

ABBY LEE

August 12, 2022

Dear Selection Committee Members:

With more than 23 years of higher education leadership, I am a passionate champion of education and have dedicated my career to promoting college access, affordability, and student success. I am excited about the opportunity to highlight my skills and experience in consideration of being selected as the next **President of Dixie Technical College**.

I currently serve as Associate Vice President of College and Public Relations for Treasure Valley Community College. I started at TVCC in 1999 in public relations and have been an administrator since 2013.

I hold a master's degree in Instructional and Performance Technology from Boise State University where I honed my skills in gap analysis, performance improvement, and organizational communication. As part of this program, I developed several policy documents that served to improve board governance, fundraising training, and online education at both Eastern Oregon University and Treasure Valley Community College. I can assess the systemic impact of a problem, design and implement appropriate interventions, and effectively communicate solutions.

I will complete my PhD in Public Policy and Administration from Boise State University this year with an emphasis in education policy and board development.

Experience Summary

After reviewing the position description and desired qualifications, both my professional background and academic preparation give me a solid foundation of not only theoretical and research-based skills, but the real-world experience needed to support Dixie Technical College in the following ways:

Proven record of administrative and leadership experience at a senior executive level

As a senior administrator, I have served as the legislative liaison and led external relations for the College, working with four TVCC presidents. My responsibilities include drafting all of the legislative presentations and requests on their behalf to the legislature. I am also responsible for helping TVCC's president and the Board of Education create and implement policies that will govern and improve the college. Although my efforts span more than two decades, the following are notable highlights:

- Wrote and prepared case statements which secured legislative funding approval for TVCC's Capital Construction Projects since 1999: Go-Oregon Projects (2009), TVCC Science Center (2010), TVCC Career & Technical Education Center (2015), TVCC Nursing & Allied Health Professions Center (2017)
- Prepared TVCC's response to the State of Oregon's Education Investment Board's Achievement Compacts. These agreements gave local boards incredible flexibility in "defining success" for each performance metric, but also challenged them to create sustainable policies to not only reach the goal, but ensure that access, accountability, and other comprehensive community college goals would be met.
- Created case studies and promotional stories highlighting student successes for TVCC, the Oregon Community College Association, and legislative use.

I report directly to TVCC's president and serve on the President's Administrative Team. In addition to managing the marketing, social media, and community relations budgets at TVCC, I also oversee and supervise TVCC's Information Technology department with a budget of more than \$3 million.

In addition to my public relations and higher education experience, I am a four-term Senator in the Idaho Legislature where I currently serve as Assistant Majority Leader of that body. I have served on the Idaho Governor's Higher Education Task Force to improve communication between business and education leaders in our state. I was a key player in the effort to revise Idaho's higher education funding formula for student FTE reimbursement.

As a legislative leader and former member of the legislature's Joint Finance & Appropriation Committee (JFAC), I not only understand the process, but also the politics involved in garnering state support for budget requests. I believe this experience will be especially beneficial advocating for state resources to support Dixie Technical College and its students.

Career & Technical Education, Academic Experience

As a key administrative leader, I helped develop the strategic proposals, partnership agreements, and marketing documents for new CTE degree programs including:

- **Aviation Program** – Secured industry partnership with Silverhawk Aviation Academy to create a helicopter pilot degree at our Caldwell campus and a fixed-wing pilot degree in Ontario; reviewed agreements with a local airline to place TVCC graduates in jobs. Effort also required approval from the Veterans Administration, Northwest Commission of Colleges & Universities and industry partners.
- **Medical Assistant Program** – Met with industry partners to secure support for one-year hybrid degree program designed to allow students to work fulltime while completing their degree online with weekend labs.
- **Industrial Manufacturing & Automated Controls Program** – Created partnership agreements in support of one-year certificate and two-year degree program designed with onsite training and instruction at industry partner facilities
- **Registered Nursing Program** – Oversaw TVCC's RN program following the resignation of the Executive Director of Nursing; advocated with Oregon State Board of Nursing to ensure program remained in good standing; and helped onboard new leaders and faculty to redesign program for student success resulting in 100% student pass rate on the NCLEX.
- **Cybersecurity Program** – Secured start-up funds for equipment and community support to create a new hybrid cybersecurity degree program that can be taught online and onsite.
- **Plumbing Apprenticeships** – Revised recruiting materials, payment policies and course scheduling for non-credit two-year plumbing training program at the TVCC Caldwell Center

I have also created several online classes and workshops using both Canvas and Blackboard. I have taught academic and community education classes for both Treasure Valley Community College and Eastern Oregon University. As an adjunct instructor, I have taught Political Science and Early Childhood Education courses. I also developed and taught an introduction to grant writing series for TVCC's community education classes. As a skilled and experienced instructor, I can develop and deliver curriculum that informs and engages audiences.

