

EDUCATION

Ph. D. Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership, University of Northern Colorado

Dissertation: Stories of university parental involvement from those not flying in helicopters: The lived experience of parents of Latina students as the first in the family attends college

Post-master's Certificate in Residential Education, University of Missouri-Columbia

M.A. Student Development in Postsecondary Education, University of Iowa

B.A. Psychology, Central College

Wales International Education Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Paradise Valley Community College

Feb 2019-present

Paradise Valley Community College (PVCC) is one of ten colleges of the Maricopa Community College District. PVCC is a comprehensive community college offering general education and transfer degrees as well as degrees and certifications in occupational fields. PVCC earned the distinction of being in the top 150 community colleges by the Aspen Institute in March 2023. PVCC is a Hispanic-Serving Institution, and offers a Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education and Special Education and a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, Accounting. PVCC serves over 10,000 students annually and has an annual budget of \$47 million.

President

July 2024-present

Interim President

Aug 2023-July 2024

Key Responsibilities

- ◆ Serve as the Chief Executive Officer for Paradise Valley Community College and am responsible for all College operations, strategic direction and planning, and creating a data-informed, positive, student-focused culture with a focus on advancing the institutional capacity to serve the region's workforce and academic needs
- ◆ Responsible for assigned district-wide initiatives under the direction of the Chancellor and serve as a member of the Chancellor's Executive Council providing leadership and strategic planning for the Maricopa Community College District
- ◆ Develop, implement, and support shared governance practices ensuring that all voices and perspectives are present in strategic decision-making processes
- ◆ Manage an annual budget of \$47 million, optimizing resource allocation across academic departments, student services, and infrastructure while maintaining a balanced budget and improving the college's financial standing
- ◆ Serve as a community partner and actively engage in the Phoenix North Valley to support the development of the region, including partnerships with the local school district, local businesses, and community and service providers
- ◆ Support the philanthropic efforts of PVCC by actively working to support the fundraising goals of the College and the Maricopa Community College District by serving as a college advocate, generating new donors and nurturing the relationship with current donors to the College

Key Accomplishments

- ◆ Ensured compliance with accreditation standards by successfully leading the Reaffirmation of Accreditation 10-year visit from the Higher Learning Commission in the Fall 2024 with no findings, demonstrating strong institutional quality and academic integrity
- ◆ Selected to participate in the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program's Unlocking Opportunity network, working to establish pathways to high value post-graduation outcomes for students
- ◆ Supported the development of Paradise Valley Community College's second bachelor's degree, Business Administration in Accounting far exceeding the initial enrollment goals with currently over 700 students pursuing this new degree
- ◆ Serve as the executive sponsor of the Maricopa College in High School Re-envisioning Task Force with the goal to ensure every high school student in the Maricopa Community College District service area has access to 12 meaningful college credits while in high school
- ◆ Supported the strategic enrollment plan that led to a 13% increase in student enrollment from Fall 2024-Fall 2025 semester and the highest fall-to-fall retention rates at 58%, showing increasingly positive enrollment patterns after the pandemic drop
- ◆ Developed innovative student strategic scheduling allowing for year-long enrollment and with student cohorts in classes that resulted in 600 new enrollments in the first year
- ◆ Conducted an internal and external college listening tour to establish the next steps for the institutional planning processes
- ◆ Enhanced the college's brand and visibility by leading strategic outreach efforts, increasing community event attendance and media coverage
- ◆ Increased college engagement and effective communication by creating a strategic communication plan to include written and in-person opportunities to share information
- ◆ Directed the successful implementation of a new shared governance structure, improving collaboration between administration, faculty, and staff
- ◆ Achieved PVCC's first-ever Title III, Strengthening Institutions Grant supporting retention and completion by focusing on additional academic support in gateway math and science courses
- ◆ Expanded academic program offerings, adding new programs in high-demand fields including an expansion of our EMT and Paramedic programs, Clinical Research Coordinator, Esports and Cybersecurity

