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Del Mar College names Dr. Gerald F. Napoles as new Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Community college leader brings more than 25 years of experience in student success, strategic partnerships, and institutional innovation to DMC's executive team

Del Mar College (DMC) has appointed Dr. Gerald F. Napoles as its next Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, following a national search. He will step into the role this spring, succeeding longtime DMC leader Lenora Keas, who is retiring this January.

Dr. Napoles brings more than two decades of leadership across Texas, California, and Kentucky community colleges and currently serves as Vice Chancellor of Student Success at Lone Star College in Houston. His portfolio includes systemwide initiatives in student success, enrollment services, strategic planning, technology modernization focused on collaboration and the student experience.

“Dr. Napoles brings experience and leadership that aligns with Del Mar College’s mission to elevate student success,” said Dr. Mark Escamilla, DMC President and Chief Executive Officer. “He understands the value of partnerships and innovation, and we’re excited for what that means for the Coastal Bend and beyond.”

Throughout his career, Dr. Napoles has built meaningful partnerships with K-12 school districts, economic development boards, industry, and nonprofit organizations to expand workforce training, dual credit access, transfer pathways and student support. He’s known for community-focused leadership and aligning college initiatives with regional needs.

His leadership at Lone Star College includes roles as President of the North Harris campus, Interim President at CyFair, CEO of System Office–University Park and Special Assistant to the Chancellor. Previously, he served in Kentucky as Senior Vice President of Student and Organizational Success and Vice President of Student Affairs at Southcentral Kentucky Community and Technical College.

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Dr. Napoles has served as an accreditation liaison and reviewer with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the accrediting body for both Del Mar and Lone Star College. Nationally, he served on the Board of Directors of the American Association of Community Colleges and has worked with the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development NISOD, the Center for Community College Student Engagement and Achieving the Dream, leading national organizations focused on student success and institutional excellence.

A first-generation college student, Dr. Napoles began his journey at Dallas College-Richland Campus. He holds a bachelor's degree from Sam Houston State University, a master's from the University of North Texas and a doctorate in Education Administration with a focus on community college leadership from The University of Texas at Austin. In 2024, he received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Dallas College.

Dr. Napoles will officially begin his new role at Del Mar College in early April.

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