Most notably, I have been involved in each of TVCC's reviews and visits from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) since 1999. I understand the need to demonstrate that course outcomes are being met as well as how to tie strategic goals to academic performance.

Successful experience in strategic planning, budgeting, long-range planning, and managing fiscal resources

I have experience leading a collaborative strategic planning process, monitoring progress, and creating accountability for the strategic plan's execution. Five years ago, I helped develop a "dashboard" tool to help guide TVCC's strategic planning. This interactive database ties each activity to one of four core themes outlined in the accreditation process. This is not simply a mirroring of activities, but rather a tangible way to ensure that every strategy, goal, and initiative is linked to the college's mission and to student success. It also provides a platform for effectively communicating progress on these efforts. Through this tool we are better able to focus on key performance indicators in each goal area and to better track progress year-to-date and identify trends.

I help craft the college's annual budget recommendations and am specifically responsible for writing the budget narrative for board approval. Early in my career at TVCC, I developed a proposal to support a major investment in technology, which required board approval of a multi-million-dollar bond issue. My ability to effectively identify what the college would gain using a cost-benefit-analysis of this investment, secured board support for the administration's recommendation. I also develop spreadsheets and pro forma documents to create budget scenarios that drive our negotiation discussions with TVCC's faculty union. As TVCC's Title III Coordinator, I was responsible for managing a \$1.8 million budget that required significant federal reporting and compliance.

My experience working on Idaho's state budget also helped build my skills in statewide budget analysis and reporting. I have 23 years of experience in making recommendations for difficult budget reductions as well as proposing strategic investments needed to grow services and programs to support student needs.

Proven record of coordinating with outside entities, such as business leaders, school boards, community leaders, other educational institutions, and local and State governments

One of my specific skill strengths is creating partnerships to secure public and private funding for new projects. I am especially proud of the following collaborations:

- Served as a founding member of the Snake River Economic Development Alliance (SREDA), an organization that exists to support economic development in Washington, Payette and Malheur Counties. I obtained office space on TVCC's campus for SREDA to tie TVCC's economic development efforts with local needs; meet with prospective businesses as they look to relocate to the region and share TVCC's educational and workforce opportunities.
- Co-Lead of Poverty to Prosperity Regional Achievement Collaborative, Oregon Education Investment Board - secured \$40,000 to begin development work on Poverty to Prosperity efforts aimed at Career & Technical Education expansion and collaboration between TVCC and three local school districts. Initial efforts focused on welding, manufacturing, and allied health programs
- Developed case statements, needs-analysis and legislative briefs submitted to the State of Oregon to secure \$3 million in matching capital construction funds for a new TVCC Science Center; wrote, designed, and produced all of the campaign collateral materials for a public gift campaign for use by the TVCC Foundation to raise the remaining \$3 million in less than 18-months; wrote the case support for TVCC's new CTE Building as well as the current Nursing & Allied Health Professions Center capital campaign.
- Developed needs-analysis for Board of Trustees and community leaders to garner support for a bond campaign to construct a new \$12 million Pullman Regional Medical Center in Pullman, Wash.
- Helped establish *Community for Classroom PAC* and served as Communication Director for Fruitland School District \$1 million bond campaign which received 70% approval vote; the bond campaign led solely by the Board failed to secure 40% approval the year before

- Prepared agreements to offer industrial manufacturing courses onsite at Simplot’s facilities in Caldwell, Idaho

In addition, serving as a trusted advisor to four TVCC presidents, I have a keen understanding of the political landscape, both at the state and federal level, as well as on a college campus. As a key member of Idaho’s legislative leadership, I have advised and worked directly with two governors and their executive leadership teams to craft and communicate significant policy efforts.

