



Press Release

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New energy on board at the Wyoming Community College Commission

Cheyenne, February 19, 2020 – The purpose and mission of the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC) is to provide coordination, advocacy, funding and accountability for the Community College system on behalf of the State of Wyoming. WCCC’s efforts are reinforced by the seven Commissioners who serve four-year terms in order to help provide all of the above mentioned. Therefore, the Commission would not exist without the seven Community Colleges that it proudly serves.

WCCC Commissioners and staff are working non-stop toward achieving the educational attainment goals for the State of Wyoming, increasing completion rates, and strengthening the State’s education-to-work pathways. To that end, WCCC has also had recent updates to the team they would like to highlight:

New Commissioners

In addition to Commissioners Dr. Jackie Freeze from Rock Springs, Katherine Dooley from Powell, Dr. Craig Frederick from Guernsey and Julia Newman from Torrington, who have proudly served the Community Colleges of Wyoming thus far, the following Commissioners joined the team in March, 2019:

Gregg Blikre, *Commissioner* – Joined the Commission from Gillette. Commissioner Blikre is a Navy Veteran who has served the State of Wyoming and our colleges over the years. He served as a Representative from House District 53, and he also served on a K-12 school board and Gillette College Foundation. He is a retired businessman after many years working in various business roles.

Ember Oakley, *Commissioner* - Joined the Commission from Riverton and currently works in the Fremont Council attorney’s office as the Assistant County Attorney.

Dennis Boal, *Commissioner* - Joined the Commission from Evanston and currently works as the City of Evanston attorney.

New staff

WCCC has wonderful, hard-working staff members like Chief Operating Officer, Larry Buchholtz; Senior Office Support Specialist, Naomi Lopez; Senior Data/Research Analyst, Geir Solvang and Senior Programmer, Tully Holmes. In addition to these long-term team members, the following staff have either joined or been promoted recently:



Dr Sandy Caldwell, *Executive Director* – Dr. Caldwell assumed the position in 2018. She has a long history in higher education, and is a champion for industry partnerships. A priority for her is working collaboratively to facilitate seamless transitions for Wyoming’s students and to increase overall college completion toward the state’s attainment goal. She has bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mathematics and statistics from Oklahoma State University and a doctorate from Texas A&M University-Commerce.

Dr. Ben Moritz, *Deputy Director and Chief Academic and Student Services Officer* – Dr. Moritz joined the WCCC with 20 years of experience in higher education. He began his career as a music professor, specializing in piano performance and aesthetics. After earning tenure at Mansfield University in Pennsylvania, Dr. Moritz moved into administration, initially focused on assessment and faculty professional development, and then into Honors Program administration at Metropolitan State University of Denver. Ben spent the last six years in leadership roles for start-up education companies, including Guild Education and American Honors.



Diane McQueen, *State Director for Adult Education* – Diane has 31 years of experience in Adult Education, both here in Wyoming and in Thailand. Prior to moving to WCCC, Diane was the local Adult Education Director at Eastern Wyoming College for 13 years. She holds a bachelor's degree in business/accounting and a master's degree in applied linguistics with emphasis in ESL program management.

Alina Timofte, *Public Relations Specialist* – Alina joined the team at WCCC in September, 2019. She received her bachelor's degree in public relations and communication from Northumbria University in the United Kingdom and at the same time, she worked in Internal/External Communications, Social Media and Event Management. After graduating, Alina went on to pursue her master's degree in public communication and technology at Colorado State University where she also taught Professional and Technical Communication for several years.



Rob Dennis, *Policy Analyst* -- Rob joined the team in November, 2019. His experience incorporates 25 + years in higher education, college and career readiness, and large-scale statewide assessment. Rob recently completed three years with ACT where he had oversight of large assessment contracts in 8 states. He has previously served in admissions, recruitment, and orientation at the University of Wyoming, Boise State University, and Northern Arizona University.

Promoted staff

Nicole Anderson, *Education Programs Manager* -- Nicole has been with the WCCC since August 2014. She started at the WCCC in the Policy Analyst position in August 2014 and recently moved into the Education Programs Manager position, July 2019. Prior to WCCC, Nicole has held other positions with the State, including Disability Evaluator, Child Protection Social Worker and Juvenile Probation Officer. Nicole has also been employed with Laramie County Community College as an adjunct instructor, teaching Psychology courses. Nicole has her master's degree in industrial and organizational psychology.



Cayse Cummings, *Director of Business Operations* – Cayse has been with the State of Wyoming for 16 years. For the last 11 years, she worked as the Enrollment and Finance Auditor here at WCCC and in March 2019, she got promoted to oversee agency accounting and human resources. She attended Regis University in Colorado Springs and received bachelor degrees in accounting and business administration.