

Opinion: LTCC should be a 4-year college

By Kindred Murillo

This year, Lake Tahoe Community College is celebrating its 40th year of serving the Lake Tahoe Basin and surrounding communities.

In my three years working at LTCC, it is clear to me that the college is here in this beautiful location because a group of dedicated people had a vision of higher education in Tahoe, and the determination to make sure it happened. We are now at a crossroads due to changes in funding, community college priorities, and statutes. In order to respond to these challenges, the leadership of LTCC conducted a visioning of what higher education and specifically LTCC should look like by the year 2020 and beyond.



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As we get closer to unveiling this vision, we continue to develop LTCC's vital role in the sustainability of the entire Tahoe community.

The faculty, staff, and leadership of the college has been working diligently to not only meet the state mandates, but to focus on the needs and interests of our community. We have opened the college to organizations that provide our community

with recreational, cultural, and educational events, as well as serve our community needs. We have developed partnerships and coalitions to leverage the limited funding of public agencies to provide better services to our students and community. State Sen. Ted Gaines, R-Roseville, and his team have been working with the leadership of LTCC to reinstate the Good Neighbor Policy, which recognizes the entire South Lake Tahoe area as one community, regardless of state borders. The college leadership has been rightsizing the organization to reflect our change in student enrollments, funding, programs, and learning modalities.

Based on the hard work of many at the state level, we now have an opportunity to consider offering baccalaureate degrees at LTCC, thanks to Senate Bill 850. SB850 is moving through the state legislature and will come up for a hearing on April 23. I firmly believe this is one of the most important pieces of legislation in recent years to help students access and attain quality four-year degrees at an affordable price. Those of us at LTCC hope our community will support the efforts of this bill, which would provide affordable higher education in rural communities.

If you are interested in supporting state Sen. Marty Block's, D-San Diego, efforts to ensure student access to affordable and quality baccalaureate degrees, please contact my office at 530.544.4660, ext. 210 for further information.

Kindred Murillo is superintendent-president of Lake Tahoe Community College.