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ACCJC Names Dr. Mac Powell as Next President

Sacramento, CA – The Board of Directors of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) is pleased to announce that Dr. Mac Powell will be joining ACCJC as President effective July 18, 2022.



For the past five years, Dr. Powell has served as Senior Vice President of the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and supported the agency's 163 institutions and 1.3 Million students. He led NWCCU's 2020 Standards Revision, developed the Commission's Mission Fulfillment Fellowship, supported two federal re-recognitions, and was the agency's primary conduit to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which provided millions of dollars to support the expansion of agency capacity around closing institutional equity gaps in its member institutions.

Prior to joining the Commission, Dr. Powell served as president of three universities, including John F. Kennedy University, where he led the institution's successful efforts to become a service-learning institution and a federally recognized and funded Hispanic Serving Institution.

"I believe that the future of higher education will be one that recognizes the successes of our engagement with students and expands the opportunities for students to be participants in the work of continuous quality improvement. Equity, access, and opportunity are values that must continually be reaffirmed and supported by deep commitments and actions from every stakeholder that touches the lives of our students." - Dr. Mac Powell

Dr. Powell has contributed to the strategic direction of higher education through his service as Chair of the American Council of Education's Commission on Educational Attainment and Innovation, as a Commissioner on the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Senior Commission, as a graduate of the WASC Assessment Leadership Academy, and as Chair of the Council of Applied Master's Programs in Psychology. His enthusiasm for continuous improvement and innovation and his breadth of experience add new perspectives, and position ACCJC to continue to embrace the challenging landscape of higher education.

"There is nothing more transformative than education, and the power of ACCJC member institutions to influence the lives of students and their communities is deeply inspiring. Having worked alongside ACCJC staff, member institutions, and the students that they serve for so many years, it is an honor to be joining the ACCJC family. The last five years, in particular, have been inspirational as the agency's Commissioners, staff, and volunteers have worked so successfully to support institutional transformation in a collegial environment that recognizes the contributions of faculty, staff, administrators, and community partners across the vast landscape that ACCJC serves," said Dr. Powell.

Dr. Lori Gaskin, incoming ACCJC Chair, applauded the choice of the ACCJC Board of Directors. “Dr. Powell brings to ACCJC a deep grounding in higher education and an unwavering commitment to advancing educational quality, equity, and student learning and success. His work with the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, his service as a commissioner with the Western Association of Schools and Colleges, his leadership roles as college president, and the many other contributions he has made to higher education demonstrate his dedication and steadfast focus on students. He is a champion for institutional innovation, excellence, and continuous improvement as the path forward to strengthening all students’ educational achievements. It is an honor to welcome Dr. Powell to ACCJC.”

Dr. Powell holds bachelor's degrees in philosophy and sociology, a master's degree in sociology, and a doctorate in sociology from the University of Missouri, as well as an MBA from National University and a master’s degree in clinical psychology from Antioch University.

As the author of over 50 articles, three books and two book chapters on the subjects of education, clinical psychology and performance psychology, his most recent scholarship focuses on the role of accreditation in promoting institutional transformation and the closure of institutional equity gaps. Dr. Powell has spoken around the world on leadership, the role of personality in building teams and performance, and the future of higher education. He has been a long-time volunteer for the Point Foundation, supporting college education for underserved LGBTQ students, and was one of the original members of the LGBTQ Leaders in Higher Education. His partner, Tuan Ngo, is a graduate and member of the board of trustees of Occidental College in Eagle Rock, California.

“In addition to welcoming Dr. Mac Powell as the next President, I would like to formally thank Dr. Cindy Miles for diligently serving as Interim President for the past 6 months,” said Dr. Sonya Christian, ACCJC Chair. “The ACCJC team has remained steadfast through this transition, and we are excited for the future of ACCJC.”

For more information about ACCJC, visit www.accjc.org.

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The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) accredits 136 public and private two-year colleges in California, Hawai'i, the Territories of Guam and American Samoa, the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

ACCJC supports its member institutions to advance educational quality and student learning and achievement. This collaboration fosters institutional excellence and continuous improvement through innovation, self-analysis, peer review, and application of standards. To learn more, visit www.accjc.org.