

## An OCC trustee has responsibilities

Oakland Community College, a two-year public institution, is governed by a seven-member board of trustees. Two trustees will be elected June 8. They serve without salary.

Celebrating its legal 14th anniversary on election day, OCC serves 19,000 students and has a budget of about \$22 million. The board meets the last Thursday of each month in the George A. Bee Administrative Center on Oakley Road, Bloomfield Hills.

The college is accredited by the Michigan Department of Education and North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It offers academic, vocational-technical and continuing education programs.

OCC has four campus systems: Highland Lakes (opened in 1965), in Union Lake; Auburn Hills (1965), in Auburn Heights; Orchard Ridge (1967), in Farmington Hills; and the Southeast Campus System, acquired gradually and located in Oak Park and Royal Oak.

The OCC College District covers most of Oakland County, an area of 28 K-12 districts with 34 public and 18 non-public high schools.

Left: Candidates meet the public in the J Building of the Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills. (Staff photo)

## Where OCC candidates stand

### A nonpartisan voters guide

prepared by the League of Women Voters

of Oakland County in cooperation with

Observer & Eccentric Newspapers

## How the League works

The League of Women Voters is a national nonpartisan organization established in 1920 to encourage citizen participation in government. It never supports or opposes any political party or candidate. The league does support or oppose issues after careful study without regard to the stand of any party. League stands on issues are never indicated in voter guides.

This information on the candidates for two trustee posts at Oakland Community College was prepared by the League of Women Voters of Oakland County. Biographical information and answers to questions were secured by letter.

The answers are in the candidates' own words and have not been edited except for length, spelling and punctuation. An ellipsis (...) is used to indicate a candidate's reply exceeded the stated word limitation. Candidates who did not respond have "Material not available from candidate at time of printing" by their names.

Publication of these statements and opinions of candidates is solely in the interest of public service and in no way is to be construed as an endorsement by the League of Women Voters. The league takes no responsibility for any of the views or facts stated by the candidates.

All certified candidates for OCC trustee were contacted.

### The League asked:

1. Should Oakland Community College place its future emphasis on: a) traditional college courses and employment preparation or b) specialized programs for enrichment and community services? Why?

2. Should state aid be available equally to both types of programs?

3. At a time when K-12 and college enrollments are leveling off, what do you see as Oakland Community College's construction needs?

4. In choosing a new president, should the college seek to maintain its present philosophy or to change its direction?

Candidates were limited to 350 words for all questions, along with biographical information.

### The candidates replied

PETER V. TENUTO, 87 Ottawa, Pontiac.

Material not available from candidate at time of printing.

DENNIS C. ROGERS (Incumbent), 37, of 1751 Flemington, Troy. Married: Pamela. Children: Christopher, Son. President, Rogers Electric Co., Troy. Education: Dunder High School; Alton College; UM-Dearborn. BBA management and finance; WMU, MBA management; University of Cincinnati, management and regional economics. Activities: OCC board (chairperson of presidential search committee); Kiwanis; foster parent.

1. The concept of a community college differs from that of a junior college, which is traditionally oriented and even greater from a university which normally would not provide specialized community programs only to serve local needs.

Oakland Community College was chartered with the approval of the voters and taxpayers and charged with the responsibility of identifying all of the relevant needs of the college district and to provide programming to satisfy those needs.

Because of this, it would be exceedingly difficult to deny a taxpayer recently retired, experiencing a personal change that required re-training or a additional vocational guidance or a taxpayer simply desiring the opportunity for personal expression the services of OCC.

2. State aid is not available equally to all types of programs. Value judgments are made by the legislature in appropriation hearings that are in turn reflected in the determination of the amount of funds distributed to an institution. The legislature is also predominant in establishing reimbursement rates for particular educational functions performed by the individual community college.

This question, more appropriately, should be directed to the state legislature as they continue to erode the ability of the community college to be responsive to the needs of the college district.

3. Enrollment at OCC has been and continues to be increasing. Recognizing, as we did in question 2, that a community college exists to serve the entire district and has a responsibility more expansive than a traditional four-year institution, the more critical concern is the rapid growing population of the area we serve. The need

for additional programs to service the community has been well documented at the many, many study sessions and hearings that were open to the public.

