

LTCC hires president from within



Jeff DeFranco in January will become Lake Tahoe Community College's fifth president. Photo/Kathryn Reed

By Kathryn Reed

Jeff DeFranco will become Lake Tahoe Community College's fifth president effective Jan. 3.

He was greeted with applause and a standing ovation from the nearly 20 people at the board meeting after the announcement was made Tuesday night.

The board of trustees on Dec. 6 unanimously approved the hire. DeFranco has been the vice president of Administrative Services at the South Lake Tahoe institution since summer 2012. His contract goes to June 30, 2019. He will be making \$165,000 a year.

"I'm honored and humbled by this opportunity," DeFranco said. He spent about five minutes talking about what this job will mean to him, his immediate plans, thanking the board, those in the audience and all who work at the college.

A special thanks went to outgoing **President Kindred Murillo** for taking a chance on him. Prior to coming to LTCC, DeFranco was the director of communications and facilities at Springfield Public Schools in Oregon. The two will be working together through January, at which time Murillo will leave to be president of a community college in Southern California.

DeFranco, 39, also acknowledged the administrative team Murillo assembled, giving them all kudos for their effectiveness.

“Jeff is one of those people who will not fail,” Murillo told *Lake Tahoe News*. “He exceeded my expectations in every sense.”

It was while DeFranco was an undergraduate at CSU Chico that he figured out one day he wanted to be a college president. He was on the associated student body board and got a glimpse into the inner workings of higher education.

“I knew how much that experience changed me and I knew my ultimate goal was to be a college president one day,” DeFranco told *Lake Tahoe News*. “A number of steps led me to this.”

However, he also knew it wasn't just any college presidency that he would want. His grandfather built a cabin in Meyers in the 1960s. Tahoe has been a part of his life since he was a boy.

But it wasn't until 2010 that he discovered South Lake Tahoe had a community college – and that was a fluke. He went to get a permit that December to cut a Christmas tree. The U.S. Forest Service office is on College Way. That's how he discovered LTCC. Less than two years later he was working at LTCC.

“I wanted *this* presidency,” DeFranco stressed.

One of most important jobs in his first year to will be to fill his current position.

"My goal is to bring in somebody who is better at the job than I am," DeFranco said.

He is on a state board for people who have similar jobs as his so he has an insider's knowledge about potential candidates working in California.

DeFranco at the meeting said some of things he will be working on when his job title changes include continuing student access and success, working on accreditation, ensuring the university center thrives, and facilitating the bond.