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SFCC President Receives Contract Extension

Santa Fe, NM, February 4, 2010— The Santa Fe Community College Governing Board has extended President Sheila Ortego’s contract through 2013. Dr. Ortego is the sixth president of SFCC and has served in the role since 2006.

“Dr. Ortego has shown tremendous devotion and dedication to Santa Fe Community College,” said Board Chair Bruce Besser. “Under her leadership, the college has made great progress in several key areas: developing programs to meet workforce needs, initiating building projects to accommodate program growth, and steering the institution through extreme financial challenges. The board has great confidence in her continued management and vision for the future of the community college.”

Ortego rose to the president’s position after serving in a number of staff capacities at SFCC since the college was founded in 1983. She holds a doctorate in American Studies from the University of New Mexico and attended the Harvard President's Academy.

Currently, Ortego is leading an effort to establish a Higher Learning Center that would expand partnerships between SFCC and the state’s universities in order to allow local students an affordable pathway to a bachelor’s degree. Additionally, she is directing a project to increase the college’s effectiveness through participation in Quality New Mexico, a performance excellence program modeled after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

Ortego has also been the driving force behind two current campus improvement projects: the \$17 million Health and Sciences Building and the \$11 million Trades and Advanced Technology Center/Sustainable Technologies Center. Both projects are the result of voter-approved bond issues, responding to immediate needs for workforce training in the health professions and green jobs.

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“I believe strongly in the mission of Santa Fe Community College to improve lives through education,” Ortego said. “I look forward to continued work with the board and our broader community to build an even stronger college in the coming years.”

Ortego noted that so far this spring, SFCC is serving more than 6,500 students in credit courses, which is about 15 percent more than last spring’s enrollment. She said, “We are seeing unprecedented growth in the numbers of students seeking new or expanded skills they can put to work immediately in the workplace. SFCC, like community colleges everywhere right now, is playing a major role in reshaping the local and national economy.”

About Santa Fe Community College

For more than 25 years, Santa Fe Community College has been the gateway to success for individuals and the community by providing affordable, high quality educational programs that serve the social, cultural, technological and economic needs of a diverse community. The college serves more than 14,500 students per year in its credit, noncredit and adult basic education programs. For further information, visit www.sfccnm.edu or call (505) 428-1000.

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