

Joan C. Barram

~~1115 Foothill-De Anza~~  
~~Community College District~~

August 3, 1009

Board of Trustees  
Foothill-De Anza Community College District

Dear Trustees,

I would like to apply for appointment to fill the vacancy on the Board of Trustees. I have been involve in the district in various ways since 1987 because I see the tremendous need in the community for the education offered at FHDA, and because I am impressed with the high quality of the people and the excellence of the programs offered. Truly, people all over the country have heard about and admire the Foothill-De Anza Community College District.

These are very difficult times to be a trustee. The national economic crisis and the state budget catastrophe make planning and fiscal management very painful. The loss of an experienced and capable chancellor adds to the challenge for FHDA. But I am confident that you will not use any of the current problems as an excuse for relaxing academic standards, squelching opportunity, halting innovation, lessening diversity or slowing construction. I would like to be part of the way forward, and I think that I could become a valuable member of the team very quickly because of my past experience as a board member of the Cupertino Union School District and my years of involvement in the FHDA district. I know many of the people and programs and I am familiar with many of the issues you will face over the next few years.

Perhaps the most important task a board of trustees faces is the hiring of a chancellor. This one position of leadership in the district affects every aspect of the district's business from student success to budget, facilities, collective bargaining, and community relations. The chancellor, more than anyone, determines the culture and the future success of the district. I have been through the process of selecting a superintendent for the Cupertino school district and I know how difficult the process is, how dependent it is on positive working relationships among board members, respect for differing opinions, understanding of the role of the chancellor, and good judgment in evaluating candidates. Subsequent, on-going evaluation of the chancellor also requires careful processes and relationships.

Development of the NASA Research Park is another large and challenging issue facing the board in the next few years. I love the prospect of giving students access to programs preparing them for "clean-tech, green-tech" jobs of the future, and a community college campus which would be more accessible to many students in Sunnyvale and Mountain View. It will be important to understand every aspect of the project and its costs and benefits to FHDA as the project moves through the planning phases.

I would be committed to monitoring the Educational Master Plan implementation to ensure a diverse student body, a fully engaged faculty and staff that promotes educational excellence, and programs and services that focus on student access and student success. It is important to

maintain the wide variety of general education, degree, and certificate programs that serve needs identified by students and the community in spite of budget constraints. I would pursue all means of enhancing resources and optimizing spending. I would like to explore how trustees could be more involved in supporting the Foundation to increase fund raising. Continued implementation and oversight of projects and spending associated with Bond Measures E and C is also crucial.

Other issues are revealed in the questions you asked candidates to answer.

- How do you define and evaluate ethics in the decisions and behavior of a trustee?  
*Openness, accountability, trustworthiness*

The Board of Trustees is the body legally empowered to represent the community and to ensure that the colleges meet their educational mission. Trustees do this by adopting a mission and policies in collaboration with the faculty, staff, students and the community, and by hiring a chancellor to administer them. A trustee should be able to put aside personal agendas and vote always with the best interests of the colleges, the students and community as a guide. All decisions should be made openly and in public. A trustee must acknowledge any personal conflicts of interest and disqualify him/herself from any decision that involves an issue where he/she has a conflict of interest. After a decision is made a trustee must support the action taken by the majority. All discussion and decisions made in a closed session should be kept strictly confidential.

No individual trustee has power to make any decision or take any action apart from the board. All trustees should be well informed, familiar with people and programs at both campuses, but not an advocate for any particular program, group or individual. A trustee should not interfere in the activities or decisions of any person or group on campus and should relay any issues or concerns to the chancellor and the rest of the board members. I understand and fully support the concept that the board sets the policy and the chancellor administers the policy.

- How would you balance competing needs in a collective bargaining environment?  
*Shared governance, participatory decision-making, good faith bargaining*

FHDA has an exemplary system of shared governance and a decision-making process that includes every group in the development of the district mission. This creates an environment of trust and shared goals to take to the bargaining table. I would begin by keeping the district mission always at the top of the agenda, “providing a dynamic learning environment that fosters excellence, opportunity and innovation in meeting the educational needs of our diverse students and community.” I believe that is everyone’s goal and that a solution can be reached with cooperation and without confrontation.

