

The latest news from Luna Community College

Second Volume 4, Issue 7 April 9, 2021

Six presidential finalists named

The Luna Community College Board of Trustees named six finalists for the position of president in a special meeting last Thursday.

They are (in alphabetical order) Dr. Javier Ayala, Dr. Rod Flanigan, Dr. Edward Martinez, Dr. Benjamin Moritz, Dr. Kenneth Patterson and Dr. Christopher Villa.

Dr. Rod Flanigan withdrew his name from consideration this morning.

The national search began in January and has been under the direction of Gold Hill Associates, a community college executive search firm.

Dr. Ayala has held positions such as campus dean with the State University of New York-Monroe, vice president of instruction with Umpqua Community College and dean of career and technical education at Grossmont College in California. At Grossmont College, he established career guidance



Dr. Javier Ayala



Dr. Edward Martinez

pathways for cohorts to promote successful employment for students following graduation. In addition, he provided students with comprehensive information on wage expectation and what paths to follow for students to achieve their goals.

Dr. Martinez has served as vice president for strategic enrollment



Dr. Benjamin Moritz



Dr. Kenneth Patterson



Dr. Christopher Villa

management at New Mexico Highlands University, where he addressed retention issues by developing long-term strategies through innovation, listening,

inclusivity, collaboration, transparency and data analysis. He also is the founding director of ARMAS at Highlands, which is designed to engage and retain

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Finalists...

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students through graduation in the STEM area. He has extensive experience in grant writing and has facilitated numerous partnerships with community organizations, other colleges and universities and federal and state agencies. He has also been a faculty member in the STEM area at Highlands.

Dr. Moritz is currently the deputy director and chief academic and student services officer of the Wyoming Community College Commission. His duties include managing budgets, contributing to the strategic planning, supervising staff, conducting curriculum reviews across seven regional campuses within the system and leading cross-college program initiatives to improve access as well as outcomes. He also has teaching experience as an associate professor and Mansfield University in Pennsylvania and five years of higher education administration experience as assistant department chair, honors director and associate to the provost for faculty development.

Dr. Patterson has been interim president at Luna Community College since June 2020. Prior to this, he was Luna's vice president of instruction and student services. Over the last two decades, he has managed and evaluated full-time, part-time, adjunct and contract employees. His experience with retention program development and enrollment management extends to his work as a senior coordinator and facilitator in conjunction with the Institute of Higher Education Policy. He also has extensive experience in budget development and budget administration. He most recently led Luna Community College off probationary status from the Higher Learning Commission.

Dr. Villa recently served as president of Portland Community College Rock Creek in Portland, Ore., where he was responsible for the overall operation of the college, including the budget. At PCC, his duties included engaging with more than 35 full- and part-time faculty, staff, students and administrators in

“It was an extremely difficult decision because we had 53 quality applicants. We want to thank the search committee, especially Dr. Tomas Salazar and Briana Montano-Baca, for helping us during this process.”

Dr. Phyllis Martinez
Board of Trustees Chairwoman,
Luna Community College

developing a strategic equity student success plan for the college. The plan was based on the need for continuous program improvement through ongoing measurement of outcomes in closing achievement gaps. He was appointed to the State of Oregon Higher Education Council Coalition with the objective to increase equity in postsecondary education.

Due to the ongoing pandemic, a public forum will be held via Zoom for each finalist. Luna students, employees and members of the community can send questions to Luna prior to each forum. As part of the forum, each candidate will have up to 10 minutes for introductory remarks and about an hour to answer questions. More details on the public forums will be available later.

“It was an extremely difficult decision because we had 53 quality applicants,” said Luna BOT Chair Dr. Phyllis Martinez. “We want to thank the search committee especially Dr. Tomas Salazar and Briana Montano-Baca for helping us during this process.”

Luna Community College is the only community college in northeastern New Mexico. It is located in the lower slopes of the majestic Sangre de Cristo Mountain Range overlooking the city of Las Vegas, New Mexico. Luna Community College enjoys an outstanding reputation for its caliber of facilities, teaching methods, curricula, and dedication to excellence.

