



# BARSTOW COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Public Information Office

## News Release

**Contact:**

Maureen Stokes  
Public Information Officer  
760.252.2411, ext. 7350

**Dr. Thom Armstrong Named Barstow Community College President**

*Former Interim VP of Academic Affairs for BCC Named President of the  
Best Rural College in Southern California*



*(Barstow, Calif. – June 23, 2009)* Dr. Thom Armstrong was named the President/CEO of Barstow Community College. It is anticipated the he will start July 1, 2009.

The Board of Trustees announced its decision last night in a regular session, which concluded a nationwide search for the institution's 15th college president.

"The Board had a difficult decision to make as all candidates interviewed were highly qualified. Dr. Armstrong demonstrated the knowledge, skills and abilities that BCC needs to distinguish itself as an innovative and Green Technology leader," said Board President Phil Harris.

Located in Southern California's Mojave Desert, halfway between Los Angeles and Las Vegas on Interstate 15, Barstow Community College with an enrollment of more than 4,000 students is in a prime location to expand on the emerging technologies of the future that include solar, wind and the natural sciences.

In a statement by Armstrong upon learning of the Board's decision to hire him as their next college president, he said, "I look forward to working with the administrative team, faculty and staff at BCC to move the college forward to its next level of development in service to students and the communities it serves."

Armstrong began his 25-year community college career in 1984, when he was hired as a full-time instructor in history, political science and sociology at Palo Verde College in

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Blythe. He was subsequently tenured and served also as chair of the social sciences department. From PVC, he went to El Camino College in Torrance, where he developed and taught various courses in United States, World and British history as a tenured professor of history.

He left ECC and accepted a position as the dean of the social sciences division at Mt. Hood Community College in Gresham, Oregon, from 1993 to 1997. His division was the first to implement learning communities through a Title III grant.

From 1997 to 2004, Armstrong was vice president of instruction at Citrus College in Glendora. As the chief academic officer of a community college with 12,000 full-time equivalent students, he oversaw all educational programs, including athletics, workforce and economic development, and the Center for International Trade Development. He is proud that he helped develop one of the largest and most creative distance education programs in California, supported faculty innovation and creativity, such as technology-enhanced instruction in the classroom, and played a major role in establishing the Lifelong Center, Institute for Distance Education & Autonomous Learning, Testing Center and the Center for Innovation.

Armstrong served as superintendent/president of Copper Mountain College in Joshua Tree from 2004 to 2007. While there, he helped lead a successful general obligation bond campaign, establish and expand an RN program, established the college's first study-abroad programs, and acquired a Cooperative Title V grant.

Armstrong recently served as interim vice president of academic affairs for BCC (Sept. 2008 to May 2009) just prior to his appointment as college president.

Armstrong graduated from Portland State University with a bachelor's in history and political science, and an M.A. in history. He holds a doctorate in History from the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Armstrong is married to his wife Cheryl, who works as a part-time community college instructor, as well as the director of music for a local Presbyterian church in Yucca Valley. He has two sons: Nathan, who is involved in musical theater in the greater Los Angeles area; and Zachary, who recently graduated from Boston University and is pursuing his career as a high school English teacher. Armstrong and his wife plan to reside in Barstow.

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