

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LOS RIOS CHANCELLOR BRICE HARRIS ANNOUNCES HIS RETIREMENT

Sacramento—Los Rios Community College District chancellor Brice Harris announced today he plans to retire at the end of August. With nearly 16 years at the helm, Harris is the longest serving chancellor in the district's history.

In a letter sent to all Los Rios employees today, Harris noted that many things are in place making it possible to transition to new leadership, "We have several years before our next accreditation, our strategic plan has been recently updated, our building program is well underway, our collective bargaining agreements are current, and our student success indicators are on a positive trajectory."

Considered one of the most respected leaders in higher education, Harris is credited with a long list of accomplishments. "His legacy can be seen everywhere you look on our campuses," said Los Rios board president Ruth Scribner. "He has done so much to increase our ability to serve more students and to significantly increase their success."

Harris successfully led the district through two local bond measures which funded the renovation and expansion of facilities at all four of the district's colleges and allowed the district to serve thousands more students. He also spearheaded the building of educational centers throughout the region, putting education close to where people live and work. Today, the district operates permanent centers in West Sacramento, Natomas, Placerville and Davis and another is under construction in Elk Grove.

He also oversaw the building and initial accreditation of the district's fourth college, Folsom Lake, which today serves nearly 9,000 students. The college is home to a regional performing arts center, Three Stages, which also was driven by Harris' vision.

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Over the past three years, Harris is credited with successfully guiding the district through one of the most difficult budget periods in California's history.

"It will be very difficult to replace Brice," said Scott Lay, executive director of the Community College League of California. "He is passionate about student success, understands the need to connect with the business community, is a visionary who is actually able to realize his vision, is an exceptional leader, and has brought tremendous respect and renown to Los Rios. You just don't find those qualities very often."

Harris has served on a host of local, state and national boards and commissions. He was the first educator to serve as president of the Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and also served as president of the Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Organization (SACTO).

"Brice has always been ahead of the curve in understanding the workforce training needs of the region," said SACTO president and CEO Barbara Hayes. "When he first came to Sacramento he recognized the need to increase the number of graduates in computer information science, electronics and engineering so he started TechForce 2000 an ambitious project designed to triple the number of Los Rios graduates in those fields—and he did it."

Harris also started HealthForce to meet the need for more nurses and healthcare workers in the region which led to a partnership with Sutter Health that greatly expanded the nursing program at Sacramento City College. HealthForce was followed by GreenForce designed to train students to enter the growing clean/green technology fields.

Harris serves on the American Council on Education (ACE) board, and was a member of the California Community College Chancellor's Office Student Success Task Force and the Community College Leagues Futures Commission. He also serves on Valley Vision's *Next Economy* project. In 2010 Harris received UCB's *Humanitarian of the Year* award and in 2011 he was honored by being named *Sacramentan of the Year* by the Sacramento Metro Chamber.

"When it's all said and done, what I am most proud of are the faculty, staff, administrators and Board members who stepped up and worked so hard to make a difference for our students," Harris said. "They deserve the credit for whatever success we have had."

The Los Rios District enrolls 85,000 students at its four colleges—American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City.

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(Editors note: Chancellor Harris' message to all employees is attached.)