

**Ron Oden**  
360 Cabrillo Road, #104  
Palm Springs, California 92262  
(760) 534-8026  
Ronoden1@gmail.com

May 5, 2023

Trustee Bonnie Stefan, Ed D., Chair  
College of the Desert  
43500 Monterey Avenue  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear Trustee Stefan:

I am respectfully expressing my interest in being appointed to fill the vacated College of the Desert Trustee Area 3 seat.

I have been given the greatest education opportunities.

Through my decades of experiences as an educator at COD, administrator, elected public servant and faith leader, I have gained perspective and insight to be a productive problem solver and conscientious consensus builder.

My sharing classrooms with thousands of earnest students, churches with thoughtful congregations and city leadership with passionate constituents has been the greatest education.

With the conclusion of the Spring Semester, I will be retiring from my 33-year career as an adjunct instructor at COD. My retirement will occur before the appointed Area 3 Trustee will be seated. It would be an honor to continue my role at COD as a member of the Board of Trustees.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Ron Oden



DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
43500 Monterey Avenue
Palm Desert, CA 92260
760.346.8041 | www.collegeofthedesert.edu

Provisional Trustee Candidate Application Form

Name Ron Oden

Home Address 360 Cabrillo Road, #104

City, State, Zip Palm Springs, CA 92262

Phone Number 760 534-8026 Email Address: Ronoden1@gmail.com

Occupation Adjunct instructor, College of the Desert, retiring Spring Semester 2023.

Company College of the Desert,

Business Address 43500 Monterey Avenue Palm Desert, CA 92260

Please complete the following or attach a current resume.

Education (List degrees or highest year completed and the college or school.)
See attached resume.

Employment History (last 6 years)
See attached resume.

Public and Community Service
Palm Springs Mayor 2003-2007; Palm Springs City Council 1995 - 2003.
Boardmember, Cal State San Bernardino Palm Desert Campus. Pastoral Care consultant at the Betty Ford Center.

(Check if applicable) I am related to a current employee of the district.

If yes, name of employee and your relationship

I understand that I may not be an employee of the district and serve as a member of the board.

I certify that I meet all eligibility requirements. (Note: To be eligible, an individual must be at least 18 years old; must be a resident Trustee Area 3; must be a registered voter and must not be disqualified from holding civil office by the Constitution or any law of the state.)

Signature: Date: May 4, 2023

Application due by May 4, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Application may be emailed to Armando Robles, Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent/President's Office and Board of Trustees at arrobles@collegeofthedesert.edu or delivered to the Superintendent/President's Office at 43500 Monterey Ave, Palm Desert, CA 92260.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Bonnie Stefan, Ed.D., Chair • Bea Gonzalez, Vice Chair • Rubén AriAztlán Pérez, Clerk
Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Member • Allen Pahl, Student Trustee

Superintendent/President
Martha Garcia, Ed.D.



### Written Application Questionnaire

1. Please state why you are seeking an appointment with the Board of Trustees.  
See attachment for response.

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2. What skills and abilities would you bring to the work of the board of trustees?  
See attachment for response.

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3. Please describe your experience in serving on boards, commissions, appointed or elected positions.  
Please list the dates and how these experiences would contribute to your service on the board.  
See attachment for response.

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4. Describe other community involvement and experience that would contribute to the work of the board and the community college.  
See attachment for response.

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5. Please give an example of how you have handled being part of a voting body when you have had a different point of view or position than the majority of the board members.  
See attachment for response.

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6. What is your approach to working with a team of people in achieving policy level goals?  
See attachment for response.

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7. What do you hope to accomplish by serving as a trustee?  
See attachment for response.

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*Applicants may attach supporting materials and letters of reference. However, the maximum number of materials that may be submitted is 10 pages (this includes the application, resume, interest letter, questionnaire responses and any supporting documents)*

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Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D., Member • Allen Pahl, Student Trustee

Superintendent/President  
Martha Garcia, Ed.D.

