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NEWS

CSU trustee visits CPP



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By Alicia Balderrama

The newly-appointed chair of the California State University Board of Trustees visited with representatives of various student organizations on Wednesday to learn about the most pressing issues facing Cal Poly Pomona students.

Rebecca Eisen has been a member of the trustee board since 2012 and was elected to the position of vice chair in 2014.

According to the CSU Office of the Chancellor, “the chair of the Board of Trustees is elected annually from among members of the board and serves a one-year term.”

One of Eisen’s first goals as chair was to visit each of the system’s 23 campuses in order to get a sense of the unique issues facing each distinct campus.

“The board are not typically folks who came up through the higher education system,” said Eisen. “Unless you get out to the campuses, you can’t really understand what education is all about.”

Eisen and representatives from Associated Students, Inc. and the many campus cultural centers convened in the president’s conference room for an open talk.

The emerging topic of the hour was the graduation initiative, which is a CSU-wide move to increase four-year graduation rates to 40 percent.

“The goal of the initiative is to remove institutional barriers, not force students to graduate when outside circumstance may otherwise prevent them,” said Eisen.

One of the biggest reasons why students drop out of college is a lack of connection with their peers and environment.

The students in attendance shared their individual reasons for staying in school and not becoming a drop-out statistic. Every single person said that his or her motivation to persevere came from some type of campus involvement, including athletic programs, cultural centers, the Veteran Resource Center, the Graduation Pledge program and friendly faculty, among others.

ASI members said that many students are unaware of community resources on campus, despite their best efforts to educate and inform, even as early as orientation.

Veonte Barnes, a fifth-year communication student, suggested that part of the problem lies in the stigma that CPP is a commuter campus. Commuter campuses stereotypically have low student involvement because students drive to school, go to class and then return home.

“It’s always the same faces at these meetings,” said Barnes. “We need more initiatives to get people involved.”

When Eisen finishes her CSU tour, she plans on sharing the concerns of each campus with the trustees in order to implement programs to effect the necessary changes.

The CSU Board of Trustees is made up of volunteers who address key issues system-wide and coordinate with individual campuses and the chancellor’s office to find solutions.

“[The CSU is] going to be on the forefront of working with students to achieve their goals as soon as possible,” said Eisen.

