

April 18, 2023

Search Committee for the  
Dean of Career Technical Education position  
Monroe Community College  
1000 East Henrietta Road  
Rochester, New York 14623

Dear Members of the Search Committee:

I was pleased to find the posting for The Dean of Career Technical Education position at Monroe Community College. I served as Dean of Curriculum at MCC some time ago and my career has come full circle. I would be delighted to return to MCC in a position I know well. My work since leaving Monroe, including substantial experience working in Career Technical Education, has prepared me well to take on this role.

Let me begin by speaking directly to my qualifications for this position.

Master's Degree in an applied media technology field and a Ph.D. in higher education administration. I have more than two decades of experience in higher education including several years as a college teacher followed by many more years in community college administration.

I have worked in colleges larger and smaller than MCC providing leadership in areas including supervision, curriculum development, budget planning, grants, evaluation, and communication. I have a long track record of commitment to supporting an inclusive environment on a campus and I have led initiatives to expand diversity, equity and belonging at multiple institutions. My extensive experience in comprehensive community colleges demonstrates my deep commitment to the community college philosophy.

I am a highly effective interpersonal, small group and large-group communicator, bringing exceptional critical thinking, problem solving, team building, and mediation skills to the table.

I served for seven years as Provost and Executive Vice President for the Community College of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh. In the fall 2022, I took an early retirement option and recently I have been working with the new community college in Erie, PA helping America's newest community college establish itself. Whether building new partnerships, advancing instructional and curricular innovations, aligning curricula with industry needs, building pathways with K-12 schools or finding new ways to help people reach their goals, I find deep satisfaction in the work I do every day.

I have accomplished many things in my career thus far. I have led successful MSCHE Self Study processes and negotiated four Collective Bargaining Agreements with the American Federation of Teachers. In Pittsburgh, launched a multi-pronged recruitment and retention initiative using two new CRMs and data analytics software as well as cross-functional teams to develop college-wide strategies. I have advanced Planning and Institutional Research in the development, approval and launch of a new Strategic Plan and strengthened Dual Enrollment relationships, greatly expanding enrollment in our College in High School program. I have launched several grant programs, including a \$13 million Health Professions Opportunity Grant aimed at recruiting socio-economically disadvantaged people into stable and high paying professions. I expanded services for Military and Veteran students and work each day to make our institution stronger in service to those who have served.

I have greatly strengthened assessment activities everywhere I have been, designing and delivering exceptional assessment systems that measure results, facilitate growth and improve effectiveness. I re-launched an *Achieving the Dream* initiative focused on meeting students' needs and secured a substantial grant to develop Open Educational Resources. I am very committed to improving the learning culture of my colleges.

I am deeply committed to student success. That success depends on a continuum of engagement with all who share our student's aspirations. That begins with creating a widespread understanding of and appreciation for the college across the community. We nurture the continuum in the K-12 schools, where we offer our support, our advocacy and our talents to assist in their mission to develop our youth and facilitate their readiness for the opportunities that await them. I engage a variety of community agencies to partner on these initiatives. We engage with industry partners to ensure our programs provide our students with the knowledge and skills that their employers need and value. We build an increasingly robust student experience that promotes development, learning and engagement. We establish campus-based services to assist those about to graduate in taking their place in a meaningful career. It is exceptionally rewarding work.

I am dedicated to building a better learning environment for our students. We have worked collaboratively on improving online course offerings, on strengthening dual enrollment, on seeking out partnerships to address student wellness, on building an exceptional assessment strategy and on deepening student engagement.

I am an ardent believer in community engagement. I embrace it as the means of finding the best answer, the best way forward. I believe that the greatest possible instructional environment comes from an institution filled opportunities crafted from the network of businesses, industries, agencies and advocate -- people who are passionately dedicated to the well being of the community. I have been successful in creating those relationships in partnership with our faculty and staff. I have empowered faculty teams to drive innovation

– placing tools in the hands of those with the vision for making the college the best it can be.

I have always centered my leadership roles on the development and growth of the people with whom I work. It is exciting to discover the impressive talent I have found in every team. I am passionate about adding diversity to our team to enrich the student experience, deepen our collective understanding of our community, and exponentially improve our decision-making ability. I develop a nurturing employment environment, where excellent people know they will grow and where opportunities come from every direction. I like nothing better than to assemble an extraordinary group of people and then establish an environment that lets their talents shine.

As I mentioned at the outset, I was excited to learn of the opportunity at Monroe. I own a home in Rochester and see this opportunity to be a great opportunity to bring all that I have learned in my career back to the institution that gave me an amazing foundation early in my administrative career. It would be my great privilege to join the team of an institution of the quality and character of Monroe Community College.

If you have questions or need additional information after reviewing the accompanying documents, please feel free to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stuart T. Blacklaw", written over a thin horizontal line.

Stuart T. Blacklaw, Ph.D.