1. What has the CEO initiated or helped to develop in the area of innovative programs used in two-year postsecondary institutions?

What is telling about Lee Lambert’s leadership of Pima Community College is that PCC, while simultaneously addressing heavy scrutiny by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and managing a complete financial disinvestment by the Arizona Legislature, is an innovator locally, regionally and nationally. Lee recognizes that gaining the highest degree of confidence from our accreditor is merely a necessary step to making PCC into a premier community college. He has charged administration with looking beyond accreditation to identify other challenges and opportunities, and to make truly substantial change.

Lee’s farsighted leadership has given rise to wide-ranging new initiatives that will improve programs and services for students, employers and the community in Pima County. Here are a few examples from 2016 and 2017:

- PCC is the only community college in a consortium of eight colleges and universities in the western U.S. to receive a U.S. Department of Transportation grant to address regional transportation, mobility, workforce development and environmental issues. The grant will help PCC provide Geographic Information System/Global Positioning System (GIS/GPS) training, along with training in soft skills for students in its Truck Driver Training and Logistics and Supply Chain Management programs. The funding also will allow PCC to put its Logistics and Supply Chain Management program fully online.

- PCC is the only community college in Arizona, and one of only 38 in the nation, to receive Achieving the Dream's Open Educational Resources Degree Initiative Grant. Over three years, the grant will allow PCC to develop online degree programs using high-quality, free educational resources, removing a financial roadblock for many students, high textbook prices.

- The Chancellor, in concert with community college leaders in Phoenix and Casa Grande, signed a charter for an Arizona Advanced Technology Corridor, a new partnership to create a standardized technology curriculum in order to make the Tucson/Phoenix region more attractive to employers. Lee, recognizing that geography need not limit partnerships, has led PCC to charter membership in the Talent Solutions Coalition, a non-profit organization comprising PCC and three other U.S. leaders in Aviation Technology education that will operate as a conduit between colleges and employers.

2. How has the CEO served on technical or special committees serving two-year postsecondary education, and what impact did this effort have in the community, state, or nation?

Chancellor Lambert serves on multiple committees to address two-year postsecondary education issues in the local community, regionally, as well as nationally. A non-exhaustive sample is listed below:

Education leadership
- American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), former member of Board of Directors
- AACC Committee on Program Initiatives and Workforce Training, former chair
- Arizona Community College Coordinating Council (AC4), member
- American Council on Education (ACE), member
• National Society of Collegiate Scholars, honorary board member
• University of Arizona STEM Learning Center, board of advisors

**Economic development**
• Arizona@Work, board member
• National Association of Manufacturers, member
• National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3), former board chair
• Sun Corridor Inc., Founders Circle and Board of Directors

**Community leadership**
• Pima Association of Governments (PAG), board member
• Southern Arizona Leadership Council (SALC), member
• United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona, board of directors

**Diversity/Inclusion**
• Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), member
• National Asian Pacific Islanders Council (NAPIC), board member

3. **How has the CEO demonstrated a “caring attitude” toward the board of trustees, administrators, faculty, and students?**

When Lee arrived at PCC in July 2013, he was the fourth person to occupy the Chancellor’s office since early 2012; when the previous Chancellor retired amid media reports alleging he engendered a culture of fear at the College. Lee replaced the second of two Interim Chancellors just months after the College had been placed on probation by the HLC. Employee morale was low, as was the public’s confidence in the institution.

Lee immediately set about changing how the College is perceived by employees, students, and the community. The effort has been marked by Lee’s appreciation that change begins at the top, and that it is necessary for him to be a model of civility, openness and honesty in interactions with all PCC constituents.

Additionally, he has brought substantive institutional change that has improved PCC’s image across the board. Lee demonstrated his commitment to shared governance through the creation of All College Council, a key PCC governance body that brings together students, regular and adjunct faculty, staff and administrators to discuss important College-wide issues and initiatives. Lee’s desire to retain and nurture the College’s best and brightest employees is evident in the development of a series of leadership trainings. During his tenure, PCC has established a College Climate Cooperative to address issues related to employee morale. Lee has sought out community input by annually holding a Futures Conference, a gathering of internal and external stakeholders and a key part of the College strategic planning process. Lee also understands that PCC, located in diverse Tucson, should be a champion for residents of Pima County often overlooked by higher education, and should serve as an instrument of social justice. That mindset animated PCC’s first Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan, a document notable for the degree to which the community collaborated in its drafting.

