After nearly 20 years of service at College of the Canyons, including five years spent as the Founding Dean of the college’s Canyon Country campus, Dr. Dena Maloney has been named Superintendent-President of Taft College and the West Kern Community College District, effective May 1.

“I will never forget my years at College of the Canyons, and would like to thank the entire community for all the kindness and support they’ve shown to COC and the Canyon Country campus,” Maloney said. “I’ve had the good fortune to work with an immense group of talented, motivated, innovative and inspiring people during my time here, and I’ll always treasure the memories I have as part of this incredible community.”

Maloney’s career at COC began in the early 1990s as a part-time employee, when she was hired to help launch some of the college’s initial efforts to provide training and economic development services to the local business community. She was eventually hired full time in 1997 as director of the COC Employee Training Institute (ETI), and later became director of the college’s Center for Applied Competitive Technology (CACT).

In 2006, Maloney was named Founding Dean of the still yet-to-be-built Canyon Country campus and tasked with the duty of helping transition COC into “one college on two campuses.”

Since its opening in August 2007, Maloney has been pivotal in helping to guide the campus’ continued growth and development. During the 2010-11 academic year the Canyon Country campus served more than 10,000 students, with 68 percent of the college’s 2011 graduating class having taken at least one class at the Canyon Country campus.

Significant additions to the Canyon Country campus during Maloney’s tenure include the 2007 construction of the Carl A. Rasmussen Amphitheater, the Canyon Country Center for Early Childhood Education (ECE) and the campus’ first permanent building, the eagerly anticipated Applied Technology Education Center (ATEC), which opened in August.

“Dr. Maloney helped our college during a significant growth period and excelled in many roles, including generating resources and partnerships to support economic development, offering input for instructional programs, engaging in community outreach, and overseeing the growth and development of our Canyon Country campus,” said College of the Canyons Chancellor Dr. Dianne G. Van Hook. “Her dedication, intelligence, work ethic and professionalism are gifts she shared with us as she championed our now thriving Canyon Country campus over the past five years, and in the many ways she has developed our capacity to partner with and serve our local business community.

“Dena always set clear goals and pursued them with a ‘can-do’ spirit and attitude, which is something we will all miss as she leaves College of the Canyons,” added Van Hook. “She is someone who has contrib-
uted much to our district and even more to the lives of the people with whom she has worked, supported, nurtured and cared for at COC.”

In anticipation of Maloney’s departure, the college has started to implement a leadership transition plan that integrates continuity, flexibility and an additional focus on instruction.

Effective May 1, Ryan Theule, former Assistant Dean of Student Services at the Canyon Country campus, will assume the position of acting Dean, serving as the primary on-site leader of the campus and taking on many of Dr. Maloney’s job responsibilities as related to the Canyon Country campus.

In addition, Denee Pescarmona, the college’s current Interim Dean of the Humanities, will take on the role of acting Associate Dean, Instruction Programs, Canyon Country campus, beginning this summer.
“The restructuring of the former Assistant Dean, Student Services position will allow for added support for additional instructional programs that are both ongoing and in the development phase for the Canyon Country campus,” Dr. Van Hook said.

To assist in the transition, Diane Fiero, COC Assistant Superintendent/Vice President, Human Resources, will be onsite to provide district-level coordination and mentoring and assist with high-profile projects, including the coordination of the campus’ Educational and Facilities Master Plan.

“I feel confident with this new structure in place that the Canyon Country campus will continue to grow and flourish with exceptional leadership at the helm,” added Dr. Van Hook.

For more information about the College of the Canyons Canyon Country campus please visit www.canyoncountrycampus.com.