

Subject: From the President's Desk**Date:** Fri, 3 Jun 2005 11:21:37 -0700**From:** "Raul Rodriguez" <rrodriguez@deltacollege.edu>**To:** "Campus Wide Business" <campusbusiness@sjdccd.cc.ca.us>

Happy Friday! The weather is glorious and summer is almost here. I love the heat so I am happy that it is finally getting warmer!

Commencement

Obviously, there was no weekly message last week as I was inundated with meetings and last minute preparations for the annual commencement ceremony. I enjoyed the ceremony and want to thank everyone involved in the planning and actual support of this major event. It is a large-scale production and many people work hard behind the scenes to make this event a special evening for our students. There are too many people to list individually, but there is no doubt that the whole graduation team did an outstanding job!

Of course, as always happens after such an event, we are now in the debriefing process and are analyzing what went well and what didn't. I expect that we will make a number of changes that we hope will make next year's commencement ceremony even better.

Health Benefits

The health benefits issue is probably the number one issue out there right now in terms of anxiety level and concern for what is going to happen. On the positive side, there have been a number of fruitful and informative discussions about the implications of this issue. I am encouraged that people are finally paying attention to this critical issue and taking it seriously. We all wish that we were not in this situation and that health costs could be frozen or limited in some fashion. Unfortunately, they continue to rise at an alarming rate and we need to find better ways to deal with the need to provide excellent coverage to everyone at Delta and to make it financially feasible for the long-term financial viability of the district. It is not an easy issue to sort out, but at least there is a candid discussion of the issues and a clear necessity that we all need to work together to solve this problem.

Kudos

- This may be "old news" by now, but I still think it is worth a mention. Delta is fortunate to have many outstanding student athletes and among the best of the best is Jill Schlenker. Jill leaves Delta with an individual state championship in the pole vault. She was also second in the state last year and holds a number of meet and conference records that are testimony to her skill and talent. Jill is leaving but won't be far away as she will be on a full-ride scholarship at CSU, Sacramento next year. Many heartfelt congratulations to Jill!

- Similarly, I want to congratulate the Lady Mustangs softball team on a fine season! Meghan Dyer and the other Mustangs were truly phenomenal in winning the NorCal Regional and being seeded number one from the north in the state softball championship tournament.

- In addition to our commencement ceremony, I also attended the commencement for the Middle College High School. This partnership with Lodi Unified is one of our most gratifying programs as the two hundred plus students who comprise this high school on our campus continue to achieve at a remarkable rate. This high school once again achieved the distinction this year of garnering the highest test scores (on the state exam) of any high school in our region. In fact, there was no other school close to them. It was an honor to participate in their graduation ceremony and to find out that many of these students intend to continue at Delta for another year and then transfer to a university. This program is a win-win for all concerned.

- Kudos to all Delta College classified staff, full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and managers. We had separate board resolutions for various times in the month of May to honor each of these groups individually. I want to thank each and every person at the college for a great year and for putting forth their best efforts on behalf of our students.

This will be my last regular e-mail message until the fall semester. If issues arise during the summer, then I will do a special message about particular issues. However, like everyone else, I plan to take some vacation time between now and August. I promise to get my batteries recharged this summer and to continue these communications again once fall classes begin. Have a wonderful summer!