

Brief Biography for Dr. Marie-Elaine Burns

Dr. Marie-Elaine Burns is an educational leader who is visionary, energetic, and passionate. While adaptable to change, she is a risk taker/entrepreneur; not afraid to explore an idea different from her own or to encourage others to try their ideas. She encourages and supports innovation and creativity.

Dr. Burns' leadership style is characterized by respect, inclusiveness, transparency, collaboration, effective listening skills, and participatory governance. She is committed to equity and student success. Contributing to a positive impact on students has always been integral to the decisions she makes as a college leader.

Having worked in higher education for many years, Dr. Burns has been responsible for college access, student retention, support services, transfer and graduation success which are major components of student success. She worked at universities and colleges throughout the state which include but are not limited to the following: San Francisco State University which provided her first opportunity to teach; California State University at Long Beach where she assisted the Director in training college and university learning assistance professionals (faculty, coordinators and practitioners) from countries around the world; at Skyline College in San Bruno she was the Director of The Learning Center and the Student Support Services TRIO program and lead the establishment of the Jump Start Program for high school students that continued long after she left the college; and Foothill College in Los Altos Hills where Dr. Burns was Dean of the Middlefield Campus and established the successful Dare to EXCEL program for high school students with a grade point average of 2.0 and below.

As Vice-President of Student Affairs at San Jose City College (SJCC), Marie-Elaine Burns developed a vision and championed core values for student affairs and cultivated an effective Student Affairs management team. Under her leadership the College opened a Veterans Resource Center; the Annual African American/Latino/Pacific Islander/Native American Male Summit was established and led by her for six years; the Mental Health Advisory Committee (MHSAC) was established and is running effectively; she developed the first online student support services which assisted the College in being released from an accreditation sanction; and she co-chaired the Student Success & Equity committee as well as led the development of both the initial SSSP and Equity plans.

Currently, Dr. Burns is Vice-President for Special Services at San Jose City College. In this position she works collaboratively with the SJCC President, vice-presidents and Milpitas Unified School District partners to ensure the establishment of student services at the new Milpitas Community College Extension and a successful opening; she represents the College and participates in the Silicon Valley Leadership Group (SVLG) Working Council and the Education Committee; and assists the District and colleges in providing Title IX Responsible Employee (student, faculty, staff and administrators) training. These are only some of her career accomplishments.

Dr. Burns' postsecondary educational accomplishments include a Bachelor's of Arts degree in Broadcast Communication Arts from San Francisco State University, cum laude; a Master's of Science Degree in School Management & Administration, summa cum laude and a Doctorate in Institutional Management, magna cum laude, both from Pepperdine University.