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Alameda briefs: Heyman runs for Peralta colleges trustee

Area 1 seat represents Island, part of Oakland and is only one contested Nov. 3

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ALAMEDA

Backed by the Peralta Colleges Chapter of the SEIU 1021 labor union and five former presidents of the College of Alameda, Jeff Heyman has announced his candidacy for Peralta Community College District Trustee, Area 1. The seat represents the city of Alameda and a portion of Oakland. The race is the only contested Peralta Trustee seat on the Nov. 3 ballot.

Running on a slate to bring reform to the troubled Peralta Community College District — which, in addition to the College of Alameda, includes Laney and Merritt colleges in Oakland and Berkeley City College — Heyman brings more than 18 years of on-the-ground experience at the district leading a diverse, student-focused department and teaching journalism at Laney College.



The Peralta colleges, which educate 20,000 students each semester, have been reeling from years of board and administrative mismanagement. Fiscal misappropriations have resulted in tens of millions of dollars disappearing from college classrooms. The state's Financial Crisis & Management Assistance Team had to step in to quell the out-of-control spending.

The Peralta Colleges have been put on probation for the second time in 10 years by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. A new chancellor hired by the board to clean up the district resigned after only nine months on the job, issuing a scathing letter outlining the board's dysfunction and inability to follow its own policies.

"Enough is enough. We need to change the downward spiral caused by a clear lack of leadership on Peralta's Board of Trustees. I've thrown my hat in the ring because I care deeply for our students and they deserve more than this from our elected officials," said Heyman, who became so concerned with the situation at Peralta that he filed a whistleblower complaint in 2007 prior to his retirement

Heyman, who also served as staff to the District's Citizens Bond and Parcel Tax Oversight Committee, added, "I intend to work to clean up the financial and administrative mismanagement that I witnessed and to ensure that our students get the education they deserve and what our taxpayers are paying for."

Heyman is running against the incumbent, Bill Withrow, who has served on Peralta's board for 16 years. A longtime columnist for the East Bay Times' weekly newspapers, Heyman lives in Alameda with his wife, Sari, and is the communications analyst for the city of Lafayette. For more details, visit heyman4students.com.