



# Newsmakers



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## New CEO



**Patricia Benson** will serve as campus chief executive officer of **CT State Community College Housatonic** in Connecticut. She previously was vice president for finance and administration at Delaware County Community College (DCCC) in Pennsylvania.

Benson's top achievements at DCCC include leading the college to financial stability through the pandemic and expanding its reach by securing bond funding for a \$66.5 million campus expansion. She aims to enhance CT State Housatonic's community engagement and collaboration, which is crucial to strengthening Housatonic's ties with local businesses, governmental agencies and nonprofits.

Benson also currently serves on the board of directors for the Delta Research and Educational Foundation, a public charity founded by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

## Retirement announcement



**Warren Nichols**, who has served as president of the **College of the Mainland** (COM) since 2017, announced that he plans to retire next summer.

Under Nichols' leadership, COM has seen significant growth and success through record enrollment, strong partnerships, new facilities and more. The Texas college recently successfully completed its decennial review and accreditation renewal. The review noted COM's "Commit to Complete," a comprehensive student success initiative designed to improve retention and graduation rates by encouraging students to set their career paths earlier.

Previously, Nichols was vice chancellor of community colleges for the Tennessee Board of Regents. Prior to that, he was president of Volunteer State Community College in Tennessee, which, under his leadership, saw record student enrollment — including expanded dual-enrollment offerings — and several significant construction projects.

Earlier in his 42-year career in community college education, Nichols was vice president for academic affairs at Darton College (Georgia) and the founding associate dean of social and behavioral sciences and public service at Montgomery College in Texas. Nichols plans to officially retire on July 31, 2025.

## Kudos



**Deborah Casey**, president of Maryland's **Wor-Wic Community College**, has been selected as a 2024-2025 Fulbright U.S. Scholar in the United States-France International Education Administrators program.

Run by the U.S. State Department, the Fulbright scholarships are fully funded opportunities for U.S. higher education administrators to participate in two-week seminars abroad to learn about other countries' higher education systems.

Casey said in a release that she aims to gain a deeper understanding of the different cultures' educational practices that could benefit her community and perhaps open doors to collaboration and exchange possibilities with colleagues and students.



**Jermaine Whirl**, president of **Augusta Technical College** in Georgia, has been honored with the Leadership Award from the Greater Augusta Black Chamber of Commerce Inc. He is one of four recipients recognized by the chamber for their continuous contributions to the community. Whirl has also received the Good Samaritan John Dewey Award from the Clifford Memorial Presbyterian Church. The award recognizes and celebrates citizens in the community who have demonstrated outstanding dedication and selfless generosity to others.



**Linda C. Young**, president of **Wallace Community College-Dothan**, will serve as chair of Leadership Alabama's board of directors for 2024-25. Leadership Alabama provides leaders with opportunities to connect, collaborate and learn about key issues affecting the state, fostering a collective effort to improve Alabama's future.

"This organization plays a significant role in shaping the future of our state by cultivating leaders who are committed to making a positive impact," said Young, who has served on the Leadership Alabama board since 2014 and on its executive committee since 2020.

**Nicole Robinson Gauthier**, executive director of the **Lone Star College Foundation**, has received the ATHENA Leadership Award. Through the award, the Conroe/Lake Conroe Chamber of Commerce partners with ATHENA International to honor local women leaders for their contributions in helping to improve the quality of lives for others while helping women attain professional goals and leadership skills.

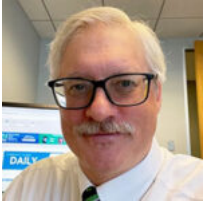
## Appointments

**Trish Gorman** will become the new dean of **Salt Lake Community College**'s Gail Miller School of Business on August 1. Over the past three decades, Gorman has developed and delivered executive business programs for Columbia Business School, Wharton Business School, London Business School, Duke University and nearly 100 other corporate and academic entities in more than 20 countries.

**Joanne Russell** has joined **Mesa Community College** (Arizona) as vice president of academic affairs. She most recently was senior vice president for academic affairs and provost at New York's Kingsborough Community College.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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