

**Subject: From the President's Desk****Date:** Tue, 20 Dec 2005 13:36:47 -0800**From:** "Raul Rodriguez" <rrodriguez@deltacollege.edu>**To:** "Campus Wide Business" <campusbusiness@sjdccd.cc.ca.us>

*Good afternoon everyone!* I had intended to get this message out sooner, but one of those nasty little bugs that is going around has gotten ahold of me and delayed my plans. I got so fatigued yesterday that I had to go home in the morning and I am afraid the same thing may happen sometime today.

Getting a bug like this so close to Christmas reminds me of when I was a student in college. Every year, like clockwork, I would get sick at the end of the fall semester. That is, my body kept it together long enough to complete all my schoolwork, but when the semester was over my immune system apparently collapsed and surrendered to whatever bug was around. I hope I'm not regressing back to that old syndrome. To be sure, even if I am sick, I'm not going to let anything like that spoil my Christmas! I intend to have lots of fun even if when I laugh, I am really having a coughing fit. That's why I have stocked up on pills for severe colds, cough syrup, Nyquil, and several different brands of cough drops, in short, everything one needs to make it a dreamy, albeit slightly narcotized (is that a word?), Christmas.

**Merry Christmas**

I hope that you all have, unlike me, a healthy Christmas and a merry one as well. This holiday season seems even more special this year than most due to all of the extra effort that has gone into ensuring that the victims of the Hurricane Katrina disaster not only have an enjoyable Christmas, but that they have something to look forward to in terms of putting their lives back together. I am sure it has been comforting for them to know that there are many people across our country that care about them. I am proud of all of the people who have contributed to the disaster relief and want to single out Catherine Mooney for efforts above and beyond what most people have done. She is a shining example of what Christmas is really all about. It is about self sacrifice and selfless acts of kindness. It is about putting your own life and interests on hold when the need of others is greater than your own. It is about a spirit of community that we often seem to have lost in this country until a disaster comes along to pull us back together. Catherine's efforts exemplify all of that and more. However, she didn't do it alone and there are many other people who deserve praise and gratitude for their generosity and contributions. I can't list everyone individually so if you did something for the disaster relief or something to help those less fortunate than yourself this Christmas, then you deserve a bounty of kudos as well.

**Happy New Year**

At the close of a calendar year, it is often inspiring to think back on all of the many remarkable events that happened during that year and to give thanks for the positive events. One of the things that I am most thankful for are the new employees at the college. It is difficult to say goodbye to and to lose so many faculty and staff who are moving on to retirement or on to other occupations, but it is also wonderful to see the quality of the people who are replacing them. We have had some outstanding hires this past year. In fact, we hired seven new faculty positions last spring and we just completed an eighth hire last week. We had trouble finding a Culinary Arts instructor last spring so we had to go out for a second search this fall. In that pool, we found an

instructor who had an impeccable background and a variety of experience. His name is Toussaint Potter and he will begin teaching for us in January. I am already salivating at the potential menus that Chef Potter will come up with in the Student Chef. At the same time, I want to thank Chef James Odishoo for the exemplary job he performed in filling the position on a temporary basis this past fall. It will be a challenge to top Chef Odishoo, but the good thing is that he is not totally leaving the program as he will hopefully continue on as an adjunct instructor for us.

We are also currently searching for a POST Academy instructor and will begin searches for five more faculty positions early next semester. In addition, I expect that we will have four more faculty positions added to that group and, if we can squeeze a little more out of the budget, we hope to add several more positions to those.

There are so many other things to be thankful for that occurred this past year (for example, concluding the Mountain House legal process, developing new building plans, holding another successful classified staff retreat, implementing our AI strategic planning process, getting off to an early start on our accreditation self study with broad participation, making tangible progress on student learning outcomes and program review, as well as great CAPs programs, excellent concerts and drama productions, exciting athletic events, and so much more).

Let's all hope that 2006 is even more fruitful and successful than 2005. I look forward to seeing all of you and working with you in the new year.

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all members of the Delta College family!**

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