4. By accepting the additional task as chairperson of the presidential search committee for OCC, I feel that in the best interests of all parties to decline answering question 4. I firmly believe that the chairperson of this committee should maintain an absolutely neutral posture concerning the presidency. Indicating a personal preference during the search proceedings may impinge upon the integrity of the committee and the process as established by the board of trustees.

SANDRA L. RITTER, 2713 Colman Dr., Pontiac. Teacher at McLean School, Detroit. Spouse: Dennis M. Children: Sarah Anne, Michael. University of Michigan '68, AB; University of Detroit '72, MA. School teacher, Detroit, 10 years of service. Affiliations: Drayton Plains Nature Center, trustee, 1977-present; Detroit Association of Women (U-M); Donelson Park Civic Association; Waterford Democratic Club.

1. A community college cannot be so specialized to exclude the needs of all residents within the district as the question would suggest. A community college owes each individual a varied curriculum. In order for OCC to fulfill the needs of the community, it will need to place emphasis on traditional college courses, employment preparation, as well as specialized programs for enrichment and community services.

2. Acknowledging that the apportionment of funds from the State of Michigan rests in the hands of the legislature, it would be very difficult for a trustee to change the current method of funding. However, I feel the board of trustees should address both programs equally and should formally ask the legislature to do the same.

3. The construction question is very important as OCC has never developed a master plan for either its academic or construction future. I do not feel that OCC should embark upon a short-sighted building program, but would encourage the board to develop a plan to better serve the present and long-term needs of the community.

4. In choosing a new president, I feel it is important to seek an alternative to the present philosophy of "cognitive teaching" (learning). I believe the college should look at as many educational philosophies as possible, select one that best fulfills the community needs, then seek out the best qualified candidate to implement that philosophy.

ROBERT L. NEWTON, 3225 Walma Drive, Orchard Lake. Resident there since 1951. Married: Patricia. Three children—one attended OCC. Banker 41 years, assistant vice-president, University of Detroit, BBA; MBA (77). American Institute of Banking; School of Banking, University of Wisconsin; Oakland University and Oakland Community College; president, Bloomfield Lions Club; executive committee, March of Dimes, Superwalk(er); scout.

1. a) The college should continue its emphasis of sound traditional college education. Increasing attention should be given to vocational-technical and career programs to meet the needs of Oakland County residents of all ages. b) Programs for enrichment and community services for adults seeking non-college programs are provided by most of our local high schools in the county. Rather than duplicate these programs, the college should supplement them with unique services where needed. For example, individualized instruction, counseling, refresher courses in English and math for students returning to school after a long absence.

2. Yes. However, some set of priorities for funding these programs is needed. Training nurses and health-related technicians is expensive, yet critically needed, and requires a higher level of financial support. Vocational-occupational programs often require lab facilities and specialized equipment. I support state aid but on a

measured funding basis for selected courses.

3. Having attended classes at the Highland Lakes campus reinforces my belief that the average age of students at the college is increasing with middle-aged men and women availing themselves of the many opportunities open to them. The college reports that enrollment is increasing among the 25-45 age group and especially among women. Oakland County will sustain continued college enrollment, according to a State Board of Education study.

Enrollment at the Royal Oak campus justifies the need for new facilities in downtown Royal Oak to replace the remodeled supermarket, etc. Many hours at Highland Lakes convinces me it's time to renovate the old hospital facility maintaining the good structures on that beautiful campus. Library facilities are critically needed. The newly opened students activities buildings have encouraged nearby residents to attend and higher enrollments should be projected. The Lamphere High School campus attendance demonstrates the demands and merits of the community college concept.

4. Under the leadership of the late president, Dr. Joseph Hill, the college has maintained a sound period of administration. I don't believe there should be any dramatic changes in the present philosophy. However, if members of the administration or faculty have "a better idea," they should be encouraged to present their thoughts to the college and the board.

MARILYN T. LEVINSON, 7411 Pebble Pointe, West Bloomfield. Widow of third man originally hired to establish OCC, the late Irving J. Levinson, provost, Highland Lakes campus. Mother of five (former students), grandmother of 11. Experienced in the financial and educational fields. Presently Realtor-associate, Durbin Co. Long-time active participant in OCC activities; regular attendee at board meetings for many years.

