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SVC looking for trustee after death of Piercy

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The Office of the Governor's Boards and Commissions staff will begin the process to fill an open Skagit Valley College Board of Trustees position in the next few weeks following the death of Trustee Don Piercy.

Piercy died May 25 following a long battle with cancer.

Piercy was first appointed to the SVC Board of Trustees in January 2007 and reappointed to another five-year term last October. He was board chairman from July 2009 through June 2010 and also served on the Board of Directors and Legislative Action Committee for the Trustees Association of Community and Technical Colleges.

"(Piercy) was very well-respected throughout the community and technical college system. He was very passionate about the college, very passionate about the students," said SVC President Tom Keegan. "He loved to see students succeed. Graduation was one of his favorite days because he was able to shake hands and see the excitement of the students."

Keegan said the college completed many major building projects during Piercy's tenure on the board, including Laura Angst Hall, Gary Knutzen Cardinal Center, the Joan Armstrong Tennis Courts and the Northwest Career and Technical Academy in partnership with local school districts. A groundbreaking ceremony for Lewis Hall, which was designed and funded during Piercy's tenure, will be held next Tuesday.

Piercy also presided over SVC's search last year for a new president to replace Gary Tollefson, who retired.

Kim Tanaka, executive analyst for the Boards and Commissions staff, said she will begin working with the current trustees, local elected officials and community leaders in the next few weeks to determine what strengths would benefit a new candidate. Then, current board members will talk with potential candidates about filling the volunteer position that will run through September 2016.

Tanaka said board members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state Senate after having been vetted and recommended by the Boards and Commissions staff. Anyone can apply to the position on the office's website. She said the ideal candidate would be someone committed to education and the community college system who understands the needs of the community.

Keegan said the five-member Board of Trustees governs the college by setting its strategic plan, hiring and evaluating the president, and establishing the college's policy and budget.

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Piercy