



**Joel L. Kinnamon, Ed.D.**  
Superintendent/President, Emeritus

Dr. Joel Kinnamon, College of the Desert President Emeritus and California Indian Nations College Trustee and Chairman of the Board has served in higher education for more than 30 years and retired as Superintendent/President of College of the Desert on March 31, 2021. He is a first-generation college graduate. He attended Seminole Junior College in Oklahoma and then transferred to Oklahoma State University earning a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Agricultural Economics. He received a Master's in Business Administration (M.B.A.) at Oklahoma City University and Doctorate (Ed.D.) in Education from Nova Southeastern University.

After several years of working in the financial field, he knew his skills would be best applied in education. He became a professor of Business Management and held various administrative positions, including the Dean of Business, at Oklahoma City Community College, and later, promoted to Provost at Tulsa Community College.

In 2002, Dr. Kinnamon moved to the San Francisco Bay Area where he served as Vice Chancellor, and subsequently, Chancellor for Chabot-Las Positas Community College District. He was one of the co-founding Chancellors creating programs for African American men (UMOJA) and LATINx students with the Puente program. Dr. Kinnamon also served as California's college representative to the national Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

In July 2012, Dr. Kinnamon assumed the role of Superintendent/President at College of the Desert. During his time at College of the Desert, he oversaw tremendous growth, witnessed the completion and renovation of numerous buildings on the Palm Desert Campus, the expansion of the Mecca/Thermal Campus, and the opening of the East Valley Campus in Indio. The college also opened satellite classrooms in Desert Hot Springs and a temporary campus in Palm Springs. In November 2016, voters approved a \$578 million bond that allows for continued facility expansion; including building a permanent West Valley Campus in Palm Springs to fulfill a twenty-year community commitment providing access to underserved communities, and doubling the size of the East Valley Campus in Indio, and creating a University Center that allows students to remain in the Coachella Valley to earn a bachelor's or graduate level degree.

In May 2021, the College celebrated the largest graduating class in its 60-year history for the seventh straight year. While President of COD, the College was ranked as the fastest growing community college in the state of California. During his tenure, he increased and diversified the number of faculty and staff and implemented services to targeted student populations resulting in higher success rates. These actions resulted in COD earning state and national awards and nominations for excellence including the Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and a winner of the prestigious Bellwether Award.

When Dr. Kinnamon arrived at COD, the College faced an \$8 million deficit owed to the State Chancellor's Office for inappropriate reporting of the number of full-time equivalent student enrolled. By the time Dr. Kinnamon retired, College of the Desert was in its best financial shape ever with approximately \$30 million in reserves.

Dr. Joel Kinnamon lives in Rancho Mirage with his husband, Chris Parman. They have been together for 24 years and were the first gay couple to be married on the Assembly Floor of the State Capitol in 2008.