

# Minnesota State

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## Deidra Peaslee Named Saint Paul College President

**ST. PAUL, Minn., March 17, 2021** – The Board of Trustees of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities has named Deidra Peaslee to become the next president of Saint Paul College. The new appointment becomes effective immediately.

“Dr. Peaslee's commitment and leadership of the college while serving as interim president has been exemplary,” said Devinder Malhotra, chancellor of Minnesota State. “She consistently demonstrates strong leadership, empathy, decisiveness, and tenacity. No matter where she has been, she has wholly embraced and immersed herself in transforming the institution, facing challenges head on with grace and grit. As interim president, she has navigated the college community through the dual crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and that of systemic racism. Dr. Peaslee is the right leader at this juncture of the college’s trajectory.”

Dr. Peaslee is an innovative leader with extensive experience in higher education leadership in community colleges, public and private universities, as well as non-profit organizations. She has been serving as interim president of Saint Paul College since 2019, and during this time, her many accomplishments include helping to shape the institutional approach of the college and documenting its progress as it prepared for an accreditation visit, and providing leadership that resulted in the creation of a workgroup of faculty, staff, and administrators who drafted a plan to become an anti-racist and trauma-informed institution.

Previously, she served Anoka-Ramsey Community College (ARCC), which enrolls over 11,000 students annually. From 2011 to 2019, she served as vice president of academic and student affairs, leading a team of administrators in managing all academic programs, student services, diversity and inclusion, and institutional research. Her accomplishments included leading the creation and implementation of the First Year Experience program which helped improve retention of new students by 15%, and leading the development and collaborating on the creation of the ARCC Scholar (Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) program for faculty members to conduct research within the two-year college classroom.

She also served the ARCC Cambridge Campus as dean of educational services from 2002 to 2011, supervising all academic and student affairs functions, and collaborating with 12 local school districts to offer concurrent enrollment and community-based college programs. Under her leadership, the Cambridge campus more than doubled its enrollment and developed the Teacher Preparation Partnership, a collaboration with St. Cloud State University and the North Branch Area School District.

Previously, she served the Kellstadt Graduate School of Business of DePaul University as assistant dean and director from 1999 to 2002, and as director of the International MBA from 1997 to 1999.

She holds a bachelor's degree from South Dakota State University, a master's from Minnesota State University, Mankato, and a doctorate from Saint Mary's University of Minnesota.

Dr. Peaslee succeeded Rassoul Dastmozd, the previous president of Saint Paul College, in 2019 when he announced his intention to retire.

With approval by the Board of Trustees, the chancellor is authorized to negotiate a three year contract with Dr. Peaslee that will become effective July 1, 2021.

### **About Saint Paul College**

Founded in 1910 with roots in technical education, Saint Paul College has a rich tradition of educational excellence, diversity, and partnerships. It has grown to become a respected, innovative, and comprehensive community and technical college serving 15,000 students each year. The college offers 50 associate degree and 67 certificate and diploma programs, including business, career and technical education, health science, STEM, service programs, and liberal and fine arts. Many programs have been recognized for innovation, teaching excellence, and student success. Saint Paul College was recognized as a top 10 Community College in the United States by TheBestSchools.org in 2020.

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*Minnesota State includes 30 community and technical colleges and seven state universities serving approximately 340,000 students. It is the third-largest system of two-year colleges and four-year universities in the United States.*