VENTURA COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Moorpark College · Oxnard College · Ventura College · District Office

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

VCCCD Associate Vice Chancellor Receives Statewide Information Technology Award
California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office honors Dan Watkins
for work updating statewide technology process

Camarillo, Calif. (March 14, 2022)—The state's 116 community colleges are accomplishing dynamic work that deserves recognition. When the Chief Information Systems Officer Association (CISOA) and the California Community College Chancellor's Office determined that the award nomination and selection process could be improved, members Dan Watkins, Associate Vice Chancellor, Information Technology, Ventura County Community College District; Chelsy Pham, San Joaquin Delta College; and Fredrick Rocha, Coast Community College District, rose to the challenge. The streamlined, standardized award process their workgroup created earned the three a California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Technology Focus Award from CISOA, a nonprofit supporting technology leadership in the state's community college system.

The annual award recognizes outstanding work that meets specific criteria: technological innovation, scope and complexity of a project, benefit to the institution and key constituents, and demonstration of excellence and professionalism.

In 2021, Watkins, Pham and Rocha formed a collaborative workgroup to develop a more approachable nomination process and judging rubric. Watkins created the updated forms and executed the technical backend work on the website to support the new process. The workgroup consistently sought feedback from CISOA membership to ensure it was equitable and workable for every college in the state.

"It's important to me that we collaborate with other colleges. We can learn from each other and support the work we are all doing on behalf of our students and employees," said Watkins, who joined VCCCD in 2018.

"The District's Information Technology department's collaborative approach benefits our state's community colleges," said VCCCD Board Chair Dianne B. McKay. "Dan is a strong leader who values partnerships and acknowledges that open communication helps our IT department and others' to be more efficient."

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Watkins led VCCCD's IT department in quickly implementing AWS (Amazon Web Services) software so employees could access their core

applications and files while they worked remotely. In 2021, the IT department received the CISOA Technology Excellence Team Award for their seamless execution of the AWS new software and sharing best practices with other California community colleges.

When the District required COVID-19 vaccinations for all students and employees to be on campus, Watkins oversaw the Healthy Return to Campus mobile app development. People coming to a Ventura County community college campus or the District Administrative Center use the app to complete a daily screening and to upload their vaccination card for verification or test results if they have a medical or religious exemption.

"Dan's statewide recognition represents the third CISOA award for VCCCD's IT department in four years. We appreciate the acknowledgment of our IT team, which is comprised of highly respected professionals who are committed to ongoing learning, sharing and excellence," said VCCCD Chancellor Greg Gillespie.

Watkins, Pham and Rocha will be presented their awards on March 21 during the 2022 CISOA Technology Summit in Ontario, Calif.

Ventura County Community College District
The Ventura County Community College District is a member of the 116-campus California Community College system and serves approximately 31,000 students annually. The District's three colleges--Moorpark, Oxnard and Ventura--offer programs in general education for degrees and certificates, transfer to four-year colleges and universities, career technical education, and provide opportunities to engage in co-curricular campus activities. For more information, please visit vcccd.edu.

Media Contact:
Patti Blair
Director, Public Affairs and Marketing
Ventura County Community College District
communications@vcccd.edu