

# Newsmakers

By Daily Staff, Published October 20, 2016

## CEO retirements

**Lee Rasch** will retire on June 30, 2017, as president of [Western Technical College](#) (WTC) in Wisconsin, where he has served as CEO for nearly 28 years. In 2010, Rasch led the adaption of Vision 2020, the college's long-range strategic plan. The plan's development of new facilities, integration of program curriculum and implementation of flexible scheduling practices will allow the college to serve an additional 1,000 students per year by 2020.

"It's through his leadership and vision that the college has transformed academic programming, systems to serve students and district-wide facilities. He will be missed and will leave big shoes to fill, not only at Western, but as a community leader," said Dennis Treu, chair of the WTC District Board.

From 1986 to 1989, Rasch served as senior vice president of Moraine Valley Community College, where he also was executive dean from 1982 to 1986.

**Kerry Youngblood**, who has served as president of [Carteret Community College](#) (CCC) in North Carolina since 2009, plans to retire in June 2017.

"It's through his leadership that Carteret Community College has been able to maintain the high quality of education, staff and teachers while experiencing significant cuts from the state budget," said Mitch Mangum, a CCCC trustee.

Youngblood began his career as a certified welder working for the Oklahoma Natural Gas Co. From 1988 to 1993, he was the principal of a technical high school in the Mesa Valley school district. Youngblood also was director of the School of Applied Technology at Mesa State College from 1993 to 1996, and dean of industry and technology from 1996 to 2004. In 2005, he was selected as vice president for community college affairs and as president of Western Colorado Community College.

## Kudos

**Sunny Cooke**, superintendent/president of [MiraCosta College](#) in California, has been named by Leap to Success — a leading nonprofit formed to empower women who are overcoming domestic violence, homelessness and other major life challenge — as the inaugural recipient of its "I Leap Award," which recognizes extraordinary women who have impacted their community.

"As an immigrant from India, whose family had only \$40 on arrival, Dr. Cooke's success shows us that someone from humble beginnings can become successful and be a role model for women," said Dana Bristol-Smith, executive director of Leap to Success.

**Jane Karas**, president of [Flathead Valley Community College](#) in Montana and a former board chair of the [American Association of Community Colleges](#), has received the 2016 Marie Y. Martin Chief Executive Award from the Association of Community College Trustees. The award honors CEOs who, among other criteria, initiate or help to develop innovative college; demonstrate a "caring attitude" toward trustees, administrators, faculty and students; and are active in developing, organizing or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary education associations.

## Appointments

**Greg Adams** will serve as executive director of the [Nebraska Community College Association](#). He is currently president and executive director of Accelerate Nebraska, a non-profit corporation that is focused on improving educational outcomes and the alignment between high school, postsecondary institutions and the workforce. Previously, Adams served eight years in the Nebraska legislature, from 2006-2014, including two years as speaker of the legislature.

**Christina Brannan** is the new business manager at [Central Virginia Community College](#). Previously, she was the business manager and financial program coordinator for Virginia Tech University.

**Alisha Fox** was recently chosen as assistant vice president for finance and operations at [Cleveland State Community College](#) in Tennessee. Previously, she was assistant vice president for finance and operations at the college and also served in a number of other roles, including interim director of fiscal services, director of procurement, disbursement and contract services and director of purchasing and contracts.

**Dana Nichols** is now vice president of academic affairs at [Chattanooga State Community College](#) in Tennessee. She is a former assistant vice president of academic affairs at Lanier Technical College in Georgia. Nichols has been involved in higher education for 18 years with classroom experience teaching English, English as a second language and linguistics, beginning and intermediate Spanish, and film.

**David Ruth** was recently named chief of staff at [Northampton Community College](#) (NCC) in Pennsylvania. Previously, he was dean of students and chief student affairs officer at Drexel University, which he served for more than 20 years.

At [Bunker Hill Community College](#) in Massachusetts:

- **Michelle Elias Bloomer** is now dean of professional studies and workforce development. She is the previous assistant dean of education and public service at Middlesex Community College.
- **Dana Brown** is executive director of high school and community partnerships. A partner in the college's high school dual-enrollment program, he served as principal of Malden High School for 13 years.
- **Marika Hamilton** is now executive director of academic services and registrar. She previously served as registrar at Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Middlesex Community College and Curry College.

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