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College of the Desert Names Vice President of Administrative Services

PALM DESERT, CA (May 18, 2026) -- College of the Desert (COD) is pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Raymond "Chip" West, III, as Vice President of Administrative Services. The position guides day-to-day operations and long-term planning that directly impact student success across the district.

West has served as the Interim Vice President of Administrative Services since February 2025. During that time, he led efforts to enhance campus grounds, strengthen public safety and develop auxiliary services, including campus bookstores, the golf center and other programs.

Also, while serving in an interim capacity, Dr. West modernized the budget process by implementing training programs and closer collaboration with department heads, resulting in more accurate long-term financial projects. He also fostered the renovation of Beeps Café and an expanded menu, which has led more students and faculty to enjoy the upgraded dining options.

"There's a lot of work behind the scenes that allows our faculty and students to focus on education, and this move elevates a proven leader," said College of the Desert Superintendent/President Val Martinez Garcia. "The improvements are already putting us in a better position to help our students."

As Vice President of Administrative Services, West will also oversee the school's finances and the bond funded construction and renovation projects, including Roadrunner Motors, the Athletic Stadium and other facilities throughout the district. He assumes the permanent role effective May 18, 2026.

"College of the Desert offers one of the best education programs in all of California," said Dr. West. "I'm humbled by the opportunity to be a part of it."

To learn more, visit collegeofthedesert.edu.

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About College of the Desert

College of the Desert serves more than 20,000 students across five campuses in Palm Desert, Indio, Mecca/Thermal, Desert Hot Springs, and Palm Springs. Founded in 1958 and opened in 1962, College of the Desert is governed by the Desert Community College District Board of Trustees. Through the pEDGE program, the college offers eligible students two years of tuition-free education, removing financial barriers and expanding access to higher education in the community. College of the Desert provides the Coachella Valley with affordable degrees, certificates, and transfer pathways, offering in-demand programs that prepare workforce leaders and strengthen the local economy.