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# Maureen Dunne: Candidate Profile

Posted

3/11/2019 12:01 AM



**Maureen Dunne, candidate for College of DuPage Board of Trustees, 2019**

**Bio**

Name: Dr. Maureen Dunne

City: Naperville

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Website: [www.maureendunne.com](http://www.maureendunne.com)

Office sought: College of DuPage Board of Trustees

Age: 43

Family: Husband and three children. Two identical girls and one boy (triplets). Throughout the years, I have also welcomed children with autism into my home as a therapeutic foster parent.

Occupation:

- Co-Founder/CEO, board director and adviser to technology startups
- Project Director/Adjunct Professor, "Innovation and Future of Work" -- University of Illinois Discovery Partners Institute Projects
- Partner, angel investor groups for early stage tech companies

Education:

- Fellowship, Cognitive Science and Technology, Harvard/MIT
- Ph.D. (Oxon DPhil.) University of Oxford (Rhodes Scholar)
- MSc. London School of Economics and Political Science
- Joint B.A./M.A. University of Chicago (Phi Beta Kappa)

- A.A. General Studies, Honors Program, College of DuPage
- Diploma, Downers Grove South High School
- Our Lady of Peace School, Darien, IL (K-8)

Civic Involvement:

- Executive Committee and Director for Technology and Entrepreneurship, Downers Grove Economic Development Corporation
- Board of Directors, Mental Health Association of Greater Chicago
- Member, Rotary Club (Chair, Autism Scholarship Fundraising Committee)
- Volunteer, American Cancer Society
- C-Suite Committee Member (supporting female technology entrepreneurs), Astia.org and Astia Fund
- Autism Society of America (Professional Membership)
- Co-Founder, Code DuPage
- Philanthropy and scholarship projects: The Transition 2 Success Project [www.transition2success.org](http://www.transition2success.org) and the Dr. Maureen N. Dunne Autism Student Success Scholarship at the College of DuPage

Previous elected offices held: This the first time I have ever run for any elected office.

Website: [www.maureendunne.com](http://www.maureendunne.com)  
(<http://www.maureendunne.com/>)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/maureen-n-dunne-ph-d-a2609a45> (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/maureen-n-dunne-ph-d-a2609a45/>)

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### **Issue questions**

Describe your vision for the primary role of a community college?

Ideally, a community college is an affordable, convenient, high-quality educational resource capable of evolving with a changing employment and knowledge landscape while meeting the needs of an extremely diverse community. Everyone has the opportunity to

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learn at a community college: The poor, the rich, the single parent, citizens, noncitizens, students with disabilities, retirees seeking personal enrichment, veterans looking to reskill, high school graduates interested in certificate and apprenticeship programs in the skilled trades, and honors students looking to transfer to selective four-year universities. To quote former COD President Dr. Michael T Murphy: "We can say to those looking for a second chance, we have it for you. And for those looking to go as far as they can possibly go, we have it for you as well" ("A community of achievement," Chicago Tribune, December, 29, 2002). I got my own start at COD.

How well is your community college fulfilling that role? What changes, if any, need to be made?

I have listened carefully to COD stakeholders, and my strong sense is that most are eagerly waiting to be uplifted by a positive and proactive message about the future of College of DuPage. A fresh perspective is needed on the Board of Trustees. Every decision is both fiscal and fundamentally about the quality of education at the College. As an alumna, I am in a unique position to help facilitate increased trust and collaboration between the faculty, administration, students and the Board of Trustees to move beyond the past and toward a new era of innovation and growth. When I was a student at COD, the motto was "Lifelong Learning." Never has this been more true. Due to a rapidly changing employment landscape, it is already becoming commonplace to have multiple careers during one's lifetime. The community college of the future will need to evolve into 'the primary community resource' for retooling skills throughout a person's lifetime. A proactive approach to 21st century skill development is imperative given the inevitable transformative impact of artificial intelligence and automation. The challenge for community college leaders is to be nimble and deft enough to achieve this goal in a fiscally responsible manner.

Are you currently employed by or retired from a school district, if so, which one? Is any member of your direct family -- spouse, child or child-in-law -- employed by the school district where you are seeking a school board seat?

No for both questions.

Is a tax rate increase needed and, if so, how do you justify it?

No. COD has a strong cash position at present.

As an alum and taxpaying resident with deep experience in board governance, executive management, education, science, and technology, I have been meeting with college representatives over the past year to advise on innovative strategies to advance the mission of the College in a manner that precludes any further demands on taxpayers. There are a number of strategies, including grant funding, public-private partnerships and private sector funding sources that have not been sufficiently explored. As a Trustee, I will ask tough questions and will push the board to thoughtfully consider options for increased enrollment, as well as the best path and return on investment for cash reserves. Not only will I give proper attention and oversight to the fiscal management of the college, I will also be able to engage all stakeholders in important conversations about the future of COD. The balance between fiscal prudence, community trust, and educational quality is always a delicate one. But, as I believe we have discovered of late together, there are important additional tools that can be tapped to continue the path of progress without any need to increase the burden on taxpayers.

Community colleges provide many services to a diverse population. Is there a service your college should be providing that it is not, or reaching a segment of the population that it is not?

New and creative ideas and outreach activities are needed to ultimately reach segments of District 502's population not previously reached. Twenty years ago, I proposed the "Activities Transcript" that the College produced as a prototype. Recently, I have worked with college leadership in making such an alternative transcript available for all COD students in the future (separate from course grades) -- to showcase leadership activities and mastery of skills for potential employers. From listening to stakeholders, we also need to be considering the changing demographics of the students we serve. Are we regularly showcasing successful role models in STEM for our diverse study body? Other areas of suggested improvement include: Resources for veterans, transitioning workers, high school grads not seeking a four-year degree, and workers displaced by rapid technological change seeking to retool their skills and re-enter the workforce. Applied skill-building could become a great value proposition at COD. There is also a rapidly growing student population with autism spectrum disorders. As this program undergoes expansion to meet this rising demand at COD, one important priority will be

faculty training on evidenced-based practices to accommodate diverse learning needs, including students with autism.

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