Vice President of Student Affairs

Feb 2019-Aug 2023

Key Responsibilities

- ◆ Provided leadership, strategic planning, supervision, budget development, and oversight for all student affairs areas including Dean of Student Affairs, Dean of Enrollment Services, Welcome Center, Admissions and Records, Early College Programs, Financial Aid, Testing, Career Services, New Student Orientation, Academic Advising, Student Life and Leadership, Student Recruitment and Outreach, Intercollegiate Athletics, Disability Resource Services, and Veterans Services
- ◆ Supervised 4 direct reports and managed approximately 65 full-time, and over 30 part-time professional staff members, hourly, and student staff
- ◆ Engaged as a member of the President's Cabinet providing insight, support, and vision to all College-wide efforts
- ◆ Collaborated purposefully with the Division of Academic Affairs to develop a college-wide culture of care and mutual respect, establish effective student academic pathways, and achieve shared student success goals
- ◆ Led the student affairs efforts to ensure alignment with Higher Learning Commission standards

Vice President of Student Affairs (continued)**Key Responsibilities**

- ◆ Implemented Guided Academic Pathways at PVCC in collaboration with District-wide initiatives, including the redesign of academic advising, the formation of student-centered intervention teams within each academic area, revisioning of the first-year experience and the implementation of a new student onboarding process
- ◆ Served as the executive sponsor for the College's Engagement and Inclusion Action Plan developed with an intent to address our college culture
- ◆ Developed a culture of institutional learning and assessment
- ◆ Served as the institutional Title IX/504 compliance officer
- ◆ Provided system-wide leadership as the Chair of the Vice-President of Student Affairs Council, participating on the System-wide Bachelor's Degree Advisory Board, serving on the Legislative Agenda committee, supporting the First-Year Experience Committee, and leading presidential and vice-presidential searches across the District
- ◆ Administered budgets, monitored expenditures, and allocated resources for multiple budgets in Student Affairs totaling over \$6 million
- ◆ Investigated and responded to student complaints regarding services, programs, and college interactions
- ◆ Provided college-wide leadership for pandemic efforts to support students moving fully online mid-semester and staying online for a full academic year including moving all student services fully online in a period of two weeks ensuring uninterrupted service in all areas

Key Accomplishments

- ◆ Served as Interim Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Student Affairs during a leadership transition
- ◆ Developed the College's new Strategic Enrollment Plan within the first year and then used the teams established to navigate modifications throughout the pandemic and led efforts that increased enrollment for the first time since Spring 2020
- ◆ Developed and implemented a redesigned academic advising model that support the tenets of Guided Academic Pathways
- ◆ Supported the redesign of the College's Behavioral Intervention Team and implemented a care and conduct team to support the increased need to proactively address students' increasing basic and mental health needs
- ◆ Partnered with Academic Affairs to establish a strong partnership with the local school district including embedding advisors within the schools
- ◆ Partnered with Academic Affairs to implement the First-Year Experience course for all incoming students leading to an increase in retention of 25% for students in the course
- ◆ Supported the development of a new campus food bank and established social work services to support student basic needs
- ◆ Partnered with Academic Affairs to establish a *Show Love* campaign that institutionalized the culture of care on campus
- ◆ Supported the development of a community partnership with *Dress for Success-Phoenix* which provides career preparation and personal development and up to a week's worth of clothing for PVCC students and community members
- ◆ Developed the *Puma Commitment* which is a commitment all students, staff and faculty make to one another as members of our college community to support engaged learning and a sense of belonging
- ◆ Supported the District-wide implementation of student success technology that supports enhancing the student experience from interest through graduation

Front Range Community College**Dec 2012-Feb 2019**

Front Range Community College (FRCC) serves approximately 30,000 students and is the largest community college in Colorado. FRCC has three campuses in three counties serving both urban and suburban communities.