Submit questions to presidential finalists

Attention, members of the campus community and community in general:

Luna Community College Board of Trustees is asking Luna students, employees and community members to submit one to three questions to ask the six presidential finalists during Zoom forums that will be available for public view beginning on Wednesday, April 21.

Questions should be general in

relation to the presidential position and phrased so that a finalist can understand each question and formulate an answer. In addition questions should be non-biased and impersonal. Each candidate will be asked the same questions for consistency purposes.

Board of Trustees and Luna Presidential Search Liaison Briana Montano-Baca will screen questions. Please e-mail your questions to

bmontano@luna.edu by 5 p.m. on Monday, April 12. Questions will not be live.

Submitting questions does not guarantee inclusion.

The finalists are Dr. Javier Ayala, Dr. Rod Flanigan, Dr. Edward Martinez, Dr. Benjamin Moritz, Dr. Kenneth Patterson and Dr. Christopher Villa. Dr. Rod Flanigan withdrew his name from consideration this morning.

Roughing up the virus

Luna Community College nursing students complete clinical hours while helping the New Mexico Department of Health administer COVID-19 vaccinations at the former Memorial Middle School campus in Las Vegas. Luna nursing students have been assisting with shots throughout the rollout of the vaccines, gaining valuable experience while providing an important public service.



Welcome Morris Madrid and Raymond Sanchez



Luna wants to welcome Area Health Education Director Raymond Sanchez (top left) and Chief Financial Officer Morris Madrid.



Trustees deliver first pitches

Luna softball coach Steve Wallace, trustees Louise Portillos, Dianna Medrano and Dr. Phyllis Martinez, and athletic director Carl Vigil get ready for the softball home opener April 6 at New Mexico Highlands University's Cowgirl Field. The three trustees threw ceremonial first pitches to start the Rough Riders' series with Western Nebraska. (See Page 12 for additional information.)



2021 Nightingale Scholarship Winners

These twenty outstanding students will each be awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to assist them in the pursuit of their nursing degrees.

Many thanks to the New Mexico Board of Nursing for a Nurse Excellence Fund grant which allowed us to award this increased number of scholarships.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

Anita Slavens

Las Cruces
NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

Bridget Acquah-Baidoo

Las Cruces
NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

Milena F Lujan

Las Cruces
NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

Robin Carrillo Ortiz

Santa Fe
SANTA FE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Sabrina Melanie Navarro

Albuquerque
CENTRAL NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY COLLEGE
/UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Sarah Flynn

Los Lunas
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Taylor Ann Tomashot

Ranchos De Taos
NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN NURSING

Danika Blevins-Chavez

Farmington
SAN JUAN COLLEGE

Idally Velazquez

Chaparral
DOÑA ANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Josiah Martinez

Las Vegas
LUNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Mona Tina Martinez

Farmington
SAN JUAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Olivia Hernandez Jimenez

Las Cruces
DOÑA ANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Renee Aline Alford

Farmington
SAN JUAN COLLEGE

Timothy Bronn

Las Cruces
DOÑA ANA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ADVANCED DEGREE (MSN/DNP/PHD)

Francine Aline Dee

Shiprock
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Hunter Marshall

Albuquerque
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Jessica Elizabeth Altamirano

Las Cruces
GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY

Julianne Armijo

Edgewood
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Karen Nielsen

Santa Fe
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO

Naomi Lou Valles

Albuquerque
UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO



Photo of the edition, submitted by Aaron Harford, captures this 'homestead on a hill' on Hermit's Peak.



Congratulations goes out to the Staff Senate St. Patrick's Event winners. First Place Germaine Baca and Angelique Arguello; second place Jonathan Lujan, Mary Duran, Estelle Garcia, Levitt Baca, Melissa Cordova and Rochelle Mueller. Pictured are (l-r) Levitt Baca, Jonathan Lujan, Angelique Arguello and Rochelle Mueller.

