As a PNA Boardmember, I have worked to bring vital resources such as the first Pico Branch Library that will be opening in April of 2014. In my current role as PNA Vice Chair I have provided leadership on issues, such as development projects, youth services and affordable housing affecting Santa Monica residents. In the area of SMC capital improvement projects, I plan to apply my experience in development and coalition building to create a win/win approach to our capital improvement projects while working with resident groups and our partners in SMMUSD and the Cities of SM and Malibu to accomplish our strategic goals and practice good neighbor principles. I am an active parent at Edison Language Academy where my son attends. I have volunteered as a room parent rep for the past three years.

What is your understanding of the mission and purpose of the California community colleges?

As a former community college student I believe the purpose of the Community College system is to provide an affordable opportunity for students who seek to pursue higher education or a career pathway requiring certificated training. In 1960 the California Master Plan for Higher Education. In Santa Monica there was a time when the Community College and the k-12 school system were one. As SMC expanded its scope in programming it also expanded its regional responsibility to providing post-secondary education and training. SMC's current mission is to provide a safe and inclusive and affordable learning environment that encourages personal and intellectual exploration, and challenges and supports students in achieving their educational goals. The College's programs and services assist students in the development of skills needed to succeed in college, prepare students for careers and transfer, and nurture a lifetime commitment to learning. My community connection, experience in diverse public policy issues affecting our key stakeholders places me in a position to contribute to a progressive mission, vision and purpose for a stronger SMC.

What is the role of the Board of Trustees in relation to its constituencies- (1) the communities of Santa Monica and Malibu, and (2) the students, administrators, faculty, and staff of the college?

The role of the Board of Trustees in relation to Santa Monica and Malibu communities is to provide educational services & resources to its residents while providing access to decision makers to ensure that the SMC is being responsive to the needs of its residents. As a member of the Board I plan to be inclusive in my decision-making and ensure that residents in both communities are treated with respect and dignity. In regards to the students, administrators, faculty and staff of the college, the Board of Trustees role is to work collaboratively with the administration, faculty and staff to ensure that the college is providing quality instruction and services to its students.

Given the Governor's proposed State budget for 2014-2015, what would be your priorities for the upcoming Santa Monica College budget?

Given the Governor's proposed State budget for 2014 -2015, the priorities for the upcoming Santa Monica College budget should include expanding access to educational services and opportunities to communities with low educational attainment and student success in an effort to close the achievement gap for underrepresented student groups. The role is also to ensure that student success be accelerated by faculty, staff, and administration. SB1456 requires that all students eventually will have Educational Plans, orientations, assessments to enhance success in college.

What do you see as the major issues currently facing Santa Monica College?

The major issues currently facing Santa Monica College is increasing the College's student retention rate and creating degree programs that are relevant to the fastest growing industries in the region. The lack of preparation of pre-collegiate students has been highlighted by the recent Governor's budget and need to be addressed. I believe SMC can do much more in the area of student success and in the process expand our ability to train our students in new green technologies, global needs and initiatives such as global warming and human relations, strengthen the local economy by providing training in growing and emerging industries, technological advancements and market forces such as the recent recession has taught us that continued training and re-training will be the norm. Community colleges will be at the forefront of leading collaborative efforts linking the P-16 educational system and the workforce.

Name : Mel Poteshman, CPA, CFE

Please state (1) why you are seeking appointment to the Santa Monica Community College District Board of Trustees and (2) the skills, abilities, and experiences you bring to the work of the Board of Trustees.

I'm committed to the City of Santa Monica and having been married to a teacher and having a daughter who is also a teacher, I do understand the issues facing out schools today.

Describe the public service and community involvement you have had in Santa Monica and Malibu that would inform your work on the Board of Trustees.

none

What is your understanding of the mission and purpose of the California community colleges?

To help students decide on a career and bring their grades up so they can attend a 4-year university.

What is the role of the Board of Trustees in relation to its constituencies

(1) the communities of Santa Monica and Malibu, and (2) the students, administrators, faculty, and staff of the college?

To Govern fairly.

Given the Governor's proposed State budget for 2014-2015, what would be your priorities for the upcoming Santa Monica College budget?

Look for waste.

What do you see as the major issues currently facing Santa Monica College?

Money

Name : Barry Snell

1. *Please state why you are seeking appointment to the Santa Monica Community College District Board of Trustees and the skills, abilities, and experiences you bring to the work of the Board of Trustees.*

I am seeking an appointment to the Santa Monica Community College District (SMCC) Board of Trustees because I care about educating our young people. I believe that every individual should be afforded the opportunity to have a quality post-secondary education. As Trustee, I can be part of a board that enacts policy to achieve that goal.

I believe my experiences of servicing on several Boards and Commissions in Santa Monica, Malibu and the Los Angeles area, along with my educational background and business experiences, will serve as a great asset to the SMCC. I pride myself on being a good listener and I work very hard at gathering as much information to an issue before making a decision.

My family and I live in the Pico Neighborhood which is greatly impacted by the activities of the College. My three children currently attend SMCC. These two factors are the impetus for my desire to become a Trustee of SMCC.

