



# YC DGB CHAIR DEB MCCASLAND, PROFESSOR JERALD MONAHAN ARE REGIONAL WINNERS, NATIONAL FINALISTS FOR ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES AWARDS

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For the second consecutive year, Yavapai College District Governing Board Chair Deb McCasland has been recognized nationally for her exceptional leadership and commitment to student success. The Association of Community College Trustees has bestowed on her its 2023 Trustee Leadership Award for the Pacific Region.

Last year, McCasland received the American Association of Community Colleges' Trustee of the Year award. The national honor paid tribute to her stellar leadership and her championing of YC initiatives and programs that greatly benefit individual students and the greater community.

The ACCT -- a non-profit educational organization representing elected and appointed trustees for more than 1,200 community, technical, and junior colleges in the United States and beyond -- has also recognized YC Administration of Justice Program Director and Professor Jerald Monahan for his many meaningful contributions to social justice education on and off campus. Monahan earned 2023 ACCT Faculty Member Award for the Pacific Region.

As ACCT regional honorees, McCasland and Monahan are finalists for the national award in their respective categories. The regional and national awards will be presented at the ACCT's annual leadership conference in October in Las Vegas.

ACCT's Regional Awards recognize the tremendous contributions made by trustees, chief executive officers, faculty members, and professional board staff.

"The roles and responsibilities of community colleges have increased considerably in recent years," said ACCT Chair and South Texas

College Trustee **Rose Benavidez**. “The individuals who have been selected to receive this important recognition are truly vital to their communities and regions.”

“ACCT’s member colleges and the individuals who serve them work tirelessly, often with little recognition,” said ACCT President and CEO **Jee Hang Lee**. “We are proud to shine a spotlight on some of the nation’s best public servants and professionals through our regional awards program.”

A YC alumna, McCasland is also a former longtime employee of Yavapai College, serving in a variety of roles in student services, for the YC Performing Arts Center (now known as the Jim and Linda Lee Performing Arts Center) and for the Yavapai College Foundation. She earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Northern Arizona University and has served on the YC District Governing Board since 2015, the last four as chair.

McCasland’s nomination for the prestigious ACCT Trustee Leadership award, put forward by YC President Dr. Lisa Rhine, touts her myriad community service pursuits and her advancement of key YC initiatives such as the new business baccalaureate degree, early college and tuition-free Promise programs, open educational resources, Hispanic outreach and workforce innovation, among many others. During McCasland’s tenure on the DGB, YC associate degree awards have increased by 58 percent since 2019 and student retention has increased 5 percent, also since 2019, while the college foundation’s invested assets have increased by 37 percent.

The leadership award also applauds the DGB chair for spearheading “remarkable” and successful efforts to overhaul and improve board governance.

In Monahan’s nomination, put forward by Dr. Joan Fisher, dean of YC arts and humanities and professional programs, he is described as a “dedicated educator and former law enforcement officer with a passion for empowering others.”

Monahan was the chief of police for Apache Junction, the City of Prescott and Yavapai College before taking the reins of the Administration of Justice program at YC. After graduating from Central Arizona College, he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Grand Canyon University.

Since joining the YC faculty, Monahan has advised the law and justice club, founded the Yavapai College Justice Institute and served continuously on the college’s Respect Campaign. Outside of the college, Monahan lends his time and talent to multiple regional, state and national anti-hate and anti-violence organizations such as Start by Believing, which advocates on behalf of sexual assault survivors, in the international Women’s Peace Group and in the Police2Peace movement.

Monahan’s nomination quotes multiple students who praised his teaching style and call him out as a role model, mentor and friend. “There has not been an issue or challenge that I have brought to Mr. Monahan that went unaddressed. Whether that be on an academic front, or him going the extra mile and actively caring for his students and faculty, he always figures out the best way to help anyone who needs it,” one student wrote.