

CLIFFORD COPPERSMITH, PH.D.

President, Chesapeake College

The Chesapeake College Board of Trustees selected Dr. Clifford P. Coppersmith to be the school's sixth president. Dr. Coppersmith was chosen by a unanimous vote of the Trustees from a pool of 72 applicants in a nationwide search.

Coppersmith, 55, was previously Dean of City College, an embedded community college within Montana State University Billings with 1,400 full and part-time students. He's been the school's chief executive officer in charge of academics, student affairs, finance and facilities since July 2015.



Prior to City College, Coppersmith held several administrative and academic positions including over 19 years at two institutions: Pennsylvania College of Technology, a special mission affiliate of The Pennsylvania State University; and Utah State University – Eastern, formerly the College of Eastern Utah. In addition, the college enacted a new three-year strategic plan which called for upgrading technology across the college locations, investing in employees through professional development and using data to drive decisions. This plan concluded successfully with 89% of the initiatives progressing to plan or fully complete. The college then launched a new strategic plan in 2020 and continued with the Balanced Scorecard approach. The plan focuses on 4 main perspectives: Customer, Internal Business Process, Employee Learning and Growth, and Financial.

Born in the West Indies, Coppersmith said saltwater is in his blood. He looks forward to sailing, kayaking and canoeing on local waters and visiting the beach.

The Coppersmiths have three adult children – including two living in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh – three grandchildren and close family members in Frederick and Northern Virginia.

A former commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Reserve and Army National Guard and an intelligence officer with the Central Intelligence Agency, Coppersmith believes strongly in executing the mission of the College which is critical to his vision for Chesapeake.

His service background also includes 45 years in scouting with the Boy Scouts of America.

Coppersmith holds four academic degrees: A doctorate in history and anthropology from Oklahoma State University; a master's in history from St. Bonaventure University in New York State; a bachelor's in political science and Latin American studies from Brigham Young University in Utah; and an associate in social science from Jamestown Community College in New York State.