

## VICTORIA MENZIES - October 2018

### Business Director's Background as "Efficiency Expert" Will Help Bring Necessary Changes

With 25 years of experience in business and fiscal operations and a stellar reputation that led her to become Merritt's new Director of Business Services, it's hard to believe that Vikki Menzie's high school counselor steered her toward becoming a secretary. But in those days, clerical work was one of just a handful of careers paths that women went into.

But it didn't take long before Vikki's abilities to go beyond secretarial skills became apparent. As a secretary for the defense contractor Gould, Inc., she was given the best advice of her life: get an education. "I was doing secretarial work, and I was also becoming familiar with programming and helping my bosses," she says. "I was tired of taking notes and getting coffee. So when one of my bosses suggested I start taking college classes, I immediately enrolled at Mt. San Antonio College to study business."

It was at her next job in the Human Resources Department for the Housing Authority of Los Angeles County where Vikki began her work with PeopleSoft. She was part of the implementation team that transferred policies into system codes and conducted testing with payroll. Eventually she became an expert user in the PeopleSoft system. Later she was promoted to another area that managed all of the properties in unincorporated LA County and was put in charge of budgets and grants.

Vikki continued taking classes on the "extremely long route" to graduation, even after landing a job as Associate Budget Analyst at Cal Poly, Pomona, based on her knowledge of PeopleSoft. Her ambition to learn new skills in previous jobs had led her to a job that would start the steps to her future career.

After she completed two years at Mt. Sac, she entered the University of LaVerne's accelerated weekend program for adults and earned her BA in Business Administration with concentration in finance and began moving up in her career. At Pomona, she was promoted from Associate Analyst to Administrative Analyst and eventually to Business Manager for Facilities Planning & Management while earning her Master's in Public Administration at Pomona.

"After 16 years at Pomona, I had done everything there was to do in terms of finance and budget," says Vikki. "My boss knew I was getting a master's degree, and he recommended that I go to the women's leadership conference for NACUBO (National Association of College and University Business Officers.)"

It was at that conference where Vikki met someone who offered her a job at San Francisco State University. "I never thought I would leave Pomona," she says, "but then I started thinking I'm not married, my kids are grown, I can move anywhere I want. They offered me the job and I was there in a month, leaving behind my furniture and my house."

Vikki initially worked in physical plant and planning and later accepted the position of Director of Finance and Operations for the College of Liberal & Creative Arts at SF State for over a year before realizing it wasn't exactly the job for her. But she has no regrets about moving to northern California.



“I’m excited to be at Merritt and look forward to the opportunities that it may offer,” says Vikki. “My hope is that my background in academic budgeting, facilities management, and fiscal operation can be utilized here at Merritt and the Peralta District. I am aware of the challenges that exist and will be looking forward to making progress in helping students achieve their educational goals,” she adds. “Although I am a behind-the-scenes administrator, the work that we accomplish is important to students and their success. I consider myself an efficiency expert and can see the need to improve processes that will allow the college to run more smoothly, from ordering equipment to paying vendors in a timely manner. I’m looking forward to working with faculty, staff, and students to make important changes that will be beneficial to the campus and district.”

—*Susan May*