

CSN Subject Matter: Campus Vice Presidents

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Meghin Delaney: Welcome to this week's edition of CSN Subject Matter, the College of Southern Nevada's weekly radio program in conjunction with KNPR. I'm your host Meghin Delaney, from CSN's communications office. CSN is Nevada's largest and most diverse higher education institution so naturally we got plenty of great stories to share.

Today I'll talk with our three campus vice presidents and provosts, Patty Charlton on the Henderson Campus, Clariss Cota on the North Las Vegas campus and Sonya Pearson on our Charleston Campus. These positions are relatively new to CSN, Patty piloted the program last year, you'll hear more from our VPs directly but these new positions are really aimed at helping our students succeed at CSN no matter what class or campus they're on.

As always, you can learn more about CSN by visiting csn.edu. We look forward to helping you succeed, and now onto today's show.

Meghin Delaney: Hi Patty, can you introduce yourself to your audience, a little bit of who you are and what you do for CSN?

Patty Charlton: Sure, my name is Patty Charlton and as you mentioned Meghin, I'm the vice president and provost at the Henderson Campus. I actually came to the CSN as a student 34 years ago, graduated from CSN, went on to UNLV, completed a bachelor's degree and a master's degree, I'm finishing up my PhD at this time. I came back to work twenty-four years ago so very exciting time and what a wonderful place to be connected to the college that really has made such a big difference in my life.

Meghin Delaney: I always like to ask folks to take us sort of through their educational journey and how it got them here, so you mentioned that a little bit here, but can you take us through I guess your work history at CSN, what did you start doing and how did that lead you to where you are now for?

Patty Charlton: So I started as I mentioned 24 years ago, September 1, 1995, is my anniversary date. I actually started as an administrative assistant for the finance and administration Vice President at the time. I was finishing up my bachelor's degree after having an amazing experience here at CSN in my associates program. I had an amazing opportunity, was at the right place, I think, at the right time as the valley was growing, the college was growing, and I soon became the budget manager, the budget director, the associate vice president for finance and administration, became the Vice President of Finance and Administration, served for a number of years as a Senior Vice President of Strategic Initiatives and Administration and then when this opportunity came up with his new multi-campus district model, the opportunity to come home to where I started my school at the Henderson Campus just I could not pass that up.

Meghin Delaney: When you took on this position in the 2018-19 year you were that the pilot program on the Henderson Campus, so can you tell us a little bit about how you understand that role and how it works?

Patty Charlton: Sure so the campus Vice President & Provost is really the key stakeholder at that campus and not just the campus, but the entire service area because CSN is not just limited to our three campuses we have a number of learning centers and sites spread all throughout Southern

Nevada. We're really responsible for all of the education opportunities, not just at the traditional college level, but also with our partnerships with K-12 throughout all of Southern Nevada. That's a very, very big area. So for me coming to the Henderson Campus I wanted needed to ensure because they're really had not been that kind of centered leadership at the campus, but really to work with faculty, work with students on a daily basis to make sure that we're meeting their goals, their expectations, helping them to build a pathway for student success but also being that key stakeholder to engage with our communities.

Having lived in Henderson for close to forty years, it's pretty unique for me because I also get to work with the city of Henderson, Boulder City, and other community organizations spread throughout that service area to make sure that the college is serving their needs, looking ahead at they're heading from a city, from an organization, where students need to have their education in line and so a lot of time has been spent working with the city, working with stakeholders, working with K12 and helping our students on a daily basis.

Meghin Delaney: Since you are in the Henderson campus, I was hoping you could tell us a little bit more about some of the specialized academics and programming that are on your campus? I know there's one exciting building that opens this year, you have another one in the works, so tell us a little bit about your campus specifically?

Patty Charlton: So the Henderson Campus is actually, our second oldest campus and many people don't know that. It was started in 1981 and actually, it's the same building that I went to when I started and we've got the same library that was there when I was a student but that's what's really exciting about where we're heading. So the Henderson campus also has a pretty significant K12 engagement and so we have a number of students that are coming to CSN to get not just college experience and educational classes, they're also attending high school at the very same time. So we're a little bit untraditional model, we've got about 44 percent of all of our students are full-time, which is a little different in a community college environment.

