Contra Costa Community College District Honors Outgoing Trustee John E. Márquez for More Than 55 Years of Service

Martinez, Calif. (Nov. 12, 2026) – The Contra Costa Community College District (4CD) Governing Board recognized outgoing Trustee John E. Márquez on Nov. 10 for his more than 55 years of service and leadership dedicated to expanding educational opportunity, supporting student success, and strengthening communities throughout Contra Costa County.

“For more than five decades, John Márquez has demonstrated a deep commitment to education, equity, and public service,” said Governing Board President Diana Honig. “He has always led with extraordinary kindness, and his leadership has helped shape our District, strengthen our communities, and transform the lives of countless students. We are proud to recognize his remarkable legacy and lasting contributions to the Contra Costa Community College District.”

Márquez's connection to 4CD began in the late 1960s when he enrolled at Contra Costa College (CCC) using the G.I. Bill after serving in the U.S. Army. As a student, he became an advocate for increasing Latino student enrollment and worked alongside college leaders to encourage more students from local high schools to pursue higher education.

During the 1970s, Márquez helped establish some of CCC's first Chicano Studies courses, contributing to programs that helped elevate Latino history, culture, and perspectives within the college curriculum. After earning his degree from San Francisco State University, he returned to the District as an instructor, teaching Spanish and serving as a part-time faculty member for more than 25 years.

"Contra Costa College changed my life," Márquez said. "I wanted to make sure other students understood that higher education could open doors for them, too."

Following his retirement from teaching in 2000, Márquez was elected to the 4CD Governing Board as the trustee for Ward 1, representing West Contra Costa County. In this capacity, he has continued to advocate for equitable access to higher education, student achievement, and strong pathways to college and career success. Throughout his tenure,

he has remained focused on ensuring students from all backgrounds have access to the resources and opportunities needed to reach their goals.

“John Márquez has dedicated so much of his life to the Contra Costa Community College District and to the community he cares about so deeply,” said Chancellor Mojdeh Mehdizadeh. “His leadership has always come from the heart and has been grounded in a steadfast commitment to opening doors for others. I have been incredibly fortunate to work alongside him, and his impact on our students, our colleges, and our communities will be felt for generations to come.”

His contributions have earned numerous honors, including being named Contra Costa County Hispanic of the Year and receiving the 2026 Future Leaders of America Latino Lifetime Achievement Award.

Márquez’s current four-year term on the Governing Board ends in December 2026, and he chose not to seek reelection. Two candidates competed to succeed him in the November 2026 General Election. As of Nov. 10, 2026, education advocate Dr. Raquel Donoso had received approximately 60% of the votes counted. She is expected to be sworn in as the trustee for Ward 1 on Monday, Dec. 14.

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The Contra Costa Community College District (4CD) is one of the largest multi-college community college districts in California. 4CD serves 1.2 million residents, and its boundaries encompass all but 48 of the 734-square-mile land area of Contra Costa County. 4CD is home to Contra Costa College in San Pablo, Diablo Valley College with campuses in Pleasant Hill and San Ramon, and Los Medanos College with campuses in Pittsburg and Brentwood. The District headquarters are located in downtown Martinez. Each college is individually accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. For more information, visit www.4cd.edu.