# Ron Oden

## Application Questionnaire attachment

### **Q1. Please state why are you seeking an appointment with the Board of Trustees?**

I am excited about the opportunity to represent COD Area 3 and the entire Coachella Valley to bring progress and positive solutions to COD's future.

Our COD students are important to me. Over the past 33 years as an adjunct instructor, I have taught and interacted with thousands of students. As the Coordinator of Student Activities, students have shared with me the challenges they face and the incredible benefits of higher education. And, I have a high school-aged granddaughter who will be attending COD. I want to help foster the talents, confidence and leadership skills of COD students.

I have had the gratifying experience working alongside creative and talented COD educators, administrators and staff.

As I enter my retirement from teaching with the conclusion of the Spring Semester, I look forward to the opportunity to serve as a Trustee to be a part of making COD a richly rewarding experience for its students, faculty, staff and administration.

### **Q2. What skills and abilities would you bring to the work of the Board of Trustees?**

I recognize opportunities. As someone who until recently has served on the faculty of COD, I understand what is working well and recognize opportunities for COD improving its services to students and recruiting and retaining the best faculty and staff.

I am a consensus builder and team player. As City Councilmember and Mayor of Palm Springs from 1995 to 2007, I worked together with my fellow Councilmembers, colleagues and staff to craft solutions to our city's challenges, develop productive policies, implement forward-thinking plans and manage tight budgets.

Since 1998 I have been a trained mediator. With the Riverside Small Claims Court, I have mediated between parties to resolve conflicts. This means listening to both sides in the conflict to find an equitable solution. Resolution often includes translating positions to the parties so they can absorb the facts if they are having difficulty moving past the personalities involved.

I am a proven education administrator. When I began my career as a Pastor, I administered several church schools. I have also served as a Boardmember of CSUSB

Palm Desert Campus Advancement Board and Executive Director of Desert Career College in Palm Springs.

I have experience with the policies and procedures of the accreditation process for vocational schools, religious schools and California community college systems.

Over the past five years I have taken additional training in the relevant area of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

**Q3. Please describe your experience in serving on boards, commissions, appointed and elected positions. Please list the dates and how these experiences and how experiences would contribute to your service on the board?**

I earned the confidence of Palm Springs residents when for a dozen years serving my city and colleagues as a consensus-building Mayor and Councilmember. I was elected to City council from 1995 to 2003 and elected Mayor from 2003 to 2007.

During my 1995-2007 period as Palm Springs elected official, I also served on numerous city, Coachella Valley and County boards and commissions, including:

- Regional Transportation Board (SCAG)
- Sunline Board
- Coachella Valley Association of Governments Board (CVAG)
- Coachella Valley Economic Partnership Board (CVEP)
- Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau Board
- Palm Springs Airport Commission
- African American Parents Advisory Council Board
- Riverside County Community Action Partnership, Chairman
- Equality California Institute Board Vice-President
- United Way
- (partial list)

From 2014 – 2017, I served on the Desert Highlands/Gateway Estates Wellness Committee which was sponsored by the Desert Healthcare District.

I served on the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus Advancement Board when we created the strategic plan to make the campus a reality. This was a collaborative effort including the valuable ideas and insights from leaders from throughout the Coachella Valley.

In these positions I learned the value of working with my colleagues to craft creative solutions to challenges, forging effective compromises on policy issues, making meaningful responses to constituent concerns and effectively managing substantial budgets.

**Q4. Describe other community involvement and experience that would contribute to the work of the board and the community college.**

In 1978 I was recruited by the Northeastern Conference and pastored churches in New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

I have served as a Pastoral Care consultant at the Betty Ford Center.

In the COD community, from 1995 – 2000 I was the coordinator of Student Activities. When I served as coordinator, it was a classified position; today, it is an administrative position.

**Q5. Please give an example of how you have handled being part of a voting body when you have had a different point of view or position than the majority of the board members?**

**Saving an architectural icon.**

While on Palm Springs city council a developer presented a proposal to raze the historic gas station at the foot of Tram Way. The structure was designed by the world-renowned architect, Albert Frey – widely known as the father of Modern Architecture. The structure had been modified over time and many were unable to see its spectacular Mid-Century character. The council as well as the community were divided on the issue of preserving or destroying the structure.

