

LMC veep to lead a community college in Illinois

Clinton Gabbard starts new job in January

By **RALPH HEIBUTZKI**

HP Correspondent

BENTON TOWNSHIP — Lake Michigan College's vice president of student services, Clinton Gabbard, is leaving for Illinois next month to become McHenry County Community College's eighth president.



GABBARD

Gabbard's commitment to student success — as well as his strategic planning and relationship-building abilities — made him the right man for the job, MCC's chairman said.

"The (MCC) board is eager to begin working with Dr. Gabbard," Mike Smith said in a news release posted Friday on the college's website. "He brings a new perspective to the college, and a balance of experience in both teaching and administration. With his extensive knowledge in strategic planning, community-based initiatives, and collaborative partnerships, Dr. Gabbard will undoubtedly move the institution forward."

The college is in Crystal Lake.

Gabbard expressed similar feelings in his own statement.

"I am humbled and excited to accept this role at MCC. The college's value of community aligns with my deeply-held belief that colleges are only as strong as their commitment to working together and to

being an effective partner with the local community."

Gabbard, in his official biography, said he leaves LMC after spearheading a number of major successes in his department, where he oversaw 56 employees and a \$3 million budget.

"Internally, I have successfully bridged departments across the college, beginning new student success initiatives that have necessitated academics, (information technology), and Student Services moving in chorus," he said.

He cites as achievements developing LMC's first wine production program; designing "Start-to-Finish," a program geared to students back on track academically; and developing the "Hawk's Nest," a student activity center, and center for veterans.

Gabbard will replace Vicky Smith, who's retiring Dec. 31 after five years at the college. Gabbard will start his new job.

Gabbard's departure coincides with that of LMC President Bob Harrison, who's retiring Dec. 31 after leading that institution since 2009.

Gabbard had been the only internal candidate to express interest in succeeding Harrison.

However, he withdrew before the LMC board last month voted to hire Harrison's successor, Dr. Jennifer Spielvogel, in order to pursue the McHenry job. He was among four finalists at MCC.

As McHenry's new president, Gabbard will serve for an initial term through Dec. 31, 2017, and earn an annual salary of \$215,000, his contract states.

Gabbard had served at LMC since October 2011. Prior to that, he served as vice president of student

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services at Walla Walla Community College in Washington – as well as director of counseling and psychiatric services at Purdue University, and psychologist and adjunct assistant professor at the University of Notre Dame.