Regarding Lee’s relationship with the Governing Board, it is important to note that four of the Board’s five members we have been elected or appointed since Lee took over. Lee’s relationship with the Board has been characterized by trust, honesty, and civility. He meets regularly with the chair and vice-chair to set the meeting agenda and discuss key issues. In addition, he communicates individually as needed with all members of the Board if important
items need to be conveyed. During his tenure he developed an extensive orientation for new board members; he created a professional development budget for each board member so that they can participate in leadership development opportunities such as the Governance Leadership Institute by ACCT. He also ensures the Board participates in the annual Leadership Congress in Washington, DC. He was one of the key Arizona community college leaders to sponsor bringing in the ACCT Governance Institute for Student Success by which all AZ community Colleges bring together governing board members and college leaders to look at best practices and develop implementation plans for student success. Lee also brings ACCT to work with the Board at its annual retreat to help set priorities and work more cohesively. He takes a team of faculty and staff leaders and members of the board to the annual HLC conference to stay current with accreditation and best practices.

Lee is a tireless communicator, telling PCC’s story to numerous external and internal constituencies, be it at employee professional development trainings, new faculty orientations, national conferences, economic development meetings, or through the media. Each semester he holds office hours at each campus and facility. During these visits, he meets with leadership, faculty and staff, often tours the facility, and has lunch with students to hear their concerns and expectations. In short, in only a few years, he has become an accessible, recognizable force in the community, the exemplar of a servant-leader, and through his efforts the College’s communities recognize that PCC is entering a new, better era.

4. How has the CEO been active in developing, organizing, or supporting state and/or national two-year postsecondary education associations?

As the CEO of PCC, Lee has worked across the state with peer institutions to serve as an advocate for community colleges. This task is challenging, given that the state’s 10 diverse community college districts are not governed by a state board, but are bound together loosely by voluntary confederation, the Arizona Community College Coordinating Council (AC4).

In spite of this challenge, in 2016 Lee succeeded in garnering widespread community college support for a crucial piece of state legislation, Senate Bill 1322, which allows community colleges to increase their ability to quickly supply innovative career and technical education (CTE) by removing some caps on spending money necessary to develop CTE programs in high-demand fields. Moreover, he was instrumental in marshaling business and industry support for the bill. That the bill became law in an era of decreased governmental support for Arizona’s urban community college districts is a testament to the quality of the effort Lee spearheaded.

5. What has the CEO published in the area of two-year postsecondary educational concepts?

Book chapters

- Author, chapter in “Overcoming Educational Racism in the Community College: Creating Pathways to Success for Minority and Impoverished Student Populations,” published by
Guest commentary/newspapers

- “Pima Community College is headed in the right direction,” Arizona Daily Star, Oct. 12, 2016
- “PCC has been turned around,” Arizona Daily Star, July 9, 2014

Huffington Post

- “Building Better Pathways to In-Demand Careers,” Sept. 24, 2014

6. What awards or honors has this CEO received in recognition of leadership in the college, community, or nation?

- Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education, national leadership award “in recognition of your leadership in the field of higher education and your contributions to the API community,” April 2015
- League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) Council 1057 annual Educators Awards & Scholarship Banquet recognition, April 2015; LULAC/FBI Community Service Gold Award, September 2014 and September 2016
- Pan Asian Community Alliance in Tucson, Man of the Year, February 2015
- NC3 Founders Award for Vision and Leadership, July 2014
- WIB Service Award, December 2014
- Arizona chapter, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), award for service to PCC’s student-veterans, May 2015
- Named Patriotic Employer for contributing to national security and protecting liberty and freedom by supporting employee participation in the National Guard and Reserve of the U.S., May 2015 and November 2016

7. What outstanding characteristics of this CEO motivated you to nominate him or her?

Lee Lambert took the helm of PCC in July, 2013 when the College was at its lowest point in its almost 50-year history. In four years, Lee successfully lead PCC through one of the most difficult, complex crises that any community college in the country has ever faced, which lead to the college being placed on probation prior to his arrival. He developed a team that strategically tackled immense problems, including a core mission change, low employee morale, and community mistrust. He walked into a College that had severe weaknesses across the spectrum ranging from college leadership and governance to operational structures. Under his leadership, in March 2017, PCC was removed from all accreditation sanctions is now on its way to becoming a preeminent national leader in the community college movement.