To reconcile the conflict in a positive way and preserve the important cultural resource I recognized that there needed to be an educational component to help those who were not aware of the beauty and significance of the original structure. My solution included inviting experts on Mid-Century architecture from around the world to educate the City Council and the public about the importance of the Albert Frey masterpiece.

This positive process had the result of publicizing Palm Springs as a mecca for Mid-Century design. Eventually we had so many people coming to our city to tell us about the treasures that we possessed. I am happy to say that from what could have been simply a demolished gas station, Modernism Week was spawned and has grown into one of Palm Springs' greatest annual revenue generating events.

**Empowering COD students**

As the Coordinator for Students Activities at COD, the Trustees were originally resistant to having a Student Trustee in attendance at Board meetings. I facilitated some of our COD students making meaningful presentations before the Association of California Community Colleges. When the COD Trustee Board saw the presentations, they realized the contributions and capabilities of our students and gave our Student Trustee a seat at Board meetings.

**Q6. What is your approach to working with a team of people in achieving policy level goals?**

First of all, I value people. Active listening is a top priority.

I believe that people should know and feel appreciated. Any and all who are willing to contribute time or talent should be made to feel like they belong and are valued. It's imperative that we also respect expertise but still allowing all to contribute their opinions regarding policies and goals.

I always try to foster a creative and cooperative environment by thanking everyone because it is vital to sustaining a team spirit while focusing on goals that the group has developed. When people feel heard and accepted there are few opportunities for serious disagreements.

I earned the confidence of Palm Springs residents when for a dozen years I served them as a consensus-building Mayor and Councilmember. I worked to bring residents, businesses and colleagues together on many issues.

**Q7. What do you hope to accomplish serving as a Trustee?**

I have worked with every city in the Coachella Valley as an elected official, a volunteer/contributor to non-profits, spiritual leadership and community service. I bring expertise as a vocational educator, administrator and mediator.

Because of my vast experience and working knowledge of the Coachella Valley I have a reputation of working with all people and I am often the voice of the unheard and underrepresented segments of our population.

My goals as Trustee are restoring the confidence of COD's faculty and building a bridge between faculty and the Trustees. I will work with my colleagues to reconcile differences and collaborate to accomplish meaningful programs for our COD students.

# Ron Oden Curriculum Vitae

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## Professional Experience:

- Adjunct instructor at College of the Desert, Desert Career College, and Chapman University 1990 to May 2023.
- Boardmember, CSUSB Palm Desert Campus Advancement Board.
- Pastoral care consultant at the Betty Ford Center.
- Taught Mediation for Community Action Partnerships, Riverside; Director, Mediation Program, CAP, Olga Sanchez.
- Taught class in Hospitality and Economic Development for Russian dignitaries, PDC, College of Extended Learning, May 2013.

## Public Service Experiences:

- Served eight years on the Palm Springs City Council 1995 - 2003.
- Elected Mayor of City of Palm Springs 2003 - 2007.

When on Council and Mayor, served on numerous boards and commissions, including:

- Regional Transportation Board (SCAG)
- Sunline Board
- Coachella Valley Association of Governments Board (CVAG)
- Coachella Valley Economic Partnership Board (CVEP)
- Greater Palm Springs Convention and Visitors Bureau Board
- Palm Springs Airport Commission
- African American Parents Advisory Council Board
- Riverside County Community Action Partnership, Chairman
- Equality California Institute Board Vice-President

## Education:

- Bachelor of Arts in History, Sociology and Theology from Oakwood College (now University) in Huntsville, Alabama.
- Master of Arts Degree in Theology with studies in Family Life and Counseling from Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.
- Master of Arts Degree in Ethnic Studies from State University of New York in Albany.
- Post-graduate courses in Marriage, Family and Child Counseling Studies at Loma Linda University

**For more information, please contact me: [RonOden1@gmail.com](mailto:RonOden1@gmail.com) (760) 534-8026.  
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## **Ron Oden references**

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