

## South Mountain Community College President, Dr. Shari Olson, named 2014 Entrepreneurial President of the Year

**[Phoenix, AZ – October 24, 2014]— SMCC President, Dr. Shari Olson, has been named the 2014 Entrepreneurial President by the National Association of Community College Entrepreneurship (NACCE).**

Since arriving at SMCC in 2011, Dr. Olson has made it a priority to focus on entrepreneurship by implementing a strengths-based model that has created a culture where staff, faculty, and students are continually encouraged to find innovative ways to employ their strengths and deeply engage in their work.

“Research has shown that up to 50 percent of jobs will be consultant or freelance by the year 2020. I am committed to providing programs where students can recognize their talents and abilities in order to succeed in an entrepreneurial society,” said Dr. Olson. “It is imperative that we create opportunities for students to learn more about taking control of their path to success and to supporting an entrepreneurial culture across the campus. I’m honored to be recognized by NACCE for my efforts in fostering the principles of entrepreneurship at South Mountain.”

In 2013, Dr. Olson brought renowned entrepreneur Johnny Cupcake to SMCC where his inspirational story demonstrated how he used his strengths, passion for risk-taking and dedication that failing is the next step to success, to create a successful business. That same year, a partnership was created with the Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) and, for the first time ever, college courses were offered on the reservation.

“Dr. Olson works diligently to create an environment where staff, faculty and students feel empowered to engage their passions and pursue possibilities,” stated Bruce McHenry, business faculty and director, community entrepreneur center. “Her leadership results in innovative programs and experiences that move the college forward.”

Founded in 2002, NACCE hosts an annual conference and exhibition, regional summits, a quarterly journal, monthly webinars, a dynamic list-serve and training resources. The organization recognizes community college presidents and representatives who have taken action by dedicating resources committed to fostering entrepreneurship and small business development on their campuses, thereby spurring innovation and job creation in their communities.

South Mountain Community College offers transfer-ready academic courses and job-specific occupational training. The main campus is located on Baseline Rd. and 24th St. in Phoenix. There are two satellite campuses, SMCC’s Guadalupe Center and SMCC’s Laveen Center. South Mountain Community College is part of the Maricopa County Community College District, one of the largest community college districts in the nation.