**Dean of Pathways and Student Success & Title III Program Director
(College-wide position)****Jan 2018-Feb 2019**

In the Fall 2017, FRCC was awarded a \$2.5 million Title III grant to continue to support our ongoing student success work. I participated in the development of this grant and was appointed by the College President to serve as the founding Dean of Pathways and Student Success and Title III Program Director. I assumed leadership for all campuses and sites in the areas of student success, retention, and completion efforts and directly reported to the President.

Key Responsibilities:

- ◆ Administered all aspects of FRCC's Title III Grant (\$2.5 million), *Building Pathways: From Connection to Completion*, ensuring that FRCC meets the grant requirements and effectively integrates grant activities with the college's overall student success efforts
- ◆ Provided primary oversight, direction, and integration of the college's student success and pathways initiatives, ensuring that the initiatives were implemented in a coherent, cohesive manner and that students have a common FRCC experience regardless of the campus
- ◆ Responsible for the professional development of faculty, part-time faculty, and staff in the development of a college-wide Pathways mindset
- ◆ Collaborated with Academic Deans and faculty to ensure that all academic programs provided students with a clear pathway for success and completion
- ◆ Developed four new positions and hired the personnel for FRCC to support the student success initiatives in the grant
- ◆ Coordinated opportunities for the college to contribute to the national conversation about student success through presentations at conferences, submission of articles, or other means as appropriate
- ◆ Integrated the college's student success and inclusion activities by ensuring that equity is integrated in all student success plans and activities college-wide
- ◆ Led the implementation of EAB Navigate, a comprehensive student success technology system
- ◆ Convened and led the Student Success Council charged with providing oversight to all initiatives
- ◆ Developed and led the internal and external communication strategy for student success initiatives in coordination with Marketing and Communications departments
- ◆ Led assessment efforts to develop, measure, monitor, and communicate metrics for student success, including interim progress measures for the Guided Academic Pathways initiatives

Key Accomplishments

- ◆ Led the redesign of our academic advising model from a primarily drop-in service focused on transactional services to a model focused on caseload management and student retention, including onboarding a team of 15 new advisors and retraining the current team
- ◆ Led implementation of a mandatory new student orientation for all students new to FRCC
- ◆ Implemented Career and Academic Communities (meta-majors) across the College and onboarded faculty liaisons for each program at each campus
- ◆ Implemented on-time registration, priority registration, and mid-semester grade reporting to support student success
- ◆ Developed a supplemental instruction program to support students in their first semester of math
- ◆ Collaborated with the Academic Deans to develop simplified academic program maps for over 200 programs

Dean of Pathways and Student Success & Title III Program Director (continued)

Key Accomplishments

- ◆ Collaborated with Academic Services to monitor student progression along the student pathway and update current academic program maps to ensure student success
- ◆ Created a college-wide student success assessment plan including key performance indicators to be used as a consistent benchmark to measure student success
- ◆ Developed and received a supplemental grant award of over \$140,000 to support financial literacy for students along their academic pathway

**Dean of Student Affairs
(Campus-based position)**

Dec 2012-Jan 2018

Front Range Community College, Larimer Campus

The Larimer Campus of FRCC serves approximately 8,600 students. As the Dean of Student Affairs, I oversaw the Division of Student Affairs on the Larimer Campus and maintained college-wide leadership responsibility in collaboration with the College Cabinet members and the Academic and Student Affairs Deans on the other campuses.

Key Responsibilities:

