



County of Monterey
Valerie Ralph
CLERK OF THE BOARD
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Economic Development Committee Application

Jenny Kuan

District: 4

Initialed Application: Yes

Applicant

First Name: **Jenny**

Middle Initial:

Last Name: **Kuan**

Employment

Occupation: **faculty**

Job Title: **Associate Professor**

Employer: **California State University Monterey Bay**

Interests and Experiences

Able to attend meetings regularly and devote the time necessary to fulfill duties as a member?

Yes

Currently serving on a County of Monterey Board, Commission, Committee or other Community Advisory Group?

No

Has served on an advisory group before?

Yes

I've served on nonprofit boards as well as advisory boards of small companies. I currently serve on the board of the Monterey Symphony.

Please tell us about yourself and why you want serve:

I'm an Associate Professor of Economics and Entrepreneurship at the College of Business at Cal State Monterey Bay where, since January, I am also the Executive Director of the Institute for Innovation and Economic Development (iiED). I study strategy and innovation and in addition to teaching classes on entrepreneurship, I also teach nonprofit management and a free, online class to demystify venture capital. I've been at CSUMB since 2019 and have served on the most recent Strategic Planning Committee for the university. As Executive Director of the iiED, I have been working to connect the faculty, staff, students with the business community to create synergies and opportunity for our local economy. We started a Winter Night Market on campus that brings dozens of local vendors onto campus

alongside student entrepreneurs and musicians. Now in its third year, the event attracts over 700 students, faculty, and staff. We've learned that doing big, impactful activities like this require a lot of collaboration and hard work, including the involvement dozens of administrators and planners. The university aspires to be more open and interactive with the community, and I'm always looking for ways to engage with the business community to break down silos. We're bringing local businesspeople into the classroom to mentor students. We want our students to get used to talking to experienced managers and to see that there are people who want to help them launch their careers. Meanwhile, SCORE volunteers have worked with student teams in entrepreneurship class, giving them the benefit of their wisdom and experience. And a big end-of-year startup-pitch event brings entrepreneurs and startup-mentors onto campus to present their ideas and give feedback. But we're just getting started. There is so much more we can do to create new companies, new industries, and new jobs. We're long-time collaborators with DART, the Drones, Automation, Robotics, Technology initiative, and we're working with a new Mechatronics department on campus to provide even more possibilities for a trained and ready workforce. Before doing my PhD in Business, I was as a manufacturing engineer, and I'm excited to be exploring possibilities with the chair of the Mechatronics program, a fellow engineer! CSUMB has a goal of being more engaged with the local community. I have found that collaborating with other people and organizations are how new ideas are formed and implemented. I think the many different facets of the County represented on the Economic Development Commission present a great opportunity to make CSUMB a resource to Monterey County, and if I can be of use, I'd be happy to serve!

Please state the reason you would like to be a member of this board committee/commission/district:

As Executive Director of an Institute at Cal State Monterey Bay, I might be of service in bringing people together across organizational boundaries both inside the university and outside. I've been able to connect people to help make innovative things happen. Most of the things we've worked on at the Institute were not my idea. Rather, people approached us with ideas that were win-wins. Working with a broad cross-section of the County, as represented on the Economic Development Commission, would present enormous opportunities to create new collaborations and build on new ideas.

How did you hear about the position?:

Richard Vaughn and Wendy Root Askew