

February 24, 2015

Chancellor John Morgan  
Tennessee Board of Regents  
1415 Murfreesboro Pike  
Nashville, Tennessee 37217

Chancellor Morgan:

Please accept this letter and attached information as an announcement of my desire to serve as the next President of Southwest Tennessee Community College. After considering the expectations of candidates for this position, I am confident that I possess the experience, insight, and energy necessary to lead Southwest Tennessee to the next level of excellence in community college education.

I have served in different roles at the institution level, and each position had direct involvement with all facets of the college. At the system level, my responsibilities have expanded to directly impact the operations of 13 community colleges. The experience of serving in different roles for more than 10 years has afforded me to have **direct responsibility for leading change and improvement in higher education**. The mission of Southwest Tennessee focuses on educating one of Tennessee's largest metropolitan areas. Fulfilling this mission requires a commitment to serving the different needs of the Memphis area from providing pathways to a four-year degree to supplying business and industry with an educated and skilled workforce. My work at Volunteer State Community College and the Tennessee Board of Regents has centered on meeting the needs of communities across this state. From academics to administration, my work philosophy has centered on leadership through collaboration, good communication, and a shared vision. I see great possibilities to make a more meaningful contribution to degree attainment, cost reduction, and service growth through this opportunity to serve as Southwest Tennessee's next President.

Tennessee is at the forefront of the national movement to increase student success by improving outcomes. The state's completion agenda has challenged faculty and administrators to rethink the way we deliver public higher education, in order to serve students in a more effective and efficient manner. Southwest Tennessee, as with other community colleges in the state, has been engaged in developing the right formula for change that aligns with the values and characteristics of the surrounding community.

My work with Southwest Tennessee Community College for more than two years has allowed me the opportunity to understand the challenges to improving degree attainment in the Memphis area. Through the Business Process Model Project, we have worked to create a more efficient operation at the institution. As a planning

team through the Completion Academy, we have discussed ways to build a comprehensive and cohesive approach to improving student retention. The ability to engage in **problem-solving activities with Southwest Tennessee** has inspired my belief that I can successfully lead the institution, and contribute to the efforts of the College and community to achieve the goal of increasing degree attainment in the area.

The strength of any community college is a direct result of building meaningful relationships inside and outside the institution. Every facet of Southwest Tennessee's Institutional Mission Statement speaks to the necessity of relationships in the community. In order for the institution to carry out this mission in the future, existing relationships will need to be enhanced and new partnerships will need to be established. Serving as Volunteer State Community College's leader for community and government relations, I worked closely with the President of the college to build strategies to improve key relationships in the community. Through my work with various communities in the service area, I have been appointed to serve as a **board member for local organizations** dedicated to education and commerce.

I live by a philosophy that every member of the community is valuable, and relationships must be established well before there is a need for support. I have learned that unforeseen opportunities often arise to advance the mission of an institution, and subsequently require the support of members of the community. I regularly participate in community efforts to learn about the possibilities to forge stronger partnerships with the community college system. An opportunity was recently presented to me regarding an adult learning environment study. The study required the time, effort, and full participation of four community colleges in the region. My relationships with each of the four community college Presidents proved useful in gaining support from everyone to take part in this assessment. As a result of doing this assessment, the institutions are in a better position of eligibility than their peers for the new Tennessee Reconnect Grant opportunity. This grant will provide funding to **improve enrollment and retention rates** for adult students. As funding opportunities continue to become more competitive, community collaboration will serve as a key asset for eligibility. My goal in leading Southwest Tennessee will be to ensure good relationships are established to make better use of scarce resources for shared community values.

The function of teaching and the outcome of learning are the main duties for all community colleges. Before partnerships can be established with the immediate community, synergy and teamwork around teaching and learning must be present within the institution. My **engagement with, and support of, faculty** has been a vital part of the success of most projects. My relationship with academic units across the state proved useful in the effort to streamline adjunct faculty course assignments. The outcome of this initiative has rendered many benefits to faculty and staff members responsible for this role at each college.

I have managed to lead change in areas of academics while maintaining the proper respect for the values of instruction and **academic freedom**. I maintain regular communication with faculty leaders, and openly discuss matters central to their function within the institution. During my time at Volunteer State Community College, I participated in cabinet-level discussions and academic departmental conversations related to conflicts between administration and faculty. The partnership between the two can only thrive when there is collaboration around a given institutional problem. In my experience, collaboration moves at the speed of trust.