Photos courtesy of Shannon Ortiz.

Join us for a special OPEN HOUSE!



Tuesday, April 20 ... 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

366 Luna Drive, Las Vegas

*** Event open to local law enforcement officers and Luna campus community.**

- See our state-of-the-art simulators in firearms and situational training and driving scenarios
- Learn more about Luna's new Law Enforcement Training Center
- Learn more about the exciting criminal justice program at Luna
- Tour the facility in small groups guided by staff; COVID-safe protocols to be used
- Ask questions about how you can benefit from the center and its nationally certified curriculum

FOR MORE INFO:

Jason Killian,
Law Enforcement
Training Center at
Luna Community
College

505-454-2551

LETC@luna.edu

366 Luna Drive
Las Vegas, N.M.
87701

Sponsored by the Law Enforcement Training Center and LCC Student Senate



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**2021-2022 FAFSA WILL COVER FALL 2021,
SPRING 2022 AND SUMMER 2022**

QUICK TIP

**USE THE IRS DATA RETRIEVAL TOOL
TO IMPORT YOUR 2019 TAXES**

LCC FINANCIAL AID OFFICE
366 LUNA DR. LAS VEGAS, NM 87701
PHONE: 505-454-2560
EMAIL: FINAID@LUNA.EDU

College Scorecard:

The U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard has the most reliable data on college costs, graduation and post-college earnings. Visit collegescorecard.ed.gov

The Luna Light is a publication of the Luna Community College Office of Public Relations. To submit story ideas or items for consideration, please e-mail Jesse Gallegos, jgallegos@luna.edu, and Dave Kavanaugh, dkavanaugh@luna.edu.

April is Community College Month!



We'd love to hear
your story.

Throughout the month of April, we invite you to join us in talking about how community college has helped you and your community. Tag your messages with #CCMonth and @CCTrustees.





Virtual Writing Workshop April 14!

Tired of all the red ink on your papers? Don't stress! The ACE will be hosting a virtual writing workshop. We will cover APA/MLA formatting and other common issues in writing. Most subjects — from Humanities, Criminal Justice, Allied Health STEM — and scholarships have some type of essay requirement, and we are here to help in any area needed.

This is a free workshop for all LCC students. Everyone is welcomed to join regardless of major or writing level; we are here for you! There are no prerequisites or requirements to attend this workshop. Simply pre-register with Ray Varela, ACE Coordinator, by calling or e-mailing at rvarela@luna.edu or 505-454-5306.

The workshop will be held at 3 p.m. **Wednesday, April 14**. Please register by **Tuesday, April 13**. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us anytime. The Academic Center for Excellence is here for you and we look forward to seeing you!

Rough Riders' Wilson honored

In his first college baseball outing, Logan Wilson learned the meaning of a long inning.

Thirteen runs allowed. One out recorded.

His next appearance, a March 21 start against Western Nebraska, was also difficult. He held the opponent to just two hits but allowed eight walks, and 11 runs scored, in two innings of work.

But Wilson's coaches and teammates at Luna Community College didn't give up on him. They patted him on the back and told him to quickly put that rough start in his rear-view mirror. They told him they knew he was better than that and encouraged him to focus on the next opportunity.

He did.

Wilson started this past Sunday's game two against McCook (Neb.) Community College, and he dominated the Indians for his second pitching win of the spring, holding them to three hits with six strikeouts over seven complete innings in a 2-0 shutout. That performance resulted in recognition as National Junior College Athletic Association Region IX Pitcher of the Week for March 22-28.

"With me, pitching has never been a physical issue," he said. "It's all mental ... (After those tough initial games), my teammates would show me that they got me. My teammates had my back. So did my coaches ... They made me believe in myself."



Catcher Milo Behrens, first baseman Dusty Sipe and closing pitcher K.T. Gearlds each spoke to Wilson and offered reassuring words: "They told me they've been in my shoes before and they told me not to let it get to me ... Milo was telling me how I need to go out and attack the new inning, and keep my mind in the game ... It was very inspirational."