Foothill and De Anza are fortunate to have an outstanding faculty and top-notch classified and administrative employees at every level. It is important to treat them all with respect and to encourage and reward their talent and accomplishments. I am impressed by and very supportive of the shared governance model that is so effectively carried out through the

Chancellor's Advisory Council and its supporting committees, as well as the Faculty Senate structure that provides leadership in instructional and professional matters.

The inadequacy and unpredictability of state funding makes every decision more difficult. I would be very careful during the whole budget process to keep the district's educational mission and priorities in mind and protect the financial stability of the district – today and into the future.

• Why did you apply for the position? How does the Foothill-De Anza trustee position fit your personal and professional goals?

*Excellence, innovation, opportunity, diversity, sustainability*

I have been interested and involved in the FHDA district for over 20 years. I know the value of Foothill and De Anza colleges to the community and I want to do whatever I can to help keep FHDA effective, innovative, and financially sound. I have dedicated much of my life to the mission of public education in California, beginning when my children were in elementary and junior high school in Sunnyvale, serving 12 years on the Cupertino School Board, and continuing with involvement in FHDA. Serving as a Director of the California School Boards Association representing Santa Clara County I was involved in instructional and governance issues, State budget negotiations, and lobbying for public education and for Santa Clara County schools.

Now, more than ever there is a need for education beyond high school for everyone. Community College is the place where every student can get an appropriate next step. It is important for the colleges to offer many options at an affordable price so that every student has an opportunity to move from high school to a good job or on to a four-year institution. Outreach to under-represented groups and support for struggling students is especially important to me.

Community colleges meet a life-long need for retraining, updating skills, changing careers, and continued learning. President Obama has said that, "In the coming years jobs requiring at least an associate degree are projected to grow twice as fast as jobs requiring no college experience. We will not fill those jobs, or keep those jobs on our shores, without the training offered by community colleges." The increased national attention and funding dedicated to community colleges makes this a particularly exciting time to be involved.

Foothill and De Anza and the district are recognized leaders in instructional excellence, participatory governance, distance learning, community partnerships and cultural sensitivity. I would like to help sustain this position of leadership for FHDA and be an advocate for community colleges locally and at the state and federal levels, reminding everyone of the educational, cultural, social and economic value of Foothill and De Anza colleges to Silicon Valley and beyond.

Sincerely,

Joan Barram

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*Resume of experience relevant to service on the Board of Trustees, Foothill-De Anza Community College District*

**Board Member, Foothill-De Anza Foundation** 2002 – 2008, President, 2005-2007, also member 1989 - 1992

**Member, Chancellor Search Committee**, 2009

**Advisory Council, Euphrat Museum of Art**, 2008-present , also member 1987-1993, President, 1989 to 1992

**Member, Foothill-De Anza "Yes on Measure C" Campaign Committee** Spring 2006

**Member, Hiring Committee** for Director, Foothill-De Anza Foundation, 2002

**Member, Hiring Committees** for Associate Directors, FHDA Foundation, 2006 & 2007

**Member, Women of Silicon Valley Donor Circle** 2005 – present

20 women donors who educate ourselves about the status and concerns of women and girls in Silicon Valley and pool our philanthropic resources to help meet their needs.

**Co-chair, Women of Silicon Valley** June 2002 –June 2005

A collaboration of the Community Foundation Silicon Valley and The Women's Foundation of CA to support leadership and philanthropy for women in Silicon Valley.

**Member, Program Committee Silicon Valley Community Foundation** 2002 – 2006

**Founding Board Member** Washington Area Women's Foundation 1996 – 2000

WAWF has raised and contributed over \$11 million to women and girls in the DC area.

**School Board Member, Cupertino Union School District** 1981 - 1993

Elected to three terms. Served as President, Vice President, and Legislative Chairman.

**Board of Directors, California School Boards Association** 1989-1993

Represented Santa Clara County and led SC County members of CSBA Delegate Assembly. Chaired the CSBA Annual Conference in 1993

#### OTHER APPLICABLE COMMUNITY BOARDS AND ACTIVITIES

**EdSource** Board of Directors 1985 to 1991 - President, 1987 to 1989

EdSource educates the public about CA school finance.

**Santa Clara County School Boards Association** Executive Board, 1984-1993

**Santa Clara County** Local Government Finance Task Force, 1984-1987

#### EDUCATION

B.S. Biology, Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois, 1965