



# NEWS

May 11, 2010

## **SOUTH SEATTLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENT NAMED Gary Oertli, widely known college leader, selected in national search**

SEATTLE – The next president at South Seattle Community College will be Gary Oertli, one of the state’s most widely known and respected leaders in higher education. Oertli, who has worked at community colleges and baccalaureate institutions throughout Western Washington, will begin his responsibilities at South before the start of fall quarter.

He was selected following a national search and recommendations made by a college-wide committee to Jill A. Wakefield, chancellor of the Seattle Community Colleges, which include South, North and Seattle Central Community Colleges.

“Gary Oertli has excellent depth of experience as a college leader,” Wakefield said. “With his skills at inspiring employees and at creating community support for the college, and his strong commitment to student success, he will be an outstanding president for South.”

Oertli is currently serving as interim president at Seattle Central Community College. He also was recent interim president and interim vice president for instruction at South Seattle Community College, former dean at Seattle Central, and director of development for International Affairs and Alumni Relations at the University of Washington. He was honored as president emeritus when he retired from Shoreline Community College, Shoreline, Wash., where he served as president and CEO from 1995 to 2000. He also served for 18 years at Edmonds Community College, Lynnwood, Wash., where he was interim president and CEO, executive vice president for instruction and student services, dean of instruction, vocational director, Business Programs director and tenured faculty member. He started his community college career as a part-time faculty member at North Seattle Community College. Mr. Oertli is a graduate of the Executive Management program in the graduate school of Business Administration at the University of Washington, where he also earned master’s and bachelor’s degrees. He received an honorary doctorate of Humane Letters from Schiller International University in London.

In his previous positions, Oertli developed several important partnerships and is well-known for his successful history of obtaining gifts, grants and in working with college foundations. His service also includes membership on the Governor’s 2020 Commission on Higher Education and president of the U of W Alumni Association. He has been recognized with higher education awards for his work in communications, community relations and by the American Association of Women in Community Colleges for enhancing opportunities for women.

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SEATTLE  
CENTRAL  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE

NORTH  
SEATTLE  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE

SOUTH  
SEATTLE  
COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE

SVI SEATTLE  
VOCATIONAL  
INSTITUTE

Georgetown  
Campus

NewHolly  
Learning Center

Seattle Maritime  
Academy

Wood  
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Center

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South Seattle Community College serves a multicultural population of almost 17,500 credit and non-credit students from an 87-acre, wooded campus in residential West Seattle, and satellite campuses in the nearby neighborhoods of Georgetown and Beacon Hill.

Students of color make up more than half of the student body, making South one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse colleges in the state, and inspiring the college to match its high student diversity with equally high student success. The college is recognized as one of the leaders and originators of the IBEST curriculum (integrated Basic Education and Training), which combines technical training with basic English skills. In 2008, the college received a two-year, \$2.4 million federal grant to support student retention and success, with a special focus on Asian-American and Pacific Islander students. South is among only six recipients from across the country, including both two-year and four-year institutions.

South offers one of the state's first four-year degree programs at a community college. A Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Hospitality Management launched in 2007 is the only one of its kind in Western Washington. A Wine Studies program features an on-campus winery, unique to the Puget Sound region, where students are creating award-winning wines.

The president will direct a workforce of 650 full- and part-time employees; he replaces former president Jill A. Wakefield, who was selected by the board of Trustees to serve as the district chancellor in January 2009.

The Seattle Community Colleges educate 53,000 students every year at North Seattle, Seattle Central and South Seattle Community Colleges, and at the Seattle Vocational Institute. College presidents are part of the district-wide leadership team who report to the district chancellor and also serve as vice chancellors responsible for coordinating specific district-wide areas such as instruction and student services.

[www.seattlecolleges.edu](http://www.seattlecolleges.edu)

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