We've got a welding program that was just modified and expanded through generous support from the state legislature. We have an aviation program which many people don't know and a huge compliment of general education classes as well as the UAB program, the unmanned aerial program, is housed at Henderson Campus. It's kind of fun to watch them flying around any time of the week or on Saturdays, you know it. We're very excited because we got the Student Union that is one of three student unions opening at the Henderson campus and this is an amazing, amazing facility supported and fully developed by our students and for our students.

Then following right after that, we're very, very fortunate that the legislature provided money for a new Health and Sciences building and this is really important for Henderson. We have a growing healthcare field that's exploding, we've got that Union Village project which is the first-of-its-kind, an integrated Healthcare model. We've got hospitals obviously sprouting up all over, and healthcare is so important to the Southern Nevada. So we're going to have the opportunity for students to come to Henderson, take those classes, and pursue in those fields that we need so very desperately.

Meghin Delaney: And I think one of the college things we should mention about that building is we're working in collaboration with one of our sister institutions, Nevada State College, under the NSHE system. Can you talk a little bit more about how that might work having both of you guys in that space?

Patty Charlton: Sure, absolutely and we have a great partnership because we're only three miles away from each other. So we're not duplicating programs, but we're really collaborating. This is a unique

partnership and I don't really think we've ever seen this in the State of Nevada before. The Nevada State College will be a part of that building, their simulation labs which are currently located about probably 25 to 30 miles away from their campus will actually be at the Henderson Campus. So they have a wing again, they have about 26 percent of the building. Then CSN has the rest for classrooms, laboratory, a new library that is desperately needed, particularly when you have the Health Sciences program but biology labs that we've never had in the past so students don't have to move from one campus to the next.

I think that's what's really exciting about the multi-campus district model is that we want to make sure that a student has a standard student experience wherever they go. That means that they can take their classes granted we're not going to replicate all of our programs but they can get all their core classes right there in their community, and they're going to have all of the services of wraparound services that are so key for students to be successful.

Meghin Delaney: Great and I know that you'll be working with your fellow VPs making sure that this rolled out for students. Now that you do have a fellow campus VPs on the Charleston and North Las Vegas campuses, can you tell us a little bit about what you guys anticipate for this role in this model as we continue moving forward with it?

Patty Charlton: Well, I am so thrilled, I have been very anxious to have these other campus VPs start, it's amazing group of ladies that I get to work with every day but also we're going to be rolling this out very consistently. We need, there is not enough communications that we can't have, making sure that students' needs are being met. Again, we are here for students to succeed no matter what they're here to do. If they want to graduate, complete, transfer but we want to make sure that they're prosperous and that's definitely in our institution's framework. But rolling this out together, we need to have lots of conversation, we need to ensure that everyone is coming along with us and that we are here to advocate on their behalf. So working with every stakeholder, from our faculty senate or administrative faculty, classified, most importantly, the students, but then also our communities and making sure that we're all together and that we're again all in support of the overall vision and direction of Southern Nevada and the College of Southern Nevada.

Meghin Delaney: If you're just tuning in this is CSN Subject Matter, I am chatting with our new campus vice presidents. I just spoke to Patty Charlton from our Henderson Campus and I'm excited to welcome Clarissa Cota from the North Las Vegas campus into the studio with me next.

Thank you for being here with me would you mind starting by introducing yourself to our audience so little bit of who you are and how you came to this position at CSN?

Clarissa Cota: Absolutely, Meghin, so my name is Clarissa Cota and I have been with the college for over 20 years at CSN, but originally my first love was a legal career and that's actually what brought me to Las Vegas. So right after law school, I was in Arizona and pursuing a career in public defense and then just decided to venture to pursue a legal career in Las Vegas, there was some opportunities that's the community was growing. Within probably the first year or two, I came across the College of Southern Nevada and they opened their arms and said hey have you ever thought about teaching? And I was like teaching what in particular and it was with the paralegal program. and I actually taught a very small class it was at the old Clark County Law Library right on Bridger and Las Vegas Boulevard and it was a group of individuals who really wanted to make their lives better and they were investing in this legal research class and I taught that two years as a part-time instructor and absolutely fell in love with not only the fact that we could help individuals make positive changes in their lives and that interaction

became the favorite part of my week, but also I strongly started to believe in the community college mission. We are on a daily basis, you know, creating opportunities, improving lives, aligning to workforce and so when an opportunity came to go full-time and actually be able to elevate and direct the paralegal program I took that and I've never looked back. Since that time I've had the fortunate opportunities to go beyond the legal and go into the business department as a chair, I was a dean over the School of Business.

