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## LBCC Board Of Trustee President Doug Otto Sees A Bright Future For Students

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In August of this year, the Long Beach City College (LBCC) Board of Trustees approved the 2020 Unified Master Plan – a long-term vision for improved infrastructure and facilities that will meet academic growth, as well as proposed bond financing for both its Liberal Arts Campus (LAC) and Pacific Coast Campus (PCC). The five-member, publicly-elected board includes President Douglas Otto, Vice President Jeffrey A. Kellogg, Roberto Uranga, Mark Bowen and Dr. Thomas J. Clark.

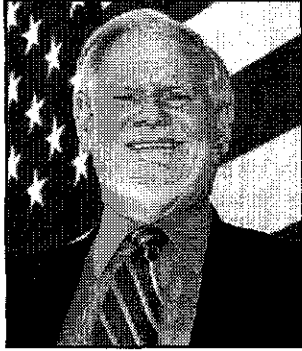
“I expect our enrollment to grow 25 percent by 2020,” Otto says. “The trustees really have two primary purposes: One is that we have an oversight role on the responsible administration of the district, and the second is to ensure student success.” According to Otto, one of the goals for the next two years is also to instill a greater sense of community.

Persistence and retention are terms Otto uses to describe LBCC’s student success strategy. When students continue each semester, they achieve what the board calls persistence. Last semester, 74 percent of the more than 26,000 students returned to LBCC. The 2020 plan anticipates meeting its proposed enrollment requirements of 27,000 at LAC and 8,700 at PCC, while maintaining a high percentage of continued student enrollment.

Equally important to persistence is retention, or preventing student dropout, since 90 percent of the incoming students are not college-ready. Rather than blame the high school system for the low percentage of students who are prepared for higher-education classes; the board has decided to “play the hand we got dealt,” Otto says. LBCC is in the process of implementing a basic skills program to help retain students, while tutors and faculty advisors are available through the campus learning resource centers.

“The difference between a community college and another higher-education institution is they admit you and say, ‘Good luck,’” Otto says. “It is our mission to ensure that students reach their goals . . . Education is the basis of any successful democracy,” Otto says.

Otto has seen several changes at LBCC since elected to the board of trustees in 2004, including a new college superintendent/president, the formation of an audit commission, the development of a new education and facilities master plan and more sophisticated goals.



“It’s all about leadership,” Otto says. “I believe we’re building an outstanding team with the president, administrators and faculty – to implement these changes.”

The board also envisions more centralized campuses for students pursuing their academic endeavors. Last semester, LAC had 50 percent enrollment, PCC had 20 percent enrollment, and the remaining 30 percent of the students were either enrolled at both campuses, taking extended education courses or meeting their requirements through other combinations. The board hopes to decrease the number of students taking courses at multiple locations by offering the same general education courses at both campuses.

“The development of tomorrow’s workplace is one of the trustees’ responsibilities,” Otto notes, adding that the economic developments of the programs are aligned with the economic needs of the community. PCC’s new Aviation and Automotive Technology Center is one way the college has matched economic need, as students completing the program can expect to secure high-wage positions in their field of choice.

The 2020 plan includes a total of 39 projects at LAC and PCC, nine of which have been completed under the current Measure E Bond Program. And with almost \$243 million in funding, the current bond meets about one-third of the approximately \$647 million of the 2020 building and facilities plan expenses.

In order to fund the additional projects outlined in the 2020 plan, the board recently approved a bond campaign that would ask taxpayers for “\$440 million to build new buildings, renovate old buildings and provide the necessary technology for the 21st century,” Otto says. The 2020 plan outlines the changes LBCC hopes to make with taxpayer money and matching state funds. The issue will go before voters in February. For more details on the 2020 Unified Master Plan, visit [www.bondprogram.lbcc.edu](http://www.bondprogram.lbcc.edu).

Otto’s experience in the academic field includes more than 15 years as a law professor and degrees from Stanford University, Columbia University, Union Theological Seminary and the University of Chicago where he earned his J.D. He continues to remain active in the Long Beach community and serves on several local boards and committees.

“The best way we measure ourselves as trustees is against our own goals that we set,” Otto says. “We started off with pretty pedestrian goals, and I’d like to think that I helped make them better.” ■