Having a short memory and knowing what to hold on to and what to let go is invaluable to a pitcher in particular. Not getting too rattled by a bad game or too pumped up by a good one is something the even-keeled Wilson has been known for, and the reinforcement from his Rough Rider teammates only helped him get ready for the next one.

"Logan is a great kid and has a really bright future as long as he

continues to work hard," said Luna head coach T.C. Nusser. "Logan really competes really well and handles pressure well. One thing I like about Logan is he could have a bad game or he could have a great game, and after the game you can't tell. He handles his emotions well."

That character trait has certainly come in handy over the past year, as the Rough Riders and many others across the planet have had to cope with curveballs served up by the coronavirus pandemic. COVID-related cancellations and disruptions have meant a series of ongoing adjustments and adaptations – a strike zone that is constantly changing, to put it in baseball terms.

"Our coaches were honest with us from the beginning," Wilson said. "They told us it could be a roller coaster ride – and it has been. But they promised us they were going to fight for our season ... What they've told us is to keep working hard. Every week, it doesn't matter so much how you do. What matters is how you prepare – your thought process, every movement, every throw."

"All this COVID thing has just brought the team closer together," he said. "Our coaches say just keep giving it 110 percent."

"What my coaches have said, it's like my dad always told me: 'Baseball is life.' You learn lessons from the game and use it in a bigger way in life."

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Luna's Anahi Ruiz gets a hit during the Rough Riders' home opener April 6. Ruiz hit the game-winning home run to rally the team past Western Nebraska in game one of the series at Cowgirl Field.

Walk-off win for Riders!

Anahi Ruiz crushed a solo home run over the center field fence on the first pitch in the bottom of the seventh inning, lifting the Luna softball team to a stirring 4-3 victory over Western Nebraska.

It was the first win of the season for the team and head coach Steve Wallace, and it couldn't have been much sweeter.

The visiting Cougars took a 2-1 edge after one inning of play, and that margin held until the bottom of the fourth. Reagan Wilson and Angelica Montanez demonstrated patience in their at-bats and got on base ahead of Ruiz, who connected on a two-RBI double to put Luna in front 3-2.

Western Nebraska tied it up in the sixth, but Rough Rider pitcher Mary J. Martinez fielded a pop-up for the third out.

Neither side scored in their next two chances, and in the bottom of the seventh, Ruiz stepped up to the plate and cleanly hit the walk-off home run.

The visiting Cougars won a slugfest in game two, 12-11, after fending off a late comeback from the Riders. Absidy Ball and Ruiz both went deep for Luna in the nightcap.

The series began with a ceremonial "first pitch" — actually three, thrown by Luna trustees Dr. Phyllis Martinez, Dianna Medrano and Louise Portillos.

Wilson...

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Wilson's journey to Luna and junior college baseball from the Big Island of Hawaii, where he learned from high school coach Tony Desa in two integral years, was made possible by networking and his performance in a California showcase event. Nusser learned Wilson could throw in the 80s and it led to an offer. "I didn't really have offers, so I jumped on it," Wilson recalled. "I'm glad I did."

Saying that he hasn't been the most academically oriented student-athlete, Wilson said he is majoring in liberal arts with an interest in firefighting. He said he has appreciated the individualized attention and genuine concern his instructors have shown him and others.

"I like it," he said. "It allows me to build on those (academic) skills and also play baseball. My professors show they care about you; some will call us and make sure we're doing our stuff. Even my math teacher (Dan Gonzales) from last semester, and I'm not even in that class anymore; he has checked up on me to see how I'm doing. I think it's great."

While Las Vegas, N.M., is thousands of miles and multiple time zones away from home for Wilson, he said he took a quick liking to his adopted hometown. "I like the town," he said. "I like the whole vibe. It's like back home. The only thing is that there's no ocean."