- ◆ Provided leadership for the following areas: Student Success, Larimer Campus Behavioral Intervention Team, Student Conduct, Admissions & Outreach, Advising, Career & Counseling Services, Student Life (Orientation, Social Justice Programming and Student Clubs and Organizations), Testing, Center for Adult Learning Programs (GED, ESL, and Adult Basic Education), Disability Support Services, Academic Support and Tutoring, Bridges to Baccalaureate Grant and provided on-site support to the campus operations for the Office of the Registrar and Financial Aid
- ◆ Supervised 11 direct reports and managed approximately 40 full-time, 20 part-time professional staff members, and hourly and student staff
- ◆ Directed the student affairs strategic enrollment management initiatives and collaborated with academic services to ensure all efforts were intentionally aligned with institutional goals
- ◆ Developed budgets, monitored expenditures, and allocated resources for multiple budgets in Student Affairs totaling over \$3 million
- ◆ Directed strategic planning for the Student Affairs Division
- ◆ Established critical partnerships with the Academic Deans to collectively best serve students
- ◆ Enhanced programmatic efforts based upon quantitative and qualitative program evaluations that assessed student satisfaction, student retention, and student graduation rates
- ◆ Directed all student conduct and grievance processes including investigations, determinations of sanctions, and coordinating judicial and grievance boards to ensure compliance with due process
- ◆ Chaired the Behavioral Intervention Team responsible for student threat assessment and effective outreach to students in crisis
- ◆ Coordinated emergency and crisis response protocol with first responders including on-campus security, local police, and mental health resources
- ◆ Investigated and responded to student complaints regarding services, programs, and college interactions
- ◆ Led the student affairs efforts to ensure alignment with Higher Learning Commission standards

Dean of Student Affairs (continued)

Key Accomplishments:

- ◆ Appointed by the College President to co-lead a college wide effort to implement Guided Academic Pathways for all students by Fall 2018
 - ◆ Led a committee with 5 work groups and over 100 members including faculty, staff, and administrators to develop the long-term vision for guided pathways
 - ◆ Initiatives included: a redesign of FRCC's advising program, implementation of meta-majors, Academic Program Maps, Supplemental Instruction, mid-semester grade checks, Priority Registration, On-time Registration, Mandatory New Student Orientation, and contextualized student success curriculum
- ◆ Facilitated the full renovation of the Student Affairs space on campus including a one-stop shop student services space, student study stations, administrative offices, and a welcome center with student-centered genius bar
- ◆ Advocated for and supported student-centered improvements including a campus food bank, counseling services, Academic Support Services, Veterans' Center, and student programming space
- ◆ Supported the redesign of Developmental Education in English and Math at FRCC with effective student affairs support
- ◆ Oversaw the implementation of the Diverse Learning Environments Survey at Front Range Community College, 2015
- ◆ Collaborated with college-wide Student Learning Committee to identify how student affairs could contribute to student learning outcomes and identified and developed assessments to document that contribution

ADDITIONAL PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director, Center for Human Enrichment

May 2008-Dec 2012

University of Northern Colorado

The University of Northern Colorado (UNC) is a public baccalaureate and graduate research university serving over 9,000 students. The Center for Human Enrichment houses the Student Support Services program and supports first-generation and low-income students in attainment of a bachelor's degree.

Graduate Assistant, Stryker Institute for Leadership Development

University of Northern Colorado, supported the implementation of a scholarship program for underrepresented women returning to college.

Bradley Learning Community Program Director

July 2002-May 2005

University of Wisconsin-Madison

The University of Wisconsin-Madison is a public-land grant research university serving a total undergraduate population of over 37,000 students. The Bradley Learning Community was a residential learning community that intentionally connected students with faculty mentors throughout their first year. This community had a strong academic learning component for students.

Residence Hall Coordinator

University of Missouri-Columbia

The University of Missouri-Columbia is a public, land-grant research university serving an undergraduate population of 23,000 students. Managed daily operations and administrative functions for three residence halls that included several learning communities and first-year student interest groups (FIGs). Served as the primary judicial officer for these communities and participated in creating a collaborative learning environment with academic partners.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT & DELIVERY EXPERIENCES

- ◆ Developed the curriculum for the Arizona State University, American Community College Course, HED 634, Spring 2025
- ◆ Supported the development of an embedded first-year experience course at PVCC in each academic program
- ◆ Facilitated the development of a coordinated first year curriculum for program participants across the areas of English Composition and Research Skills, Educational Technology and the First-Year Experience Course in the Student Support Services Program at the University of Northern Colorado
- ◆ Supervised the instructors for Educational Technology 100, English 122, English 123 and the First-Year Experience Course in the Student Support Services Program at the University of Northern Colorado
- ◆ Co-constructed the curriculum for the Bradley Roundtable experience for 200 students in a residential learning community at the University of Wisconsin-Madison
- ◆ Teaching experience including graduate and undergraduate coursework including:

