

## **PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR NATALIE BROUWER POTTS**

Please see the following explanation of how my experience relates to the “Preferred Qualifications” for the Title IX Officer position in the Office of Diversity at San José State University (SJSU). Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information.

### *Master’s Degree*

In 2000, I graduated with a J.D. from the Cornell Law School. My specialization was in Public Interest Law.

### *Experience in the CSU system and knowledge of CSU Executive Orders*

I am new to the CSU system. However, I have broad knowledge of the substance and subject matter of the CSU Executive Orders. Having closely reviewed CSU’s Executive Orders 1095, 1096, 1097 and 1098, I can honestly attest that they are quite similar to the policies I drafted and implemented for Northeastern Illinois University’s Title IX program. Title IX, VAWA/Campus SaVE Act and related civil rights and disabilities laws are federal laws and the U.S. Department of Education establishes the federal policy guidance for Title IX. Therefore, the legal requirements established by the CSU Executive Orders are fundamentally similar nationwide. Notably, California has increased Title IX’s protections and requirements under the California Equity in Higher Education Act, Education Code and the Governor’s California Campus Blueprint to Address Sexual Assault, and the Executive Orders adopt these requirements as well. The new Sexual Misconduct policy I drafted for Northeastern Illinois University (currently under review by the University Policy Committee) similarly includes the following sections covered by CSU Executive Order 1095: confidentiality and duty to report; notices of nondiscrimination and rights and options for victims of sexual misconduct, dating or domestic violence and/or stalking; role of the victims’ advocate; role of the Title IX Coordinator; training, education and preventive measures; remedies; and coordination with criminal investigations. In short, I am extremely familiar with the substantive requirements of Title IX. I would carefully review and be fully prepared to implement the CSU Executive Orders as SJSU’s Title IX Officer.

### *Experience in managing both compliance and education components of a Title IX program*

I have extensive experience managing the compliance and education components of a Title IX program. I built Northeastern Illinois University’s Title IX program from the ground up. For instance, the university’s Sexual Assault policy was over 25 years old when I took over the program and in dire need of an overhaul. There were few educational trainings for students, faculty or staff. I was entirely responsible for building the new Title IX program for the four campuses of the university community. Title IX’s requirements continued to expand as I developed the program, and it was my job to ensure compliance with every new legal obligation. With great pleasure, I can say that I had incredible support from various offices and individuals with the institution and expansion of the program. I developed especially strong relationships with the following entities/people: Dean of Students; Student Counseling and Health Director and staff; key faculty; Campus Police; Directors of the Diversity Centers; Vice Presidents;

Registrar; and Human Resources Director and staff. While I had regular contact with the foregoing, it was not uncommon for me to work with other faculty and staff and student leaders on Title IX compliance.

On the compliance side, I wrote and implemented a new Sexual Harassment policy and Sexual Assault policy. This involved obtaining the approval of the University Policy Committee and the senior administrators, navigating the public comments from members of the university community and subsequently making appropriate changes to the policies. With the updated policies in place, I timely conducted all investigations regarding potential Title IX violations. Most cases entailed full investigations; some ended with substantial sanctions. Several sexual harassment matters (never sexual misconduct matters) were informally resolved through my office, and I utilized a mediation approach where appropriate. If interim measures were needed, I made sure they were implemented. I treated all parties involved in investigations with respect and adhered to their due process rights, including providing notice of rights and options to complainants and respondents. Every year, I wrote a significant part of the Clery Report in coordination with Campus Police. I actively served on several committees fighting discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct on campus, for instance, the Campus Sexual Violence Prevention Committee and the Social Justice Allies Initiative. These committees were composed of faculty, staff and students from all over the university. All in all, I built bridges throughout the university community to promote compliance with Title IX. However, while compliance was a crucial objective of the Title IX program, education was the heart of it.

On the education side, I started conducting substantial educational and prevention trainings on sexual harassment and sexual misconduct to students, staff and faculty. I was fortunate to have the Women's Resource Director agree to serve as the Deputy Title IX Coordinator, and she was my partner in regular trainings. Among the rolling trainings we conducted, every two weeks we presented at the New Employee Orientation and every semester we presented to the new student employees. Additionally, we created extensive resources and informational materials to post online and disseminate on campus. These materials included on and off campus resources. It was important for members of the university community to know how and where to get help. I also communicated policy and procedure information to the university community via emails and throughout the year in various formats. I instituted the online HAVEN program for new students to educate them on sexual misconduct. In addition, I monitored patterns of problems and conducted trainings to offices/departments with recurring issues. There was sometimes resistance to these trainings, but I worked hard to persuade the relevant administrators to support a proactive approach. I am proud of getting the education component of the Title IX program off to a running start at my former university, and strongly believe that a large part of Title IX's success hinges on education.