

Subject: From the President's Desk

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To: "Campus Wide Business" <campusbusiness@sjdccd.cc.ca.us>

Good morning everyone and TGIF! It's cold today, but at least there is a glimmer of sunshine.

Assemblyman Nakanishi Visit

Last week, one of our local elected officials, Assemblyman Alan Nakanishi, visited the campus. He represents the Tenth District, which covers the Lodi area. Assemblyman Nakanishi is also a local ophthalmologist with a practice here in Stockton. Although he had been to the campus before, most recently to participate in the Campaign for College Opportunity event on the ninth of February, like most people who were not students at Delta, he had only seen a few limited areas of the college. We gave him a tour that provided an overview of our facilities. We showed him "the good, the bad, and the ugly" so to speak in that we took him to some of the facilities and programs we are most proud of and to some of the areas that have been neglected and that we hope to reclaim and rejuvenate through the bond or through additional state funding. I think he learned a lot on the visit. I am hoping to bring legislators to our campus on a regular basis so that they have a better understanding of what our needs are and of the vital work that we do on behalf of our students and our community.

Academic Senate Meeting

On Wednesday of last week, I had the pleasure of attending an Academic Senate meeting along with Board President Ted Simas, Board Vice President María Elena Serna, and Trustee Tony Bugarin. At the meeting, Dr. Stacy Robles presented the main points of her sabbatical project, which focused on the Academic Probation process. Her presentation was informative and was definitely the highpoint of the meeting. However, what I appreciate the most is that her presentation is serving as a catalyst for further investigation and analysis. The Academic Senate formed a retention committee to explore the Academic Probation process and to make recommendations as to how to improve that process. In my experience, the culling and pooling of faculty expertise is often the way that the best improvements are realized. I look forward to reviewing the committee's recommendations concerning the Academic Probation process.

Community College Ballot Initiative

The Californians for Community Colleges, a political coalition of administrators, faculty, and classified staff, is leading the effort to qualify a ballot measure for next November. The ballot measure covers a number of issues that are extremely important to the future welfare of the community colleges. For example, because the statewide K-12 enrollment is beginning to drop off and is expected to decline significantly over the next decade, our Prop. 98 funding is at risk. The community colleges have never received our fair share of Prop. 98 funds even though the split between K-12 and the community colleges was clearly stated (11% for community colleges) in the legislation. One result of the K-12 enrollment decline will be a smaller pot of Prop. 98 funds. Our base funding will begin to erode as the formula to determine the Prop. 98 funds is based on the K-12 enrollment. If passed, the Community College Ballot Initiative would separate the Prop. 98 funds such that the community college portion is based on our enrollments and not on the K-12 enrollments. This action will

benefit the community colleges as our enrollments are expected to increase over the next decade.

The ballot initiative also strengthens local college governance, allows the State Chancellor's Office some autonomy in selecting senior staff, and rolls back student fees to \$20 per unit. In addition to rolling back student fees, the ballot initiative prescribes a formula for future fee increases that is based on the inflation index rather than the current situation of being subject to the whim of the governor or the legislature.

To qualify for the November ballot, the Californians for Community Colleges will have to gather approximately 598,000 signatures (this figure is based on the requirement for a constitutional amendment of gathering valid signatures equal to 8% of the votes that were cast in the most recent gubernatorial election). Of course, to gather this number of signatures is not an easy or a simple task. The ASBG will be gathering signatures in the quad in the near future. Their efforts and the efforts of ASBG students at other colleges will help, but it will not be enough by a long shot to reach the target. The only way to have a legitimate shot at gathering that many valid signatures is to hire professional signature gatherers. And, that costs a considerable sum of money. For that reason, the Californians for Community Colleges have asked every district in the state to support the campaign by raising funds.

Our target fundraising goal at Delta is \$35,000. We have asked our unions, the ASBG, and various other groups to support the Ballot Initiative. So far, I have contributed \$1,000 and the ASBG has contributed \$1,000. As you can see, we are still far below our campaign target. If you are inclined to support this effort, checks should be made out to *Californians for Improving Community Colleges*. The ID number of the committee is 1282453. You can either forward your checks to my office or send them directly to the campaign c/o Rix Bradford Consulting, 512 N. Larchmont Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90004. Another way that is open to participating in the fundraising is by attending a dinner that is being held for the Initiative. The dinner will be on April 4th at the Oakland Airport Hilton. The tickets start at \$250 per person. I have room in my car so if anyone wants to attend, let me know.

North County Property

At the board meeting last Tuesday, the board authorized me to sign several purchase option agreements for approximately 160 acres in Lodi. We have not purchased the land yet, just signed options to purchase. The parcel is a beautiful piece of land that fronts the Mokulemne River. It is in a great location for a future center and possible campus. We will be carrying out a detailed analysis of the site for the next six months and if everything checks out positively, then we will execute the purchase options shortly thereafter.

