



iLEAD SCHOOLS TO HONOR COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS CHANCELLOR DR. DIANNE VAN HOOK

California education icon to receive SCVi & iLEAD Schools' "Vision in Education" award at March 10 benefit dinner

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CASTAIC, Calif. – iLEAD Schools, a network of free, public charter schools across California and the Midwest, will honor College of the Canyons Chancellor Dr. Dianne Van Hook with its “Vision in Education” award at the Santa Clarita Valley International School’s annual benefit dinner. SCVi, iLEAD’s founding school, will celebrate its tenth year of operation at the event, which will be held March 10, 2018 at the SCVi campus, 28060 Hasley Canyon Road in Castaic.

The award recognizes a community leader who has made significant contributions to public education and has demonstrated extraordinary vision and dedication in supporting and expanding educational opportunities.

As Chief Executive Officer of the Santa Clarita Community College District, a post she has held since 1988, Dr. Van Hook has increased district revenue, recruited and retained top-notch faculty and staff, expanded educational programming and offerings, and made significant capital facilities and infrastructure improvements district-wide, which together have increased the college’s ability to serve the community.

Throughout a career in California higher education that spans more than 40 years, she is credited with establishing programs that have significantly expanded access to higher education for students. At Santa Ana College, she launched the New Horizons program for re-entering students, which has since been replicated at 60 colleges throughout California. The University Center at College of the Canyons, which is named in her honor, makes more than 40 advanced degrees and credentials from four-year universities available in the Santa Clarita Valley.

When she started at College of the Canyons, Dr. Van Hook was 37 years old and the youngest person ever appointed as a California community college CEO. She was also one of only five women in the job (of 70 statewide) at that time.

“Dr. Van Hook has been a vibrant champion of the kind of work we are doing at SCVi, and she sets an incredible example for our students of what vision, determination, and an



entrepreneurial spirit can achieve,” said Amber Raskin, co-founder and CEO of iLEAD Schools. “Her selfless, fearless leadership makes her a natural fit for our Vision in Education award, and we couldn’t be more pleased to honor her at our benefit dinner as we celebrate iLEAD Schools’ tenth anniversary.”

A graduate of California State University, Long Beach, Dr. Van Hook’s early career experience includes working as an elementary and junior high school teacher, as an instructor at Long Beach City College, and as a counselor at Cerritos College and Santa Ana College. Before coming to College of the Canyons, she held positions at Feather River College and Lake Tahoe Community College.

Improving college affordability is among Dr. Van Hook’s top priorities. College of the Canyons has led the way in developing online educational resources (OER) – free, electronic educational materials that may be used in place of traditional textbooks – which save students \$3 million per year in textbook costs. COC is also among the first community colleges in California to develop and offer accelerated math and English classes, and implement innovative math and English placement methods, both of which help students bypass remedial classes and save \$1.6 million annually in tuition costs at COC alone. College of the Canyons recently launched First-Year Promise, which enabled more than 250 students to attend their first year of college tuition-free.

Dr. Van Hook holds a B.A. in Sociology from CSULB and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of La Verne. She has been inducted into the Long Beach Community College Alumni Hall of Fame, is a Distinguished Alumna of CSULB, and has been named one of the University of La Verne’s top 75 graduates. She is currently a member of the California Economic Development Program Advisory Committee, has held positions on dozens of statewide commissions, and has served as the president of statewide organizations including the Community College League of California Board of Directors, CEOs of the California Community Colleges, and the Association of California Community College Administrators.

For more information about iLEAD’s benefit dinner honoring Dr. Dianne Van Hook, contact Charlene Spiteri at (661) 888-1954 or visit <https://visionineducation.org/scvi/>.

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