Building trust with faculty demands an understanding of the classroom environment. I periodically **serve as an adjunct instructor** at the undergraduate and graduate level. Through this experience, I learn much about the needs and challenges of the instructors and the students. I designed a hybrid course in graphic design for Volunteer State Community College. I am currently teaching a hybrid graduate course in public finance, and also teach a leadership course through the Regents Online Degree Program. Earlier this semester, I took my first massive open online course through Coursera. These experiences have also allowed me to better understand the changing dynamics for instructional design and how to assess learning. Instructors and faculty need the resources necessary to successfully navigate the complex administrative and technical world of instruction. Equally, students need the proper exposure to technology to remain effective, marketable, and relevant in their areas of study. My role as a leader in higher education has included the ability to understand and identify the resources required to improve performance at the institution and system level.

Securing resources for faculty and student support, however, require a firm understanding of the ever-changing fiscal and technical landscape. Tuition over the years has become the larger share of revenue for community colleges in this state. The growing competition for grants and private funding, as a result of this changing landscape, has added to this fiscal challenge. There must be clear strategies to mitigate the reality of unstable funding, which factor operational cost and revenue growth. In various roles, I have led efforts to tackle both issues. As the department head of Volunteer State's public relations and marketing department, I experienced double-digit budget reductions caused by a decrease in state appropriations, yet managed to increase services by eliminating wasteful spending and directing resources to high-return areas. It is impossible to make good financial decisions without the presence of good data. Our work in the Office of Community Colleges involves the use of data to make **revenue and cost decisions**, such as the recent modification to the dual enrollment state grant or the fee coverage rules for the Tennessee Promise. I have always taken a proactive approach to understanding how costs and revenues will impact the future.

Beyond managing revenues and costs, an understanding of budgeting allows an institution to strategically employ resources to uphold the mission and reach the established institutional goals. As a cabinet member at Volunteer State Community

College for more than five years, I participated in the decision-making activities to establish the institution's budget. As a department head at Volunteer State, I led activities with the department staff to improve understanding of the budgeting process. As an administrator in the community college system, I work closely with community college business officers to discuss matters of **finance and budgeting**. In order for an institution to maintain a healthy budget, there must be a certain level of inclusion and accountability in the budgeting process, at all levels. The different exposures to budgeting from the academic, operational, and planning perspective give me confidence in leading a fiscally responsible institution.

The demographic and economic diversity of the Memphis area positions Southwest Tennessee Community College to serve as a major catalyst for the desired change in the community. Organizations such as the Greater Memphis Chamber, Memphis Tomorrow, and engaged and invested local businesses share values for education and economic development that very much align with the mission of Southwest Tennessee. From the public relations perspective, I have worked at the institution level presenting the proper image and message necessary to promote a positive outlook for the college. I have developed partnerships in the community and engaged in various aspects of **fundraising and resource development**. In the role Executive Assistant to the President, and as the Director of Public Relations at Volunteer State Community College, I served as one of the institution's primary **representatives for key partnerships** and often for crisis situations. A positive image for Southwest Tennessee is critical to the institution's ability to serve as the lead community college for Shelby and Fayette County. Experience as a public figure representing a community college is a skill I believe will be useful in carrying Southwest Tennessee forward, as well as managing unexpected difficult situations.

The opportunity to serve and lead Southwest Tennessee Community College is appealing to me for many professional and personal reasons. Over the past few years, I have been honored to work with many of the institution's administrators. Their engagement with the efforts to build a new framework for the state's community college system has been extremely helpful. Over the past few months, there has been a deeper engagement with the institution through my involvement with the Huron Consulting Group, in an effort to build **new strategies for the Southwest Tennessee**. I learned much about the value Southwest Tennessee Community College brings to the region. I also learned about the opportunities for improvement, which can positively impact the community. I see a clear connection between my leadership style for change, collaboration, and discipline and the vision for the future of Southwest Tennessee.

For more than two years, I have managed to lead over 400 members of the community college system across this state to achieve something once thought impossible, through a statewide standardization effort. The initiative has produced efficiencies in different areas of each institution, and has provided a method for continuous improvement across the community college system. Today, 13 different community colleges have moved in one common direction and now perform

individually and collectively in a more efficient and effective manner. If I can achieve **statewide success through relationships**, collaboration, and a shared vision, I feel confident I can successfully lead one of the prized jewels of the Tennessee community college system – Southwest Tennessee Community College.

