



MEMORANDUM

TO: College Community

FROM: Jeanette Peña, Chair, Board of Trustees
Vincent Lombardo, Co-Chair, Presidential Search Advisory Committee
Harold Stahl, Co-Chair, Presidential Search Advisory Committee

DATE: September 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Presidential Search Update and Open Forum

On behalf of the Hudson County Community College (HCCC) Board of Trustees, I am pleased to provide an update on the search for the College's next President.

At its August 2026 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the appointment of RPA Inc. to assist HCCC in conducting a comprehensive national search for the College's next President. RPA Inc. is a nationally recognized comprehensive executive search and consulting firm. Throughout its 38 years in business, RPA Inc. has established a record of success in recruitment and search facilitation for institutions of higher education nationwide, and it's dedicated to the philosophy that recruitment is an opportunity to impact an institution's future. Their objective is to develop a full understanding of the College's needs and to identify and engage the professionals whose skill sets, values, and personal characteristics most closely match those criteria.

Dana John Cohick and Amy O'Donnell of RPA will serve as the lead consultants for the search. RPA will assist the College throughout the process, including developing the advertisement and prospectus, conducting outreach and recruiting highly qualified candidates, and supporting the work of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee.

Presidential Search Advisory Committee

The Board of Trustees has finalized the membership of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee. The Committee will be co-chaired by HCCC Trustees Vincent Lombardo and Harold Stahl.

Committee Members:

Dr. Sirhan Abdullah
HCCC Faculty Member and
President of the Professional Association

Marta Cimillo
Administrative Support Specialist
Recording Secretary for the HCCC Support Staff Federation (AFT)

Dr. Lisa Dougherty
HCCC College Administrator and
Interim President

Dr. Norma Fernandez

Community Member

Jersey City Board of Education Superintendent

Diana Galvez

HCCC College Administrator (NHC) and

HCCC Alumna

Emily Martinez Pena

President, Student Government Association

Steve Mullen

HCCC Foundation

Jeanette Peña

HCCC Chair of the Board of Trustees

Hamza Saleem

HCCC College Administrator and

HCCC Alumnus

Dr. Burl Yearwood

HCCC College Administrator and

Dean of STEM

Dr. Benny Youssef

HCCC Faculty Member and

Chair of the All-College Council

Veronica Zeichner

HCCC College Administrator and CFO

Support for the Committee: Alexa Riano and Janet Chavez

Consultants to Committee: Joel Bloom and Nicholas Chiaravalloti

HR Support: Robert DiMartino

The Presidential Search Advisory Committee will play an important role in the search process. The Committee will review applications, participate in candidate interviews, and recommend finalists for consideration by the HCCC Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for selecting and appointing the next President of Hudson County Community College.

Your Voice in the Search

An essential early step in the presidential search process is developing a Presidential Prospectus that reflects the needs, aspirations, opportunities, and challenges of HCCC and the community we serve.

On September 28, RPA will conduct a College-Wide Town Hall and several other meetings to provide members of the College community and the public with opportunities to participate in a wide-ranging discussion about the qualities, characteristics, experience, and qualifications we should seek in HCCC's next President, as well as the opportunities and challenges the College may face in the years ahead.

Presidential Search Town Hall
Date: Monday, September 28
Time: 10:30 am
Location: Scott Ring Room and Via [WebEx](#)

We strongly encourage members of the HCCC community to participate in these conversations. Your perspectives will be invaluable in helping shape the Presidential Profile and informing this important search.

Commitment to the Search Process

The HCCC Board of Trustees is committed to conducting a fair, inclusive, and comprehensive search that attracts an exceptional and diverse pool of highly qualified candidates. An important component of a successful presidential search is maintaining appropriate confidentiality throughout the process. We ask all members of the College community to respect the confidentiality of candidates and the Search Advisory Committee's work.

Regular updates on the presidential search, including opportunities for community participation and key milestones, will be shared on the HCCC website and through College communications.

This is an exciting and consequential moment for Hudson County Community College. The selection of our next President will help shape the future of HCCC and our service to the students and communities of Hudson County for years to come. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, thank you for your participation, engagement, and continued commitment to the College.