

Biography

Rudy Besikof, Ed.D.



As a finalist, Dr. Rudy Besikof brings leadership demonstrating his commitment to the success of Connecticut State's rich, diverse community of higher education students. Most recently, he has been serving in leadership at Laney College in Oakland since 2018, first as Vice President of Instruction before becoming its President in July 2020. In 2024, as the culmination of the College's 2022-24 Free College initiative, Laney enjoyed a 30% increase in degrees and certificates stemming from a 25% increase in enrollment, and within the community Oakland Chinatown's Chamber recognized Laney with the 2024 Outstanding Community Partner Award.

Dr. Besikof has been in higher education since 1990, first as an instructor and then tenured faculty member of 7 years at Long Beach City College before becoming an administrator in 2011. Prior to becoming president in 2020, he had served five years as a Chief Instructional Officer and five as a Dean in both single and multi-college districts.

Dr. Besikof has also had extensive work in the planning of colleges, including full investment in the Guided Pathways Initiative. Within his own college, as Accreditation Liaison Officer and later President, he led his college from sanction to reaffirmation of accreditation, and the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior College appointed him in 2022-23 and 2023-24 to lead visiting teams. Informed by his time on the Academic Senate, he is also committed to strong planning through shared governance, with experience building critical documents such as Distance Education, Strategic Enrollment Management, Facilities, Technology, and Educational Master Plans.

Representing his college in the community, Dr. Besikof has served as an appointed member of the City of Oakland's Workforce Development Advisory Board, as well as President of the Northern Alameda Adult Education Collective's Executive Cabinet. Prior to that, he held a seat on the California Inland Empire's Chapter of the United States Department of Commerce's District Export Council. Details about his college's partnerships with industry, civic leaders, fellow educators and students may be heard on his podcast, [The President's Desk](#), which airs on radio and television.

President Besikof earned his Doctorate as a 2010 graduate of UCLA's Educational Leadership Program. His dissertation, focusing on effective fundraising practices, earned the UCLA School of Education's Outstanding Dissertation Award, and he has sat on college/district Foundation Boards as a resource member and later a president. He continued his professional growth this year as a Fellow in the 2024 UC Davis Wheelhouse Institute's CEO cohort.