The connection to Southwest Tennessee and the Memphis area is also personal. My father and mother are native Memphians. My mother is a graduate of Douglass High School, and my father graduated from Booker T. Washington High School. My mother finished college as an adult while my father was completing his doctoral degree. My father worked as a brick mason in the summers in Memphis to pay for college. Both are first-generation college graduates. Their stories are reminders to me of the challenges our students face when taking the huge leap to realize a better future through higher education. I believe I can make a positive difference for Southwest Tennessee Community College. My experience in leading change in higher education serves as an example of the benefit I can bring to the institution. My professional and personal connections with the community serve as proof that my leadership skills align with the strategic direction of Southwest Tennessee.

In closing, I thank you for considering me for the presidency of Southwest Tennessee Community College. I look forward to your response to my application submission. Please contact me if you need any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenyatta Lovett". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name and last name clearly legible.

Kenyatta Lovett, Ph.D.

## Kenyatta K. Lovett, Ph.D.



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### EDUCATION

<b>Doctor of Philosophy</b> (Public Administration) Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN	<b>May 2014</b>
<b>Master of Business Administration</b> (Supply-Chain Management) Tennessee State University, Nashville, TN	<b>Dec 2008</b>
<b>Bachelor of Fine Arts</b> (Graphic Design) Howard University, Washington, D.C.	<b>May 1993</b>

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### PROFESSIONAL FOCUS

Higher Education Leadership, Public Administration, Change Management, Organization Strategy, Public Finance, and Public Policy

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### EXPERIENCE

<b>Assistant Vice Chancellor for Community College Initiatives</b> <i>Tennessee Board of Regents, Nashville, TN</i>	<b>July 2012 – Present</b>
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#### Responsibilities

- Implement community college system mandates established by the Complete College Tennessee Act of 2010
- Manage \$1.3 million budget to standardize and improve administrative processes across 13 community colleges
- Manage efficiency and consolidation exploration activity for the TBR community college system - \$330,000 budget
- Serve as community college lead for the Lumina Community Partnership for Attainment initiative – Middle TN region
- Serve as community college lead for TBR Completion Delivery Unit team
- Conduct cost-benefit analysis for community college system revenue and expenditure strategies
- Lead response efforts for community college system legislative inquiries

#### Accomplishments

- Executed community college system process standardization and improvement program - \$3 million projected annual system-wide savings
- Implemented centralized contract standards for community college system
- Led efforts to automate adjunct and full-time faculty contracts - \$600,000 projected annual system-wide savings

- Led efforts to automate financial aid transactions with the federal government - \$100,000 projected annual system-wide savings
- Co-authored chapter for Tennessee's community colleges - *Fifty State Systems of Community Colleges*
- Led study on adult student inclusiveness for community colleges in Middle TN

### **Executive Assistant to the President**

*Volunteer State Community College, Gallatin, TN*

**Jan 2010 - July 2012**

#### **Responsibilities**

- Led institution-wide special projects for the College
- Served on the behalf of the College President for state and community initiatives
- Led government and community relations efforts
- Led negotiations for North Davidson campus expansion
- Led online education retention and success strategy taskforce
- Managed institutional risk assessment footprint
- Conducted feasibility studies to assess campus expansion opportunities
- Led the region's P-16 Council

#### **Accomplishments**

- Supported fundraising and led proposal efforts to secure \$1.5 million in private matching funds to construct a \$10 million allied health building
- Participated in team-community effort to establish community college last-dollar scholarship funding at McGavock High School (\$200,000)
- Oversaw initiative to restructure institutional committees
- Oversaw construction completion and opening of the Robertson County campus

### **Director of Public Relations**

*Volunteer State Community College, Gallatin, TN*

**Jan 2007 - Jan 2010**

#### **Responsibilities**

- Managed institution's official communication and marketing efforts
- Led campus-wide community service initiatives
- Managed institution's brand strategy
- Served on community and local non-profit boards
- Provided responses for institutional accreditation review (SACS)

#### **Accomplishments**

- Supported efforts to increase student enrollment by 29% over three years
- Developed comprehensive marketing and crisis communication plan
- Won national and state awards for marketing and design
- Managed staff efforts to improve Hispanic/Latino relations and recruitment
- Received Wall Street Journal coverage for Bank Teller Certificate article
- Received national press for Full-Time Fridays Program
- Launched college's branding campaign

