

Executive retires after inquiry

By ANDREW PAXTON

An administrator who served at Pima Community College for more than two decades has decided to retire following an investigation into misconduct.

Former Desert Vista Campus president Johnson Bia made the announcement May 1. His last day at PCC will be June 3.

The college interviewed a woman who filed a complaint, several witnesses and Bia himself, according to a fact-finding report released by PCC.

The complainant told investigators that Bia often inquired about her personal life and said his comments made her feel uncomfortable.

She also told investigators "she never told Bia 'no' because she is scared of him."

Several witnesses confirmed the assertions.

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Lee Lambert, PCC Chancellor

However, other witnesses and Bia himself contended the allegations may have stemmed from an unfavorable performance review given by Bia to the complainant.

In a response included with the final report, Bia disputed the characterization of the conversations between himself and the complainant.

"I recall many of the interactions and conversations, but not in the extreme manner portrayed in the allegations," Bia wrote.

"It was very clear the descriptions provided and the interactions portrayed were intended specifically to establish an allega-

tion of sexual harassment."

Bia also suggested that witnesses shared or corroborated information in formulating their accusations.

The investigation determined that the evidence presented did not meet the threshold of actionable sexual harassment.

However, the report concluded Bia's behavior violated college policy and did not fit the standard set for college administrators.

Bia confirmed his retirement in an email sent to employees at Desert Vista. He made no mention of the allegations or investigation.

"I have simply concluded it is time to move on and I have been

blessed here at Pima," Bia wrote.

Chancellor Lee Lambert addressed the decision in an email sent to all PCC employees.

After the college looked into the allegations, "Johnson and I agreed that it was in everyone's best interest that he retires at this time," he said.

Lambert said it is a "difficult situation" but also made clear to employees what is expected of everyone at Pima.

"It is critical that all PCC employees feel free to express their concerns about potentially difficult workplace situations," he said.

"No matter what you do or where you work at PCC, there should be no barrier to open and honest communication.

"A goal we should all share as PCC employees is to maintain the highest level of professionalism," Lambert added.