

Subject: From the President's Desk

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

Good afternoon everyone! I hope your semester is going well. Every year seems to be busier than the one before. Although, I admit that maybe that perception has something to do with the aging process. That is, it seems like the older you get, the faster time seems to pass by. Much to my chagrin, time seems to be moving real fast for me these days!

AI Strategic Planning Workshop

Paula Bennett has been great about sending out information to everyone about the upcoming college-wide AI Planning Strategic workshop. The event will be held at Micke Grove Park on November 9 from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm. **Dr. Kathy Hart** and the SJDC Expanded Appreciative Inquiry Strategic Planning Team (possibly the group with the longest title on campus) have been hard at work planning this event. Nancy Stetson, who always does a great job of leading large groups, will once again be the facilitator. The purpose of this workshop is to revisit our college mission and vision statements as well as the strategic goals that were adopted about three years ago.

Participation in this event is open to any Delta employee as well as to the members of our student government. Unfortunately, we can't pay for substitutes for faculty. We hope that faculty who are interested in attending can work out an arrangement with their classes to allow them (the instructors) to participate in the workshop. It seems that some people are under the impression that they would have to take a vacation day to participate in this activity. That is not the case. As long as your supervisor agrees to allow you to participate, then it is still considered a duty day just like any other working day. It's just that you will be doing a different kind of work on behalf of the college. I strongly encourage all college managers to allow broad and representative participation from their various departments and programs.

Planning is a critically important college function as it relates to so many other efforts at the college and helps guide us as we attempt to improve our practices, coordinate our activities, and foster ever greater student success.

Digital Bridge Academy

At a conference I attended recently, I went to hear a presentation from an instructor at Cabrillo College about something called the Digital Bridge Academy that he had developed and implemented at the Cabrillo College Watsonville Center. As someone who had worked at Cabrillo College and lived in Watsonville, I was interested in hearing what this was all about. After hearing the presentation, I knew that I had made a good choice in attending that session.

The Digital Bridge Academy is a program that takes students that are typically categorized as at-risk and

high-risk. In other words, these are students that come from troubled backgrounds (gangs, drugs, poverty, etc.) and against whom the odds for success are stacked in most situations. This program takes a different approach with these students than most other programs. It posits that they can be successful (nothing earth shattering there) and asserts that they can move from basic skills level to college level in one semester! (Now that is audacious!) Anyone reading this would have to be skeptical of such a goal. After all, students can spend years lost in the basic skills salt mines at community colleges (and they do). A more frequent occurrence is that students who are in basic skills courses just give up because the road to college level work appears to be out of reach. The data here at Delta supports that statement and data from most other community colleges tells the same story.

The difference in the Digital Bridge Academy is twofold. First, the person who created this program has developed what he calls “Light the Fire” curriculum, which is contained within a foundation course. This intensive curriculum is designed to give the students a mastery of digital skills (and other experiential skills) that are required in today’s world. By building on these skills, the students begin to gather confidence in themselves. One part of the curriculum is to give these students the same type of corporate management training received by executives in the major corporations. As a result, they also begin to learn that they possess more skills than they realized.

The second difference between this Academy and most other approaches is that this curriculum is demanding and requires a flexible person who is comfortable with high-risk young adults. It also requires extensive team teaching and data collection. The instructor plays the role of team leader and coach as much or more than subject matter expert. The instructor must also be able to implement a behavioral system to address behavioral problems.

The instructor, Diego Navarro, has tracked the students who complete this program and the success rate is above eighty percent. He has also tracked the students as they have moved into college-level coursework at Cabrillo and they have maintained a similar success rate. Because I was so impressed with his presentation and his program, I have asked Diego to come and do a workshop at Delta. We have not set the final date yet but it will most likely be on a Friday afternoon in November or early December. My hope is that we can find a core group of Delta faculty interested in learning more about the DBA and implement this program here at Delta in the near future. Any program that has this type of success rate is worth exploring and emulating.

Field Trip Week

I don’t know how anyone could have missed the scores of young people on campus several weeks ago, but, in case you somehow missed it, they were here at Delta for Field Trip Week. Field Trip Week was organized by **Dr. Hazel Hill**, our Dean of Workforce & Economic Development. Thirteen high schools (Bear Creek, Calaveras, Edison, Galt, Lindberg Education Center, Linden, Lodi, Sierra, Stagg, SJCOE, and Venture Academy) participated and sent over 900 students to tour Delta and learn about our programs. Tech Prep funds were used to pay for the event. The students learned about the variety of programs at Delta and the career paths (both degrees and certificates) available to them. Career clusters that students could tour were Health Sciences, Public Safety, Science & Math, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Engineering and Drafting, Industrial Technologies, Automotive & Heavy Equipment, Fine Arts & Media Studies, Fashion & Interiors, Early Childhood Education, Culinary Arts & Baking/Pastry, Business, Management & Information Technology, as well as Physical Education & Recreation. The students were provided with lunch before returning to their

schools. I would like to extend many thanks to Hazel for coordinating this program and to the Division Deans, faculty, and staff for sharing their expertise with the visiting students.

Transfer Day

This week another wonderful event took place at Delta: Transfer Day (I guess there was a Transfer Night as well). Transfer Day is the day when the university representatives come to speak with Delta students and then share their information with high school students from our local area in the evening. I attended the luncheon for the university representatives and the Mustang room was packed as there were about 46 representatives in attendance. There is no doubt that **Jazmin Amen** and the Transfer Center staff do a superlative job in making sure that this event is a success every year. **Mark Mekjavich** and the Delta counselors also lend a considerable amount of support for this event.

Kudos

Congratulations to **Coach Larry Huiras** and the Delta College Men's Water Polo team for beating Merced College. It was the first time that Delta had defeated mighty Merced in the last 13 seasons of competition. Delta's **Kaleb Feachner** had six goals in the 18-15 win. **Nick Fadden**, **Gregg Stevens**, and **Eric Weisz** each chipped in with three goals apiece in the winning effort.

In November the Stockton Sports Hall of Fame will be honoring several Delta sports legends including **Benny Garcia** for wrestling, **Pat Doyle** for his many years of coaching, and the 2005-06 Women's Basketball team that was the Runner Up in the state tournament. Congratulations to Benny, Pat, and the Lady Mustangs!

Delta Physics Instructor **Dr. Richard Fizell** has been coordinating the Physics Day workshop for high school teachers under the auspices of HECCC and the National Science Foundation. The workshop is scheduled for Saturday, October 14 here at Delta. I very much appreciate that Dr. Fizell is willing to lend his expertise to this type of activity. Such activities can build important links to our K-12 partners.

Best wishes to **Jack Saunders** in his recovery. I know that **Diane Pond** is doing a great job in filling in for Jack, but we all miss Jack and hope for his speedy recovery.