The community of Lodi has received the news with great enthusiasm. It is always nice to be wanted and there is a tremendous amount of support in Lodi for our development of a permanent presence in that community. We are not done with our land acquisition efforts and are still working on two more potential land deals to ensure that we have the appropriate locations from which to serve the population of our service area as it grows over time.

Obviously, the nature of the college will change in the future as we decentralize elements of our instructional program and services. However, that does not mean that we are not committed to modernizing and enhancing the Stockton campus. The largest percentage of our bond funds and the major portion of our modernization and building program are both centered on the Stockton campus. There are many projects for this campus that are well into the detailed planning stages. Before too long, the peaceful and idyllic nature of this campus will be rudely interrupted by heavy machinery, temporary chain link fence, and all of the other hallmarks of major construction projects. In the end, the new facilities will be well worth the temporary inconvenience caused by their construction.

Delta Basketball

Last night I attended the first round of games for the state basketball tournament in Fresno. The Lady Mustangs defeated Pasadena City College in a close match. The game was tight pretty much the whole way and the lead went back and forth in the second half. Our Lady Mustangs didn't wrap up the game until there was less than a minute left on the clock as they won by only four points. It was nerve wracking to say the least, but a great feeling when they finally pulled it out.

Our teams at Delta truly reflect the character of our coaches and Gina Johnson is one of the best coaches in the state. It is a pleasure to observe how she works with her team and how she is constantly teaching and mentoring her student-athletes. I feel the same way about Brian Katz and I will be going back to Fresno this afternoon to watch the men's team play the #1 seed from the South, and still undefeated, Fullerton College. Let's hope the Mustangs give Fullerton their first loss! Since the women won, it looks like I will be spending most, if not all, of the weekend in Fresno as the women play Riverside College in the semifinals on Saturday afternoon. If the men win, they will also play in the semifinals on Saturday and, hopefully, both teams will be in the finals on Sunday. Go Mustangs!!

Kudos

Although he is from New Jersey (just Joisey to natives), I have to claim **Bill Ferraiolo** as an honorary "son of the plains" Okie (like me). Recently, Bill was honored by his alma mater, the University of Oklahoma (home of the Sooner Nation and one of the greatest art collections of any university anywhere), as a distinguished alumnus of the Philosophy Department. He was invited back to Norman, Oklahoma last month to present a guest lecture as part of an ongoing lecture series. His lecture was entitled, "Small Fish, Small Pond: A Community College Philosopher." I want to congratulate Bill on this honor and encourage him to follow in the footsteps of the most eminent Okie philosopher of them all (when I say all it is just a figure of speech as I can't really think of any others), Will Rogers! Come to think of it, Bill does have that same kind of wry wit as Will Rogers (although he needs to work on the twang).

I just found out this morning that **Mike Toscano**, our resident Horticulturist, was presented with the Ron Regan Education and Career Award as the outstanding educator in Horticulture for the State of California. The California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers (CANGC) is the organization that sponsored the award. Congratulations to Mike on this well deserved and impressive honor!

Norma Hunt, Payroll Officer, was elected to the position of Board Chair of the Board of Directors for Premier Community Credit Union (formerly Schools Credit Union). This appointment took place on February 28th. Members of the Board are volunteers and are elected by the credit union membership. Norma recently received a service recognition award for 10 years of service. Premier Community Credit Union is a cooperative financial institution providing financial services to everyone who lives or works in San Joaquin County. Premier Community Credit Union has an ATM here on campus in Danner Hall, where staff and students can access services. Premier Community Credit Union couldn't have found a better chair than Norma!

Congratulations to **Caroline Doran** of the GED program on becoming a U.S. citizen!

Dr. Sally Van Bebber-Salter, one of our Communication Studies instructors, is the person who brought the Speech Language Pathology Assistant certificate program to Delta. In recognition of her pioneering efforts, Sally has been presented with an Outstanding Achievement award from the California Speech-Language Hearing Association (CSHA). She will be recognized at the state conference in San Francisco on Friday, March 31. This program is of great benefit to our community and I want to commend Sally for her stellar accomplishment.

As you all know by now, **Dr. Joe Blanchard** passed away last month. Although I never really got to know Dr. Blanchard well, I agree with the assessment of the Stockton Record that he was a visionary leader. We would not have the gorgeous grounds, distinctive architecture, and excellent facilities that have been enjoyed by this community for the last thirty years without Dr. Blanchard's foresight and bold leadership. In spite of all of his many accomplishments (he had a long and fruitful life any way you measure it), what impressed me the most about Dr. Blanchard was his humility and his sense of contentment with who he was as a person. That is, most former presidents would want a big funeral with lots of fanfare and drama. Not Dr. Blanchard, he didn't want any of that and that action alone speaks volumes about the character and integrity of the man. There aren't many leaders that I know of who are his match. He will forever have our gratitude and appreciation for a job well done here at Delta. May he rest in peace. He certainly deserves it.