Arizona State University, HED (Higher Education) 634: The American Community College, Spring 2025, Spring 2026

Northern Arizona University, CCHE 680 (Educational Leadership, Community College/Higher Education), Higher Education in the United States, Fall 2024, Fall 2025

University of Denver, HED (Higher Education) 4225, The Community College, Spring 2023

University of Colorado Denver, EDUC (Education) 5353: Leadership Practices for Responsive Change, Spring 2023, Spring 2024, Spring 2025

Arizona State University, HED (Higher Education) 620: Diversity in Higher Education, Fall 2022, Spring 2024

University of Northern Colorado, ASRM (Applied Statistics and Research Methods) 680: Introduction to Qualitative Research, Spring 2012

University of Northern Colorado ASRM (Applied Statistics and Research Methods) 688: Writing as Analysis in Qualitative Research, Spring, 2009

University of Northern Colorado's FYE 108, First Year Student Seminar

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Bradley Learning Community Roundtable

SELECTED SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY

PUBLICATIONS

- Pellish, C. & Schwartz, J. (2017). Becoming a pathways college: Lessons learned at Front Range Community College. *League Connections, League for Innovation in the Community College*, 30(10).
- Rodriguez, K. L., Schwartz, J.L., Lahman, M. K. E., Graglia, P. & Geist, M. (2011). Culturally responsive focus groups: Reframing the research experience to focus on participants. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 10(4), 400-417.
- Lahman, M.K.E., Mendoza, B.M., Rodriguez, K.L., & Schwartz, J.L. (2011). Undocumented Research Participants: Ethics and Protection in a Time of Fear. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 33(3), 304-322.
- Schwartz, J.L, Donovan, J., & Guido-DiBrito, F. (2009). Stories of Social Class: Self-identified Mexican Male College Students. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(1), 50-66.

SELECTED SCHOLARLY ACTIVITY (CONTINUED)

JURIED PRESENTATIONS

Better Humans Make Better Leaders: Being More than Chat GPT Knows, Innovations Conference, League for Innovation in the Community College, 2024

Don't Be Afraid to Leave: Elevating your Professional Career, American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) National Conference, 2023

Strong Roots: Advancing Guided Pathways while Weathering a Storm, Innovations Conference, League for Innovation in the Community College, 2021

So... You want to be a Dean of Students? NASPA IV West Conference, Wichita, KS, 2018

Becoming a Pathways College, NASPA IV West Conference, Wichita, KS, 2018

The Five Agreements of Leadership, The Chair Academy Annual International Conference, Denver, CO 2018

Becoming a Pathways College: Lessons learned at Front Range Community College, League for Innovations Learning Summit, Paradise Valley, AZ, 2017

Shifting the Conversation: Privilege and the Potential for Personal Action, NASPA IV-West, Breckenridge, CO, 2006

Male, Self-Identified Mexican Students Make Meaning of Social Class, NASPA IV-West, Breckenridge, CO, 2006

What White People Can Do About Racial Inequalities, WCPA Conference, 2004

Learning Communities: When the Rubber Meets the Road, National First Year Experience Conference, 2002, and Learning Community Conference, 2003

Being John Faculty, Top 5 Program, UMR-ACUHO Conference, 2001

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

New CEO's Lead the Charge, Panel Presentation, Executive Leadership Institute, League for Innovation, Spring 2025

Congratulations, You Got the Job! Now What? Panel Presentation, Future Presidents Institute, American Association of Community Colleges, Fall 2024

Charting the Future of Student Affairs in Arizona, Panel Presentation, Arizona NASPA Drive in Conference, Fall 2024

Navigating the Future of the Workforce, Panel Presentation, Foxfire Events, Spring 2024

Leadership Pathways-What's next for me? Panel Presentation, Colorado Community College System, 2018