1. The emphasis should not be on either a) or b) but rather on a well-organized and profitably implemented program to meet the proportionate needs of both traditional courses and specialized programs. The issue is the proper priority adjustment to meet the needs of students and the community.

2. State aid for programs should be sought wherever and whenever it is available. On the surface, it might appear that it should be equally available, but at this point in time, I don't believe the "construction needs" and "leveling off" are in balance.

3. If properly anticipated, the construction needs for a "leveling off period" should have been prepared for. At this point in time, I don't believe the "construction needs" and "leveling off" are in balance.

4. A clearer identification of the "present philosophy" of the college would help to make a comment on this question. It should be evident that the new president must be a person of many strong qualities and have extensive community college experience. The nationwide search that OCC is conducting can produce such a person. Past experience should dictate to the board the type of person necessary to develop and direct the college to its greatest potential.

LILA B. JOHNSON (Incumbent), 12728 LaSalle Blvd., Huntington Woods. OCC board member since 1964; board officer eight years. Board, Berkley Council for Better Schools 20 years. Berkley school superintendent's committee for communications. Board, PTA. Professionally, director of communications for large international trade association with responsibility for developing and implementing all communications programs. Mother of four successful adults.

1. All of these, in order to fulfill the goals and purposes of a community college and serve the community well.

2. If a choice must be made in terms of state funding, top priority should be given to traditional college courses and employment preparation. However, it should be kept in mind that one person's "enrichment" may, in fact, be "employment preparation" for another. An example could be found in the arts, which some people pursue for relaxation and others as a way of making a living.

The people of Oakland County should be aware, also, that in the past, the state legislature has not appropriated a fair proportion of the state community college funds for OCC, thereby penalizing Oakland County residents.

3. Adequate facilities must be provided to house the students and programs now being carried on in makeshift, temporary quarters.

Even in a time of declining enrollments at other colleges, OCC's head count has increased, as students seek quality education at lower cost, close to home and work.

The age range is very great at OCC, so enrollments are not necessarily tied to the number of high school students graduating annually. Potential enrollees actually include the entire adult population of Oakland County, if the college continues to be responsive to their educational needs.

Modest enrollment increases are projected for the future.

During the 10 months since the previous president became incapacitated, the college has already shifted direction to some degree. Greater attention is now being paid to developing new career education programs, reinforcing the existing ones, replacing or renovating inadequate facilities, expanding public information and public awareness programs, and involving more members of the community and college staff in the decision-making process.

A new president will need excellent managerial skills and administrative leadership to build constructively on the momentum which has been started.

JOHN R. BOWKER, 40, of 1895 Ledbury Drive, Bloomfield Hills. Assistant dean, Wayne County Community College. Married, one child. Born in Detroit, lived in Oakland County nine years. BS (economics and business administration), 1959, University of Detroit; MA (guidance and student pers.), 1966, Michigan State University; completed all but dissertation for PhD in higher education, MSU.

1. I do not believe that the college must choose between the two. Using proper budget management, it is possible to offer not only traditional college courses and employment preparation but also specialized programs for enrichment and community services.

In order to reduce the cost of offering the latter type of programs, it is necessary that the college work in close cooperation with the many community organizations and agencies to provide free space so that the only cost for these programs would be the instructors' salary. In this manner, certain programs could be offered in any part of the county regardless of the proximity of an OCC campus.

2. Yes, I believe that state aid should be available to both types of programs. There might be some differentiation as to the level of state aid, but both should be considered in the state aid formula.

3. A true "community" college does not appeal only to the 18-21 age group but to the entire community of all ages and occupations. To meet the needs of these citizens, facilities should be available at strategic locations in the county. These facilities need not be newly constructed. I believe in full utilization of available community facility resources.

4. I believe that the college should continue to pursue the delivery of quality, low-cost education and training opportunities for all the citizens of Oakland County.

If there was to be any change, I would recommend expansion of career-vocational programs that addressed the needs of both the students and the county itself.