**Webmaster**

*Volunteer State Community College, Gallatin, TN*

**May 2004 - Jan 2007**

**Responsibilities**

- Managed institution's web site redesign
- Developed web development documentation standards
- Provided web traffic analytics to campus stakeholders

**Accomplishments**

- Increased web traffic by more than 50%
- Developed online catalog system
- Developed web content management system for academic program directors

**Senior Graphic Designer**

*Char-Broil, Columbus, GA*

**Jan 2003 - April 2004**

**Responsibilities**

- Managed creative marketing design efforts for the premium grill product line
- Supported in-store planning efforts with major retailers
- Designed packaging for premium, charcoal, and specialty grill product lines

**Accomplishments**

- Developed multimedia sales kit for buyers and outside sales team
- Won regional awards in design and advertising
- Designed Home Depot in-store outdoor grill area standards

**CEO/Consultant**

*K. L. Creative Solutions, Atlanta, GA*

**Aug 2001 - Dec 2006**

**Responsibilities**

- Developed marketing and branding strategies for local businesses
- Conducted training services to creative departments
- Offered marketing consulting services to companies

**Accomplishments**

- Marketing consultant for Char-Broil's oil-less fryer product launch
- Trained Brookstone's creative department on Adobe's Creative Suite
- Supported outdoor planning strategy for Simon Property/Lamar Outdoor Advertising Partnership



**Art Director***Formetco Outdoor Advertising, Atlanta, GA***May 1994 - Aug 2001**

## Responsibilities

- Managed creative and production team
- Managed supply-chain and procurement systems
- Managed hardware and software production systems

## Accomplishments

- Increased production capacity by 700%
- Production team member for Coca-Cola's Olympic City
- Conducted training for Lamar Outdoor Advertising's pre-press division

**Intern (Budgets & Cost)***American Airlines, Nashville, TN***June 1989 - Dec 1992**

## Responsibilities

- Produced budget and workload reports for management team
- Conducted airport traffic studies
- Participated in Central Division budget development activities

## Accomplishments

- Created overtime analysis report for Kansas City, Missouri airport operations

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**AWARDS AND HONORS**

- Finalist, Helen Barrett Award for Excellence in Research, Tennessee State University (2014)
- First Place, Tennessee College Public Relations Association Design Award, (2010)
- First Place, National Council for Marketing and Public Relations Advertising Award (2009)
- Inductee, Tennessee State University School of Business Wall of Scholars (2008)
- First Place, Columbus, Georgia Region American Advertising Federation Award for Graphic Design and Advertising (2003)

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**ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING**

- Fellow - Maxine Smith Program, Tennessee Board of Regents (2009-10)
- Diversity Management, American Management Association (1995)

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## TEACHING, TRAINING, AND FACILITATION EXPERIENCE

- Instructor, *Financial Management for Health and Nonprofit Organizations - PADM 6190*, Tennessee State University (2015)
- Instructor, *Leadership in Organizations - PRST 5310*, Regents Online Degree Program (2015)
- Facilitator, *Completion Planning Partner Mini-Summit*, Tennessee Board of Regents, Murfreesboro, TN (2014)
- Facilitator, *Goals, Strategies, and Action Plans*, Tennessee Supreme Court Improvement Program, Nashville, TN (2014)
- Facilitator, *Planning Your Educational Plan*, Tennessee Supreme Court Improvement Program, Nashville, TN (2014)
- Facilitator, *Introduction to Data Visualization*, Tennessee Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers: Registrars' Roundtable (2012)
- Facilitator, *College Completion Academy*, Austin Peay State University (2012)
- Instructor, *Graphic Design I - ARTP 253*, Volunteer State Community College (2009-10)
- Trainer, *Adobe Photoshop Pre-Press*, Lamar Outdoor Advertising (1997-01)
- Instructor, *Adobe Photoshop*, The Portfolio Center (1999-03)
- Instructor, *Adobe Illustrator*, The Portfolio Center (1999-03)
- Instructor, *Adobe InDesign*, The Portfolio Center (1999-03)

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## INVITED LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

