

Excitement surrounds arrival of LTCC's next president

By Kathryn Reed

Kindred Murillo is able to identify with college students in ways many presidents aren't able to. That is as a recent student herself.

Murillo, whose contract as the next president of Lake Tahoe Community College was ratified Tuesday night, went through graduation ceremonies last weekend at Pepperdine University. She had earned her doctorate in December.



Incoming LTCC
President
Kindred
Murillo, left,
speaks May 24
with board
member Roberta
Mason.
Photo/Kathryn
Reed

After the board unanimously approved the three-year contract that takes effect July 1, applause filled the boardroom. This was much the same reaction that greeted the board's decision earlier this month to hire Murillo.

Murillo, 56, attended the May 24 meeting. The first weekend of June she will be in the area with her husband looking for a place to live. And she plans to be here full time starting June 24.

“I want to help bring people together. That is what I do well,” Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News* after the meeting. “And I want to be part of the community.”

She is moving to Tahoe from Pleasant Hill. She is currently vice chancellor for the Contra Costa Community College District based in Martinez.

Murillo has had her eye on LTCC for a while. She almost applied for the president position when Guy Lease left three years ago. She knows Lease and has heard good things about LTCC.

“It has a good reputation for being a good college, student focused, good faculty and a good community,” Murillo said.

As someone who went through the community college system at a time when she was a young mother – her son is 40 – Murillo has high praise for what these two-year institutions can provide students.

“I’m one of those people it helped,” she said of community colleges.

She is familiar with Tahoe, being an avid skier. She has a scar from ACL surgery to prove she’s been on the slopes.

One of the things that caught the board’s attention is that she wants to stay in Tahoe for a while and not use this position merely as a steppingstone.

Her current office is in a high rise and does not afford her much interaction with students. That will change at LTCC because the president’s office is in the main building of campus and requires walking through the commons area to get to

it.

Faculty and staff are practically giddy about Murillo's arrival. She received several hugs Tuesday night.

One person called her "genuine," adding that during Murillo's public forum she talked about wanting to be part of the fabric of the college.

Murillo's contract is for \$165,000 a year, includes the normal health and pension benefits, calls for \$625/month for in district travel expenses, and \$10,000 moving expenses.

This compares to Paul Killpatrick, the third president of the college and the one who did not fulfill his three-year contract, who started at \$190,000 a year. He received the same other perks, plus a \$1,000/month housing allowance. For the past year Steve Maradian has been the interim president. He leaves in a month.

Throughout Tuesday's meeting Murillo was taking notes – evening noting the June 4 softball game between students and staff/faculty.

Murillo says she wants to make sure LTCC is a focal point of the community.

"A small college in a small community is important to the economic development," Murillo said.