

May 20, 2004

04-156

COMMENDATION OF INTERIM PRESIDENT  
GERARD "JERRY" BERGER

PREPARED BY: Bob Palmer, Board Chair

REPORT: Dr. Gerard "Jerry" Berger has served as Interim President of Portland Community College from August 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004. The Board is grateful for his service and commends him for his accomplishments this year.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board adopt the resolution commending President Jerry Berger.

Jerry Berger has provided Portland Community College with outstanding leadership and guidance for the past ten months. In a time of uncertainty and anxiety about the future, Jerry Berger has provided the College with strong and steady leadership, competence and vision. Jerry Berger has been more than a "place holder" interim president. He has taken an active and vibrant role in shaping the future for Portland Community College and he has done so with confidence and enthusiasm. Jerry has given the entire College community a sense of purpose and mission and helped keep the ship on course during challenging times.

Jerry Berger has shown compassion and honesty in his interactions with Board members, students, faculty, classified, and administrative staff. He has treated people with dignity and respect and gained the trust of groups throughout the college community. He has guided the college through a successful search for a new College president, and participated personally in the search process for the campus president positions. He has ensured that the college is on a sound financial footing, negotiated contract extensions with both the Faculty and Classified federations, balanced the budget, initiated and completed a major rewrite of

Board policies and has undertaken the process for developing a College rule and procedure book. He has provided leadership in the Educational Master Plan implementation, assisted with the planning for the 2005 accreditation visit, and been an active and visible community presence.

Jerry Berger's experience as president of Chemeketa Community College and his association with the other college presidents, the OCCWD and OCCA have proven invaluable to PCC during this year. Another president would have struggled with the complications of the funding formula and the links between changing the formula and the Emergency Board allocation, as well as the policies and politics of the State Board of Education. Jerry Berger came to PCC with a deep history and understanding of the formula, knowledge of the political process and the ability to negotiate on behalf of the college. The Board appreciates his tenacity in getting through the funding formula minefield.

In thousands of other ways, Jerry Berger has left a mark on Portland Community College. He has been open, honest and compassionate in his interactions with people. He has identified and acted upon problems, gaps and opportunities. He has actively participated in decisions regarding academic and student affairs and involved people in decision-making. He has provided the Board with the capacity to discuss controversial issues, and to come to consensus in a productive way.

Jerry Berger has ensured that the College is a healthy and strong organization that is poised to flourish and meet the challenges ahead. He has left the incoming administration with a capable and talented leadership team who are prepared to work together to meet the needs of our students and communities. The Board values the contributions Jerry Berger has made this year, and thanks him for his friendship, humor, leadership, and vision. The Board wishes Jerry happiness and success in his return to retirement and his pursuit of other opportunities to make a difference in the lives of community college students.