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College of the Desert Announces New Vice President of Student Services

PALM DESERT, CA (January 21, 2026) – College of the Desert (COD) is pleased to announce the promotion of Amanda Phillips to Vice President of Student Services, effective January 2026. This appointment follows a Board of Trustees action in December, and recognizes Phillips' exceptional leadership and deep commitment to student success over her 17-year tenure at COD.

Phillips began her journey at COD in 2008 as an adjunct counselor, bringing fresh perspectives and genuine care for students to every role she has held. She served as Counselor/Coordinator for the TRIO-Student Support Services – Disability Grant and Interim Director of the Title V Hispanic Serving Institutions Grant before becoming Director of Counseling and Advising Services in 2014. In 2016, she was named Dean of Counseling Services, a position she held until this recent promotion.

"Amanda embodies the heart of what we do at College of the Desert," said COD Superintendent/President Val Martinez Garcia. "Her experiences at the college over nearly two decades recognize both her professional excellence and her unwavering dedication to creating pathways for student success."

As Vice President of Student Services, Phillips will serve as COD's Chief Student Services Officer providing direction and leadership for student services programs and staff. In addition to being responsible for recruitment and evaluation of all student services faculty and staff, she will oversee a comprehensive portfolio including Admissions and Records, Counseling, Extended Opportunities Programs and Services, Financial Aid, Student Health Services, Veterans' Center, and EDGE/pLEDGE Programs, among other critical student support areas.

"I'm honored and excited to continue serving our students in this capacity," said Phillips. "Every day on campus, I see students who are working hard to transform their lives and their families' futures. My goal is to ensure we are creating an environment where every student feels supported, valued, and empowered to reach their full potential."

Phillips holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from Randolph-Macon Woman's College and a Master of Arts Degree in Educational Counseling from the University of Redlands. Selected following a rigorous recruitment process, her appointment reflects COD's commitment to recognizing and promoting exceptional talent from within, strengthening the college's ability to serve students and the broader Coachella Valley community.