

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Santa Barbara City College Foundation Welcomes New Members to its Board of Directors

SANTA BARBARA, CA – The SBCC Foundation recently welcomed four new members to its board of directors: directors at large **Laurie Ashton, J.D., Sarah de Tagyos, Michelle Lee Pickett, J.D.**, and ex officio member/Associated Student Government representative **Alexandra Montes de Oca**. The SBCC Foundation board of directors provides strategic leadership to the Foundation. The board is currently comprised of 13 community leaders who serve voluntarily and 6 ex officio members who serve by virtue of their leadership position at the college. **Nicholas “Scott” Vincent**, who has served on the board for five years, has been elected president for the 2019-2020 fiscal year.

Laurie Ashton, J.D.

Laurie Ashton is an Attorney and is Of Counsel to Keller Rohrback. Early in her career, as an Adjunct Professor, she taught semester courses in Lawyering Theory and Practice and Advanced Business Reorganizations.

An important part of Laurie’s international work involves the domestic and international legal implications of treaty obligations and breaches. She is a member of the international legal team that represented the Marshall Islands at the International Court of Justice in The Hague. For its work, the team was nominated by the International Peace Bureau for the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize, along with the former Foreign Minister, Tony deBrum.



Laurie served on the Ethics Committee of the State Bar of Arizona for six years. She was the coauthor of a textbook on limited liability companies and partnerships, published by West, and she is AV Preeminent rated by Martindale.

Laurie is frequently interviewed and has been cited by Reuters, Newsweek, Fox News, Huffington Post, Slate Magazine, Radio New Zealand, Radio Australia, and others. She currently serves as a Trustee of the Santa Barbara Foundation and a member of the Human Rights Watch

Council in Santa Barbara, and is a former Director of the Global Justice Center in New York, which advances human rights pursuant to various international laws, including the Geneva and Genocide Conventions, as well as customary international law.

Sarah de Tagyos

An Iowa native, Sarah spent most of her 30-year career with AT&T in New York and New Jersey. She served as Executive Director of the AT&T Foundation – the company’s philanthropic arm responsible for distributing \$40 million annually in company grants and equipment – and as Chief Operating Officer for AT&T’s 300-person global Public Relations division. She served on national nonprofit boards including the Advertising Council and the Council on Foundations.



Since retiring and moving to Santa Barbara in 2000, Sarah has been active in several local nonprofits – most significantly the Women’s Fund of Santa Barbara where she has served since 2005 in leadership roles ranging from steering chair to chair of research, membership and communications committees. Now a sustainer in the Assistance League of Santa Barbara, Sarah served on their board, holding several leadership positions including oversight of the organization’s 14 philanthropic programs. She served as board secretary for The Children’s Project Academy Foundation. She was a mentor for the Katherine Harvey Fellows program and a member of the Santa Barbara Foundation’s Philanthropic Services Committee. She also served as a docent at the Santa Barbara Botanic Gardens. In 2010, the Junior League of Santa Barbara named her their Woman of the Year.

Sarah has a journalism degree from the University of Iowa. She and her husband Peter enjoy three grown sons and their families (in San Diego, Atlanta and Chicago) including five grandchildren.

Michelle Lee Pickett, J.D.

Michelle Pickett is an experienced transactional attorney and a trusted advisor to corporations, partnerships and nonprofits. Michelle counsels her clients on matters related to mergers and acquisitions, private equity, and corporate, business and tax law.

Ranging from individual investors to start-up and established companies, Michelle’s clients operate in various industries, including water, beverage, agriculture, technology, gaming and entertainment. She combines her business, accounting and legal acumen to structure and implement strategies that maximize her clients’ business objectives, and provides guidance as her clients address operational and governance matters.



In the water sector, Michelle adds her corporate knowledge and transactional experience to the firm's representation of mutual water companies, public-private partnerships and developers as they navigate the complex and ever-changing landscape of water use and management.

Michelle also works closely with for-profit gaming companies and tribal entities on transactional matters. Her experience focuses on negotiating consulting, pre-development, development and management agreements, and ongoing operational and contractual matters.

Actively engaged in providing legal services to the philanthropic sector, Michelle counsels a wide spectrum of nonprofits including large international organizations, as well as high net worth individuals and celebrities in structuring, forming and operating public charities and private foundations. She leverages her business experience to provide these organizations with best practices for continued governance and operational efficiency.

Alexandra Montes de Oca

Alexandra is a third-year student at Santa Barbara City College and a declared neuroscience major with the goal of transferring to the University of California Santa Barbara to pursue a bachelor's degree in biopsychology. She hopes to continue on in the field of neuroscience and eventually obtain a doctorate degree.

Alexandra has been living Santa Barbara for a little over five years after moving from her hometown in East Los Angeles, and is still in awe of the beauty of Santa Barbara and the friendliness of the community. She is currently in her first term as SBCC's Associated Student Government (ASG) President and is in her second term as co-president of the Neuroscience Club (aka "the NeuroClub"). Her goals as ASG President are to emphasize belongingness, equity, and positive mental health. In her term, she hopes to address issues such as food and housing insecurity as well as creating a stronger bridge between the school administrators and the student body.



As the NeuroClub co-president, one of Alexandra's goals is to create connections between the club and the community, showing students possible avenues in the field of neuroscience post-graduation, and creating internships, volunteer, and job opportunities while still at SBCC.

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About the SBCC Foundation

The SBCC Foundation has provided Santa Barbara City College with private philanthropic support since 1976, serving as the vehicle through which individuals and organizations may invest in the college and its students.

As an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization and partner to SBCC, the SBCC Foundation awards more than \$5 million annually for student success programs, scholarships, book grants, emergency funds, and other critical needs of the college. For more than four decades, the resources raised and managed by the SBCC Foundation have supported SBCC students as they prepare for careers, transfer to four-year universities, and pursue lifelong learning goals.

In 2016, the Foundation launched the SBCC Promise, offering all local high school graduates the opportunity to attend SBCC full-time at no cost. The SBCC Promise relies entirely on private support and covers all required fees, books, and supplies for up to two years. To date, more than 3,000 local students have participated in the SBCC Promise. By removing financial barriers, the SBCC Promise ensures that SBCC's life-changing educational programs are fully accessible to all local students.

For more information, visit <http://www.sbccfoundation.org>