I was recently a vice president, interim vice president for academic affairs which was really wonderful opportunity to learn the entire scope of services and programs that the CSN offers, which is tremendous and then most recently now I'm fortunate to be the vice president and provost of the North Las Vegas campus.

Meghin Delaney: So it was just teaching that first couple classes that we stole you into the CSN family? That's what happened.

Clarissa Cota: Absolutely, we have a tremendous a group of individuals who are our part-time instructors, we could not do it without them. That's something that you unique to a community college where you have those who are professionals in their industry and they have an opportunity to give back and to teach. I would encourage anyone to do that, and we appreciate all of our part-time faculty.

Meghin Delaney: I know the North Las Vegas campus is lucky to have you now, so can you tell someone who's unfamiliar a little bit about that campus particularly. I know that there's some real cool programs on that campus.

Clarissa Cota: The North Las Vegas Campus onced call the Cheyenne Campus was the original flagship campus for CSN when they got their permanent building in 1974. So it is very meaningful to individuals from not only North Las Vegas but the Valley itself. If you go around among the alumni if he has said many of them had attended, now they have had kids that have attended, and so forth. So the evolution of the North Las Vegas has been really transformational out there. I mean when you really start thinking about the unique offerings that are out there, it is quite a resource for that community.

Meghin Delaney: And what are some of the unique offerings? I know the culinary program's up there there's a ton of unique programs like that, so what are some of your favorite unique programs out there?

Clarissa Cota: Some programs that have particular distinctions. Maybe somebody doesn't know that we have a state-of-the-art automotive technology program out there or we have the only accredited nationally recognized cyber security program as a Center of Academic Excellence. We have a Cisco Networking Academy out there. In other fields, we have our hospitality, our gaming, our food and beverage programs with real labs and real kitchens that really rival anything around the country. In fact, our culinary is one of the top programs in the country. We also have a top-notch film production program, so there's no need to go elsewhere if you're interested in the film career, with over 30 student Emmys. The list goes on and on. We also some very unique amenities for the community, which we partner in. We have the only planetarium in Southern Nevada which is an amazing partnership, we have CCSD coming through all the time but we could be doing so much more to elevate that. We have the Russell's Restaurant which is actually a working kitchen, with our students both in the front and in the back management of a restaurant that's open to the community. We have an Early Childhood Center, my own children attended the Early Childhood Center at the Charleston Campus, but North Las Vegas has one as well. Then we cannot forget the performing arts, we have an amazing Nicholas Horn

Performing Arts Center and our music and fine arts programs and our art gallery is out there, so I could go on and on and we also have our gymnasium out there, so I'm very proud of what we have and there's a lot of pride in the North Las Vegas Campus for sure.

Meghin Delaney: And then I wanted to ask you about how you take that pride for the North Las Vegas campus and translate that into your vision in this new role that you're in for that campus. Can you talk a little bit about how your vision, how you think it might play out, I know you're still a little relatively new to this role, but how you see this playing out in this new model for CSN.

Clarissa Cota: What I see for this campus is to elevate its profile, make sure that we are maintaining a consistent student experience, you know, that we're offering the same level of services for our students at we serve from that service region, connecting with our community members and the nonprofits and all of our community partners, open the door to that campus and bringing the community back into community college, elevate all of the wonderful things that are faculty and staff are doing in the programming so that then it really will move that needle in student success.

Meghin Delaney: So I know now that we have three campus vice presidents one for each of our our campuses, can you talk a little bit about how you guys are planning to work together as we roll out with this academic year. Are there specific things that you're going to work on together sort of in the immediate future to help our students?

Clarissa Cota: I think CSN into this direction of now having three service regions will really bring some strength and hopefully some consistency in elevating the level of service to our students. I think collectively we have a wonderful group of experts around the table now and we're going to be looking at everything from you know, looking at our campus management teams, how we're going to be able to form our own little ecosystems on each of the campus has to be more responsive not only to the student needs but also the internal campus communities and partnering with the external community members, so definitely establishing our campus teams will be very important. Looking of course some projects are going to be involving us some of our policies and practices, I mean I think that now we're going to be able to again as we build out some consistencies but also aligning it with the unique needs of each of the campuses.