2. *Describe the public service and community involvement you've had in Santa Monica and Malibu that would inform your work on the Board of Trustees.*

From 2006 to 2010, I served as a Board Member of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District. In 2009, I was elected President of the Board by my Board Members. Prior to being on the Board, I served as President of the African American Parent Student Staff Support Group for Santa Monica High School. I also served on the Santa Monica- Malibu PTA Executive Board as Vice President of Health and Safety and as Vice President of Community Relations.

In 2011, the City Council selected me to serve on the Santa Monica Pier Board. I currently serve as a board member of the Downtown Santa Monica Board.

In addition to my involvement with the above Boards and Commissions, I am on the financial advisory board for the Santa Monica- Malibu Education Foundation, treasury for Community for Excellent Public Schools (CEPS), and on the steering committee for Santa Monicans for Renters Rights (SMRR). I also serve as a Board Member for Century Community Charter School, a middle school in Inglewood California.

I believe my involvement on the above Boards and Commissions will be a great benefit to SMCC Trustee Board, and will help inform my decisions on issues affecting the College and the Santa Monica- Malibu community, should I be selected. I care about my community and believe that it's my duty to give back my time and energy whenever possible.

3. *What is your understanding of the mission and purpose of the California community college system?*

The primary mission of the California community college system is to support and advance California's economic growth by offering academic and vocational instruction to both younger and older students, whether or not they already have a post-secondary degree. The public community college should offer instruction that will educate and train individuals to contribute to the improvement of the work force of California. Community College systems generally cover the first two years of post-secondary education, offering an associate's degree. However there is some discussion in the community college circles in regards to offering a limited amount of four year degrees by partnering with four year universities or offering additional courses at the community college.

4. *What is the role of the Board of Trustees in relation to its constituencies- (1) the communities of Santa Monica and Malibu, and (2) the students, administrators, faculty, and staff of the college?*

Understanding the concerns and needs of the community that the college resides in is one of the most difficult parts of school governance. The Board of Trustees are elected representatives of the residents of Santa Monica and Malibu. The Trustees are elected to provide appropriate high-level guidance and leadership to ensure the College acts to meet the communities' needs. Creating a strong working and transparent relationship with the cities of Santa Monica and Malibu, along with the Santa Monica- Malibu Unified School District, is one way to ensure that the needs of the communities are being met.

The role of the Board of Trustees to the students, administrators, faculty and staff of the college is to provide these constituencies an avenue to genuinely share in the governance of the college. The key to shared governance is broad and requires ongoing communication. Every constituent has a role, and it is the responsibility of the Trustees to keep each of them in the loop as developments occur within the College.

An integral duty of the board is the selection of the college president. Furthermore, the board should support the President and annually evaluate his or her performance.

The focus of the Trustees should be one of a policy maker and there should be a clear distinction between the policy-making functions of the Board and the responsibility of the administration and faculty. The responsibility of the administration and faculty is to administer and implement these policies. However, the administration, and particularly the faculty's participation in institutional governance, are ingrained in theory and should be practiced within the college community.

The primary role of the Board of Trustees, as it pertains to its students, is to provide a safe environment and a quality education. The Board of Trustees should be constantly reexamining its policies to ensure that each student has the opportunity to be successful in achieving their educational goals at the highest level. Understanding the students' needs and making the students part of the discussion in meeting those goals should be the responsibility of the Board of Trustees.

5. Given the Governor's proposed State budget for 2014-2015, what would be your priorities for the upcoming Santa Monica College budget?

The Governor's proposed State budget for 2014-2015 has made significant adjustments and increases in the areas of investing in student success, statewide performance strategies, general-purpose apportionments under Proposition 98, deferred maintenance and instructional equipment purchases, and the cost of living adjustment.

I am still trying to understand how this budget will impact the community colleges overall and particularly Santa Monica College's budget. However, I would say that my first priority would be to see how Santa Monica College can utilize monies received to close the achievement gaps in access and achievement in underrepresented student groups at the College.

Secondly, I would want to look at how the College could increase the salaries for their faculty, particularly the support staff. I am aware that over the past five years the College has utilized its reserves to maintain staff and programs, causing the College's reserves to be depleted. Therefore, I would want to balance the increase in salaries while replenishing its reserves.

Finally, I would like to see the College continue to invest in new instructional equipment and deferred maintenance in its facilities.

The Governor's budget will increase by 11.4% in 2014-15; a welcomed sight for community colleges. It will provide the Chancellor's Office with additional oversight tools and resources to its districts. The result of these changes in the budget and its effects on Santa Monica College is still evolving. As I gain a better understanding of its impact, my priorities for the College and its budget will also evolve.

6. *What do you see as the major issues currently facing Santa Monica College?*

One of the major issues currently facing Santa Monica College is that students enrolling are not ready to handle the college curriculum. The way the College evaluates these students via testing and the ability of the College to place students accurately in remedial courses is a major challenge for Santa Monica College.

Another major issue currently facing Santa Monica College is finding the right incentives, and support, to keep students in school until graduation.