- Presenter, *Business Process Model Project Efficiency Projections*, Tennessee Board of Regents Quarterly Meeting, Nashville, TN (2014)
- Co-Presenter, *Statewide Strategies for Access & Attainment*, Tennessee Chapter of the American Society for Public Administration (2014)
- Presenter, *Community College Business Process Model Project*, Tennessee Board of Regents Quarterly Meeting, Nashville, TN (2014)
- Panel Member, *Tennessee's Community College Business Process Model Project*, Tennessee Chapter Conference for American Society for Public Administration, Nashville, TN (2013)

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## SPEECHES

- “Crisis, Chaos, and Defeat”, keynote address given at the Volunteer State Community College Leadership Luncheon, Gallatin, TN (April 10, 2013)
- “The Community College System”, address given at Volunteer State Community College Convocation, Gallatin, TN (August 20, 2012)

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## SERVICE

### *Institution/Organization*

- Member, 2015-2020 THEC Formula Review Committee, Tennessee Higher Education Commission (2015)
- Member, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Search Committee, Tennessee Board of Regents (2014)
- Member, Improving Teacher Quality Grant Proposal Review Committee, Tennessee Higher Education Commission (2014)
- Member, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Search Committee, Tennessee Board of Regents (2014)
- Member, Associate Vice Chancellor of Workforce Search Committee, Tennessee Board of Regents (2013)
- Member, GEAR UP Tennessee Grant Proposal Review Committee, Tennessee Higher Education Commission (2012)
- Member, International Education Committee, Volunteer State Community College (2010-12)
- Member, Diversity Committee, Volunteer State Community College (2007-09)
- Member, Executive Director of Foundation & Vice President of Resource Development Search Committee, Volunteer State Community College (2007)
- Advisor, African-American Student Union, Volunteer State Community College (2006-08)

### *Community*

- Member, Nashville Region Lumina Community Partnership for Attainment Task Force, (2014-Present)
- Co-Chair, Donelson-Hermitage YMCA Board of Directors (2012 - Present)
- Member, Tennessee Achieves Advisory Board (2011 - Present)
- Member, Technology Access Center Board of Directors (2007 - Present)
- Member, CEO for Cities Nashville Region Talent Dividend Task Force (2012)
- Member, Donelson-Hermitage Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors (2011-12)
- Member, Sumner COMPASS Board of Directors (2010-13)
- Member, Lebanon/Wilson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee (2010-12)
- Co-Chair, North Central Tennessee P-16 Council (2010-12)
- Co-Chair, Robertson County Chamber of Commerce Education Committee (2010-12)
- Member, TN Scholars Advisory Board, TN Chamber of Commerce (2007-12)
- Member, Gallatin Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors (2007-10)

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## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- National American Society of Public Administration (2011 – Present)
- Southeast Conference for Public Administration (2013 – Present)
- Tennessee College Public Relations Association (2007 – 2010)

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## PUBLISHED WORKS

Lovett, K. (2015). *A Collective Agreement on Efficiency in Public Higher Education*. Public Administration Times

Lovett, K. (2014). *Valuing Risk as a New Strategy for Public Higher Education*. Public Administration Times.

Lovett, K. (2014). *Economic Boom Ahead! Proceed with Public Caution*. Public Administration Times.

Lovett, K. (2014). *The Pothole Consensus and the New Administrative Challenge*. Public Administration Times.

\*Lovett, K. K. (2014). *The Diffusion of Governance in State Economic Development*. (Order No. 3623027, Tennessee State University). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 184. Retrieved from <http://0-search.proquest.com.sultan.tnstate.edu/docview/1548306804?accountid=14275>. (1548306804).

\*Townsend, J. and Lovett, K. (2014). Tennessee/Tennessee. In J. Friedel, S. Katsinas, E. Miller, & J. Killacky (Eds.), *Fifty State Systems of Community Colleges, 4th edition: Mission, Governance, Funding and Accountability*. Johnson City, TN; The Overmountain Press.

Lovett, K., Eneh, C., and Streams, M. (2012). *Reliance on Natural Resources for Public Finance Brings Risk, Even if Irresistible*. Public Administration Times.

\* Indicates refereed or peer-reviewed works

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## ACADEMIC CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

Lovett, K. (2014, April), *The Diffusion of Governance in State Economic Development*. Poster presented at Tennessee State University 36th Annual University-Wide Research Symposium, Nashville, TN.

Lovett, K. (2013, October), *The Diffusion of Governance in State Economic Development*. Paper presented at Southeastern Conference for Public Administration, Charlotte, N.C.