Meghin Delaney: We talked with Patty a little bit about the new building she's getting on her campus you are also. Every campus is getting a new student union, I think the North Las Vegas one is pretty special on it's going to be named and dedicated in honor of the late Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson. What does that mean to you that you're able to serve your community in that way by honoring his legacy with the with the Student Union?

Clarissa Cota: Yeah, this past July, the Board of Regents approved the naming of the North Las Vegas Student Union after the late Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson and I can tell you there is nothing more fitting, there couldn't be a better spot to actually recognize his accomplishments, his priorities in education, the importance of mentoring and really pushing us always to do better for the students and so this is a tremendous opportunity to really recognize not only his contributions but what his legacy stood for and so really looking forward to and I hope the community as well. There's going to be a naming dedication coming in the near future which we will be sending out and we hope to have a large attendance for that.

Meghin Delaney: I know that'll be a great space for our students to hang out in that union and to eat and talk with each other and study and just have a place to hang and it's really nice I think that that space is going to honor Assemblyman Thompson.

This is CSN Subject Matter, the College of Southern Nevada's weekly radio program produced in conjunction with KNPR. Today I'm chatting with her new campus vice-presidents, Patty Charlton from the Henderson Campus and Clarissa Cota from the North Las Vegas Campus. I'm excited to be joined by Sonya Pearson, the campus vice president for the Charleston Campus next. Thank you for being here with me. Now, as we did will Patty and Clarissa, can you introduce yourself to our audience please? A little bit of who you are and how you came to be here at CSN?

Sonya Pearson: I actually joined the College of Southern Nevada on July 1 and I actually made my journey from Tulsa, Oklahoma, then from Tulsa, Oklahoma, to Missouri, and from Missouri to Arizona and now I'm in Las Vegas, but when you looked at my actual professional journey, I think it was well planned out by God and I mean that in a very spiritual way and that I felt like I was really called to be here today and CSN is a place that was designed for me and I'm also in a position where I can great things.

My background is fairly broad. I worked for a K-12 system at a school called Margaret Hudson out of Tulsa Oklahoma, it was for pregnant teens. I also worked for the Tulsa Boys Home at one point in time, and moving from there while I was working on my master's degree in counseling I began to work for the Tulsa Urban League. So as I moved on to Missouri I took all on a senior staff position as the chief student affairs officer where I was responsible for some Workforce Development programs, your grant programs like TRIO that are designed for first generation, low-income, disabled students trying to get in and help them to complete.

I also spent a lot of time working on the service side and building support and retention programs for community college students, just trying to make sure that we were doing all that we can do and deliver on the promise of saying we're here, we're community focused, it's not enough to bring you, we need to try to complete you. So that moved a lot of my work out into the community, joining a lot of boards like the United Food Bank. I have sat on the Red Cross, I have participated in national organizations, all with the spirit and intention to say how can I grow as a servant leader. So as I moved on and went to work at the Mesa Community College in Arizona I was hired as the chief student affairs officer, vice president of student affairs, again I was overseeing a very large division of over 24 different programs, but one thing that's common in all of my professional journey is that I have remained committed to servant leadership.

Everything I do is a matter of what I do to give back otherwise otherwise there's no real value for me. I was always told, you know, you're called to do things, you can do what you want or you can follow your calling and I believe that that's why I was called to be here at CSN. And actually I've watched this institution for probably the last two years intensely, my family has always had roots here in the Las Vegas area.

Meghin Delaney: The Charleston Campus is home to the Ralph & Betty Engelstad School of Health Sciences which includes cardiorespiratory sciences, nursing and surgical technology. The campus is also home to our veterinary nursing program, a dental program and an early childhood learning center. We share space with KNPR and there's a Clark County Library here as well. So I know the Charleston campus is lucky to have you, can you tell our audience a little bit about what you've learned about this campus so far?

Sonya Pearson: You know, going into my second month, every day is a new day and I learn a lot, but I can say without hesitation, my experience on this campus and the people on this campus has been overwhelming with joy and just really a process of learning that I'm going to continue to embrace. I'm looking forward to stepping forward into the community and learning more about the community and how we could fill our community college mission, scaling many of the great programs that we have today.

