

GOVERNOR PATRICK APPOINTS FERNANDO GARCIA AS CHAIR OF BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BOSTON – Friday, October 19, 2012 – Governor Deval Patrick today appointed experienced Southcoast businessman Fernando Garcia as Chair of the Board of Trustees at Bristol Community College.

The Governor's community college plan, supported by the Legislature and included in the FY13 budget, calls for the Governor to appoint the Chair of the Board of Trustees at each community college. This plan will create a more integrated, effective community college system that is responsive to both local and statewide employer needs by giving community colleges additional capacity to expand their efforts to provide students with high-quality, relevant educational and training programs. This plan will also help strengthen the connections between our campuses, our employers, and our workforce so that students of all ages have the opportunity to succeed.

"Our community colleges are at the center of our efforts to close the skills gap and help people get back to work in Massachusetts," said Governor Patrick. "I want to thank Mr. Garcia for his willingness to serve in this capacity and am confident that he will be a critical partner in our collective efforts to better serve our students and employers, building a stronger Commonwealth for generations to come."

Mr. Garcia has over 30 years of executive level experience in business development and management. He owned Fall River Ford for 16 years, which at its height employed 137 people in the Southcoast region and generated sales of over \$75 million annually. In 2001, Mr. Garcia was named Fall River Business Person of the Year and in 2002, was inducted into the New Bedford area Business Hall of Fame. Mr. Garcia was on the Board of Directors of the Fall River Chamber of Commerce for many years and served as the Vice Chair for the Fall River Office of Economic Development. He attended the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth where he earned a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts and Business Management. Mr. Garcia is filling the Chairmanship previously held by Jim Grady.

"I'm honored to be asked and am happy to serve as the new Chair of the Board of Trustees at Bristol Community College," said Mr. Garcia. "My objective is to work with the board, BCC's administration and all stakeholders to position BCC as the premier community college in the Commonwealth, both in terms of academic quality and success and in workforce development for the region and beyond. Ours is a story of opportunity and of providing a better quality of life for all who pass through our doors."

"Mr. Garcia is a long-time board member and advocate for the College," said John J. Sbrega, Ph.D., President of Bristol Community College. "He knows our community, and like all of our Trustees, he has a great heart for our students and a deep understanding of BCC's role in economic development. Trustee Garcia follows the outstanding leadership of outgoing Chair James Grady."

Delivering on the goals of his community college plan, Governor Patrick recently awarded community colleges a total of \$4 million in grants to support increased skill training and workforce alignment, improved student learning outcomes and efficiency measures at campuses across the Commonwealth.

These grants will give campuses the additional capacity they need to promote higher completion rates of degrees and certificates, be more responsive to the needs of local economies as well as of the state's fastest growing sectors and adopt a system-wide standard core of course offerings. Bristol Community College received \$299,994 to address college readiness, improve developmental education and increase student retention at the college.

To learn more about the Governor's community college plan visit <http://www.mass.gov/governor/agenda/education/>