



Robert Vela, Ed.D.

BIOGRAPHY

Robert Vela, Ed.D. currently serves as the 12th President of San Antonio College in San Antonio, Texas. One of the largest single-campus community colleges in Texas, and one of the biggest in the nation, San Antonio College is the flagship institution in the Alamo Colleges District, which is made up of five distinct colleges. Vela assumed the role of President in August 2014, after serving as the Dean of Student Affairs, Vice President of Student Affairs, and Vice President for Student and Academic Success for nearly six years. During that time, he also served as the Interim District Director for the Alamo Colleges District Center for Student Information in 2010.

With more than 20 years in higher education administration, Vela brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the position as President. Before moving to San Antonio College, Vela held the position of Dean of Student Development at San Jacinto College - North Campus in Houston, Texas from 2005-2008. As well, he served as a Coordinator/Advisor at Coastal Bend College. Earlier in his career, he held several positions at Texas A&M University-Kingsville, including: Assistant Director of Upward Bound Math and Science, Director of Teacher Development Center, Director of TexasTEACH and Coordinator of New Teacher Recruitment. He has also served as adjunct faculty for Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Texas A&M University-San Antonio, Texas State University, University of Texas Pan American, Sam Houston State University, and the University of the Incarnate Word, among others.

Dr. Vela's personal philosophy is grounded in servant leadership, which is evident in his involvement with numerous professional organizations. He serves as President of the National Community College Hispanic Council, an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges, where he also serves on the Commission for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion. His other organizational involvement includes: National Council on Student Development, the Texas Public Policy Committee Representative for NASPA III, National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, American College Counseling Association, Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, National Institute for Staff & Organizational Development, American Counseling Association, National Association of Developmental Education, Texas Community College Teachers Association, Rotary Club of San Antonio, and the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

His honors include the 2021 Aspen Institute Prize for College Excellence, 2019 Malcolm Baldrige Award for Performance Excellence, 2015 Distinguished Alumni from Texas A&M University-Kingsville, 2008 National Community College Hispanic Council Leadership Fellows Program, the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development Excellence Award in Teaching, Leadership and Learning in 2007, and the Javelina Emotional Intelligence Program Award by the American College Personnel Association in 2003. He maintains his certifications as a Licensed Professional Counselor and a National Certified Counselor, and he holds an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from Texas A&M University-Kingsville and Corpus Christi, M.S. in Counseling and Guidance and a B.A. in Psychology from Texas A&M University – Kingsville.