When you walk into an institution that does a lot of things great it's hard to visualize now what's next, but I am a visionary and I'm constantly challenging the community and our faculty and staff, I want to work with them in a way to say okay, let's imagine the impossibilities, let's take it to the next level, let's build our educational platform not just for the student today but for the next generation. So when you asked me about my collective experience since I began employment with CSN I would say that is one we're all going to continue to learn, grow, listen and share and build great things.

Meghin Delaney: It's really exciting have such great leaders with us, but I did want to ask, you have some experience with this multi-campus district model from previous jobs before, so you are bringing out to the table. While it's new for CSN, you have some experience, so can you tell us a little bit more how you seen that model works and how you think it might translate here at CSN.

Sonya Pearson: I think the heart of what we're about to confront is really a matter of our strength and our will to really reimagine transformation. As a community college, you must always be prepared to adapt, we should always be prepared to say two to four steps ahead of our community because if you look at community colleges and the development of community colleges back when we were called junior colleges. When men went off to war, the women were left to work. When the man came back they needed to be retooled, that's how community colleges evolved from being junior colleges to what we actually see today.

So we're in a new time today to reinvent ourselves in this world of higher education when we have so much competition around us, but I believe the community college will always have a core value and relevance in our country and our communities. So as I begin to look at the multi-campus model, it is going to allow us to do three things. It's going to allow us to re-form ourselves around what we've done and how we've done it and rethink that, be it our financial procedures, how we connect with the student in the student experience, and be how we examine the community in our partnerships. It's going to allow us to reinvent some partnerships, public and private and as we move to look at what's next in the future we now get to reimagine what that future looks like today. So the multi-campus model and the people and stakeholders, internal and external, need to be in a posture where they're open to say 'I can be a visionary I can touch things that I cannot see' by building a foundation today. So as we start to look at each of the divisions and in each of the campuses today, working with my colleagues working with all of the stakeholders, faculty, students, it's going to be a matter of saying 'there is no box.' I'm a person who doesn't visualize boxes, because when you have that in your mind you begin to say well I may need to get back in a box.

This is a great, exciting opportunity for us to now move from a community college focus to a community education focus. That means business and industry, community agencies, it's not about what the community college is going to do, it's about we're going to do in a shared model and that's the integration that we need to see to maintain what we're doing and to scale it.

Meghin Delaney: And I think just to relate it all back, when we do all these things and have these visions and we don't even imagine there is a box to think inside or out of, how does this propel and help our student body and help our community? It seems like an obvious question but can you just extrapolate that out a little bit for us?

Sonya Pearson: So that's break it down to actual practice, we can go out and we can educate people around our mission, we can educate people around our vision, and then at the end of the day our stakeholders be the community, the students, they want to know what we're delivering on. Are we delivering on the promise? Today's world requires for students to come in and be prepared for multiple industries, so our ability as a community college to align ourselves with industry demands and builds fields of interest where I'm not coming in to receive a psychology degree, I'm actually getting a psychology degree as well as other majors at the same time so when I leave, I can go into any one industry. That's how we actually need to position ourselves as community colleges today.

We know when students reach out front door many of them have what we call equity gaps, they may have hunger issues, homelessness, transportation issues, so as we're also moving forward to say how do we help the students get to completion putting us in practice we're going to have to figure out different ways to help fill that gap at the front door. That front door may mean reinvestment in scholarships in a different way. It may mean financial partnerships with foundations outside of the community college foundation, saying we want to build individual development plan where the student as they complete a class, they're reinvesting in their future and they will have a savings built up when they leave because we don't want to complete students and they leave the college with the same issue they came in with, housing, transportation, food disparities. So it's about putting things into practice that really mean something to the students that they can actually take away and use with in the workforce and in our communities.

Meghin Delaney: I am really excited to start seeing this play out now that we have all three campus vice presidents and provosts and I know that you are all going to be working together to bring all these Visions to life for our students in our community. You've been listening to CSN subject matter the College of Southern Nevada weekly radio program in conjunction with KNPR, I want to thank the campus vice president & provosts, Patty Charlton on Henderson Campus, Clarissa Cota on the North Las Vegas Campus and Sonya Pearson on our Charleston Campus for taking time out of their very busy schedules to talk with me today. Also a big thanks to KNPR as always for helping produce this show. I'm Meghin Delaney from CSN's communications office you can learn more about CSN by visiting csn.edu or finding us on your preferred social media site, we look forward to helping you succeed and I'll see you next time.