Creating College Structures to Promote Student Success and Equity, Colorado Coalition for the Educational Advancement of Latinos, 2018

Women's Ways of Knowing: Building and Supporting a Professional Community, American Association of Women in Community Colleges, Rocky Mountain Chapter, 2018

Becoming a Pathways College, Elumen Webinar, 2017

Panel Discussion, Pathways Best Practices, Community College of Denver, 2017

INVITED PRESENTATIONS (CONTINUED)

Conflict Mediation, American Association of Women in Community Colleges, Rocky Mountain Chapter, 2015

Power & Privilege in the Classroom, Community College of Aurora First Year Curriculum Staff, 2012

Retention Best Practices, ACT State Organization Conference, 2010

Transformational Experiences in Learning and Leadership: Illuminating Stories of Culturally Responsive Leadership Development, UNC Diversity Colloquium, 2006

Re-authoring your story: It's your story to tell, Center for Human Enrichment, 2006

I AM a feminist, BUT...Feminist Identification among Undergraduate College Women, UNC Research Day, 2006

How Traditional-age College Women make Meaning of their "hook-up" experiences, UNC Research Day, 2006

Playing with Other Cubs: Developing your Leadership Skills on Campus, UNC Lead On Conference, 2005

Creating a Safe Zone for LGBT students on Campus, UNC Training, 2005

DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS

Stutey, D., Exploring sibling abuse: A phenomenological study of school counselors' attitudes and beliefs. (Applied Psychology and Counselor Education). Faculty Representative.

Strear, M., Forecasting an inclusive future: Accessible School Counseling Strategies to deconstruct educational heteronormativity. (Applied Psychology and Counselor Education). Faculty Representative.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SERVICE

CU Denver Leadership for Educational Equity, Higher Education Advisory Board, Member, 2021-present

Desert Foothills YMCA, Board Member 2023-present

Northeast Phoenix Neighborhood Action Alliance Committee, Member, 2021-present

Arizona State University, Leadership Alliance Board, Board Member 2022-present

Saint Mary's Food Bank, Volunteer

SELECTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

American Association of Community Colleges Future Presidents Institute, 2023

League for Innovation, Executive Leadership Institute, 2021

American Association of Community Colleges, AACC Guided Pathways Project 2018-2019

The Chair Academy International Leadership Conference, 2018

The Washington Center, National Summer Institute on Learning Communities 2018

Colorado Network of Women Leaders Academic Management Institute, 2017

Social Justice Training Institute, Summer 2014 Graduate

Social Justice Conflict Mediation certificate, 2003

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS & SERVICE

Maricopa Community College District, Linda B. Rosenthal Mentor, 2021-present

American Association of Community Colleges 2018-present
Commission on Student Success, 2019-2023, 2024-present

National Academic Advising Association, 2018-2023

American Association of Women in Community Colleges, 2013-present

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), 1998-2002, 2005-2012, 2016-2023

American College Personnel Association Member (ACPA), 1999-2009

Wisconsin College Personnel Association Member (WCPA), 2004-2005

UMR-ACUHO Member, 2000-2002

Missouri College Personnel Association (MCPA), Recording Secretary and Fall Conference Co-Chair, 2000-2002

Iowa Student Personnel Association (ISPA), Member ■■■■■

AWARDS & HONORS

Phi Theta Kappa Paragon Award for New Presidents, 2025

The Patriot Award for supporting employee participation in America's National Guard and Reserve Force,
Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2023

The National Society for Leadership and Success, Larimer Campus awardee for staff member of the year, 2015

Biz West, Northern Colorado, 40 Under 40 Honoree, 2014

Outstanding Employee Award, Front Range Community College, 2013-2014

Nu Alpha Kappa Mentor of the Year Award, ■■■■

Dean's Citation for Outstanding Dissertation, ■■■■

Dean's Citation for Excellence, ■■■■

Dr. Bernie Kinnick Scholarship for Dissertation Work in Higher Education and Student Affairs Leadership, ■■■■

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences Graduate Student of the Year, ■■■■