

The OCC campaign

● 4-year posts: Differences on issues

By Tim Richard
staff writer

The five-way race for one four-year term on the Oakland Community College Board of Trustees has provided more heat than any contest at the park in years.

With distinctive personalities and backgrounds, the five hopefuls are demonstrating there are far more than "two sides to a question."

In contrast, the races for two six-year posts and one two-year post are personality contests in which candidates rarely disagree with each other. All four posts will be filled June 14.

The four-year vacancy was created when trustee Richard Pappas of Troy resigned five days before the filing deadline. Here is a profile of each candidate for the vacancy, based on their answers to questions at an Oakland County women's Republican group and a reception sponsored by faculty at the OCC Orchard Ridge campus:

BARBARA J. WILLING, 32, a former OCC student and trustee, touched off the contest with her attack on President Robert F. Roelofs.

"He has steadily withdrawn board policy and maneuvers existing policy when he sees fit. His vision of responsibility is to make the board uninformed and uninterested."

"Some (board) members are loyal to him instead of being loyal to the school," said Willing.

"The press, public and students are discouraged from attending meetings."

Noting that five of the seven board members for the past two years have come from the ranks of professional educators, she said, "Educators don't make good board members."

Willing now operates a legal secretary service out of her Royal Oak

home. She was elected to the board in 1976 and lost in 1980.

RICHARD N. COREY, 48, a businessman from Farmington Hills, disagreed with Willing on one point and agreed on another.

"I had lunch with President Roelofs," Corey said. "I was surprised to see he had terrific credentials. He and I got along very nicely."

"The president knows only as much as he can physically see or hear from his underlings. Political problems do exist."

But Corey added that "the board needs a little better mix." He has worked on a campaign. "I'll tell you who votes. Educators vote. People involved with the schools vote. Educators endorse one another. Educators push one another."

As three-day-a-week executive director of the Golden Dental Plan, Corey said he has been pleased with OCC dental technician graduates he has hired. His conversation repeatedly emphasizes job training.

EDWARD PAPPAS, 34, attorney from Farmington Hills, stayed aloof from the fray.

"I'd like to be part of the team," said Pappas, whose father was president of two community colleges and whose brother was the trustee who resigned and created the vacancy.

Pappas called Willing's assessment of the president "difficult to evaluate."

"The college has stayed within its budget, and that's admirable. I'd like to help the community know more about the college."

Finances are his chief concern. He looks forward to the business sector as state aid is repeatedly cut.

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leges. And we need to work with business in the vocational-technical area to retrain persons for the robotics and computer industries," said Pappas.

HELEN N. COST, who holds a doctorate in biochemistry who now works in industry, also stayed aloof from Willing's criticism of the administration. "I don't hear anything," said Cost.

Her own interest is job training and re-training. "I've had three careers," said the former high school teacher and Chrysler materials engineer, who is now a quality assurance supervisor in logistics engineering at General Dynamics.

People need to find something different. "If there is no job, there is no opportunity." Unless Michigan has an economic turnaround, "we'll see a lot of interest in what OCC has to offer."

The Royal Oak resident is a former member of the League of Women Voters and president of a local association for the academically talented.

ILENE KOMER asked, "Why all this negativity?"

The 36-year-old Farmington Hills resident is working on a degree in computer science at OCC and feels the college needs to be better known among county residents.

"I would like to see the counseling department used more to recruit students, to attract high school seniors," she said.

The former Eastern Michigan University student said she has been "very impressed by the service (OCC) provides to the community and the fact that OCC can move so quickly to fill the educational void created by the new technologies."

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"I've been taking and taking for a half-century," he said at a recent candidates meeting. "My training is both classical and scientific. I feel I'm a Renaissance man."

Sinischo attended

ed Community Col-

lege in Milford and

completed his bachelor's degree work at Valparaiso (Ind.) University. His previous civic work was as secretary of the Southwest Dearborn Heights Civic Association.

In response to criticism from other candidates of the OCC president, Sinischo said, "I think Bob Roelofs has done a fine job. He has a low profile."

● 2-year post: A difference in style

An educator's educator and a self-styled "Renaissance man" are seeking a minority seat on the Oakland Community College Board of Trustees.

Politically, the differences between Elizabeth Hawthorne, 35, of Birmingham, and William R. Sinischo, 51, of Pleasant Ridge, appear slight. Temperamentally, the flamboyant Sinischo and the reserved Hawthorne are poles apart.

Winner on June 14 will replace OCC Trustee Gordon Henderson, who chose not to seek election to the post to which he was appointed in 1980.

Two six-year terms and a four-year vacancy are also to be filled in next week's balloting.

"IT'S AN exciting time for higher education," said Hawthorne, who has spent many years in the field.

Currently she is a doctoral candidate in educational administration at the University of Michigan. Her bachelor's degree in child study was earned at Tufts University; one master's degree in educational psychology comes from

Temple University; a second master's is in political science from the University of Michigan.

She worked last year as an intern on the long-range planning staff of Macomb County Community College.

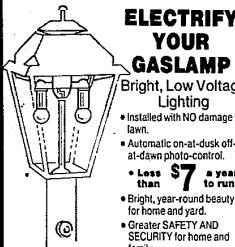
Hawthorne looks for "positive interactions with business and industry" as OCC adds vocational-technical programs.

Before moving to Michigan four years ago, she worked in political campaigns in Virginia and Pennsylvania. Locally she has been a Republican precinct delegate.

On the question of the Roelofs administration, she said:

"I'm not running to hang or praise the current administration. We need to create a dialog. The administration is to implement policy. It would be a shame if policy were made without a dialog."

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