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Highline College wins second Award of Excellence
AACC honors college for exemplary CEO and board

DES MOINES, Wash. — Highline College was awarded a prestigious Award of Excellence from the American Association of Community Colleges on Monday. The award recognizes President Jack Bermingham and the college's five-member Board of Trustees for their exemplary collaboration and working relationship, resulting in effective community college governance.

Highline was one of only seven colleges in the nation awarded at the association's annual convention in Chicago. The national awards recognize those colleges that promote economic and social vitality for the community and ongoing commitment to success for students.

"From the perspective of faculty leadership, Dr. Bermingham has created and the trustees have supported a highly effective learning and teaching environment where faculty, staff and students are inspired and enabled to do their best work," said Ruth Windhover, a tenured Highline faculty member and president of the Highline College Education Association, which is the union representing all faculty at the college.

Highline's board members serve five-year terms and can be reappointed once. The board is composed of community members from the area Highline serves:

- Dan Altmayer, of Federal Way, joined the board in 2008 and is in his second term, currently serving as chair.
- Debrena Jackson Gandy, of Des Moines, joined the board in 2010 and was reappointed in 2015.
- Fred Mendoza, of Normandy Park, was appointed to the board in 2011.
- Bob Roegner, of Federal Way, joined the board in 2011 and is in his second term.
- Sili Savusa, of South Seattle, has served on the board since 2013.

Highline was chosen in part because the CEO/board teamwork and actions reveal their shared vision, mission and goals for the college.

One indicator of their exemplary relationship was revealed during the board's recent 49-question anonymous self-evaluation. Each member gave a perfect score to a question about the

CEO/board relationship, unanimously agreeing that “mutual trust and respect exists between the board and CEO.”

The Exemplary CEO/Board Award is the college’s second AACC Award of Excellence. In 2014, Highline won in the Advancing Diversity category, recognizing it as a leader among the nation’s community colleges for increasing diversity and educational and social justice equity.

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Attachments: Photos of Highline College President and Board of Trustees:

- President Jack Bermingham
- Trustee Dan Altmayer
- Trustee Debrena Jackson Gandy
- Trustee Fred Mendoza
- Trustee Bob Roegner
- Trustee Sili Savusa

Highline College was founded in 1961 as the first community college in King County. With nearly 17,000 annual students and 350,000 alumni, it is one of the state’s largest institutions of higher education. The college offers a wide range of academic transfer, professional-technical education and bachelor’s degree programs. Alumni include former Seattle Mayor Norm Rice, entrepreneur Junki Yoshida and former Washington state poet laureate Sam Green.