Strong communication and interpersonal skills; Ability to Create Communication Strategies and Content that Drive College Goals

As Associate Vice President of College and Public Relations, I am responsible for community relations, public information and marketing. I helped secure funding and helped implement CRM technologies (Salesforce), predictive modeling, digital marketing and social media strategies. In addition, I led the following efforts:

- Helped design and developed new recruiting events at TVCC to expose prospective students to campus; created TVCC’s first New Student Orientation (NSO)
- Oversaw development and implementation of TVCC’s new website, which included focus groups, usability testing and development of significant training resources
- Developed and published a comprehensive Recruitment and Enrollment Management Plan, tied to our strategic plan; created promotional materials and information for college fairs, admissions outreach and other recruiting events; initiated and led successful digital marketing efforts which increased enrollment in several academic programs
- Led branding study and implementation; developed comprehensive marketing campaign involving entire campus, including student leaders
- Conducted community and feasibility studies to connect community needs with marketing efforts
- Developed initial proposals to support construction of a new residence hall which increased enrollment and retention
- Co-authored successful \$1.8 million Title III Federal Grant application designed to strengthen TVCC by improving access and performance of community colleges through student interventions, new institutional research, and enhancements to gateway courses to increase student success

Empower and Support Leadership and Board of Directors

As noted above, my PhD research has been focused on community college boards, board candidacy and board effectiveness. In addition to research, I have developed board assessments for the TVCC Board of Education, planned new board member orientations, and organized professional development training. I also have experience as a member of several community boards, including the Saint Alphonsus Medical Center – Ontario Community Board. I developed and lead training on critical compliance issues including Title IX, VAWA and SaVE Act, FERPA, HIPAA, campus crime reporting, Section 504 and ADA requirements, and other important student safety efforts.

Champion Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

I helped establish TVCC’s first, formal diversity focus. I was responsible for developing community events that increased diversity awareness and opened productive discussions about topics such as sexual orientation, racism, sexual violence, drug abuse prevention, mental health and others of critical importance to our campus community. I also helped establish TVCC’s first on-campus counseling services and have worked to provide funding for mental health intervention services. I have also supported initial grant efforts and advocated for funding and support for the following TVCC projects:

- High School Equivalency Program (HEP) – a federal Migrant Education Program to assist students in obtaining their GED

- College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) supporting students from migrant or seasonal farmworkers families in earning college degrees
- STEP, STEP UP and STARS grant programs provided financial and student success resource for SNAP recipients
- Oregon Migrant Leadership Institute/Academy (OMLI/OMLA): More than 150 middle and high school students attend a week-long camp to learn leadership and college success skills
- Hispanic Health Youth Leadership Conference: TVCC hosted the regional Oregon/Idaho conference with 500 students and adults in attendance
- Collaborated to prepare case material to support TVCC's successful Title V application as a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI)

As a legislator, I have been an advocate for diversity and equity. I led sweeping reforms to Idaho's foster care system and increased funding to help support programs to benefit some of Idaho's most at-risk and vulnerable citizens. I am regarded as a pragmatic policy leader who is skilled at working across party and political lines.

A commitment to Washington County and the mission of Dixie Tech

I am not new to the mission of Dixie Tech, community colleges, or the opportunities CTE programs and hands-on skills offer students and the community. Many of my family members live in St. George. I also purchased a home in St. George last year with plans to relocate to this wonderful community, and I am excited about the potential for escalating the timeframe for a move if I am selected for this opportunity.

I know firsthand the transformative change education can bring to a family. My mother is the daughter of a coal miner, and one of 13 children; she was the first in her family to graduate from high school, attend college, and the first to earn a PhD. My father was also the first in his family to graduate from college and went on to earn an MBA. It has never been lost on me how privileged my life has been because my parents found support as first-generation college students. As an education advocate, I am always reminded of the lives and communities that will be changed every time a student succeeds.

Finally, while I love serving in the Idaho Senate, and in the Oregon community college system, I am open to new challenges.

With a solid background in Career & Technical Education programs, performance improvement, excellent communication skills, extensive experience in community college administration, legislative acumen, and a passion for education, I believe I can lead the Dixie Technical College into its next chapter of growth and excellence.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of my application.

Sincerely,

Abby Lee