



LOS ANGELES
MISSION COLLEGE

PRESIDENT'S
N E W S L E T T E R

Dr. Adriana D. Barrera

...AND WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED!



Sometimes you want to pause for a moment and say, "Whew!"

It's been that kind of year. When I look back to the start of the Fall semester eight short months ago, it amazes me to think how much has happened since then and how many accomplishments we have seen. Stop and think for a moment...

- We expanded our faculty, adding 16 new fulltime members
- We opened and dedicated our new classroom building
- Our enrollment has grown by more than 14 percent over the previous Spring
- We moved our Proposition A building program into high gear with the selection of a master planner (Gensler) and a project manager (Gateway)
- Our first Prop. A project took real shape, with the near completion of the expanded Instructional Services wing – we'll be "moving in" in August
- We converted to a 15-week semester schedule
- We inaugurated our Winter session
- We awarded more scholarship money to students (\$23,000+) than ever before
- We hosted the district's annual technology expo with great success

And let's not forget that we still have a major event to look forward to before the end of the Spring semester: Commencement and a visit to our campus by U.S. Treasurer Rosario Marin.

It has indeed been a great academic year for us, and for that I have the entire Mission College community to thank – from the vice presidents and deans, to the classified staff, faculty, students and to our community supporters.

On that note of thanks, there is one member of our college family to whom I want to extend a special note of appreciation. Through the history of Mission College, there have been many changes and developments, great strides and setbacks. From the start, Carlos Nava, our vice president for student services, has been there. If he was not developing or proposing innovative new programs and procedures that made the college run more efficiently, then he was helping to calm the waters during times of trouble. More often than not over the past 27 years, Carlos was our representative, our "face" in a community that has become such an important partner for Mission College over the years. And now we say farewell and good luck to Carlos on the occasion of his retirement after 34 years with the district. We will soon fill the position of vice president for student services, but in our hearts Carlos Nava can never be replaced.

You will be much missed, Carlos. Good luck and Godspeed!

U.S. TREASURER TO SPEAK AT COMMENCEMENT



United States Treasurer Rosario Marin will be the featured commencement speaker on May 31 when Mission College awards degrees to more than 300 graduating students.

Marin is the highest-ranking Latina in the Bush Administration. She is no stranger to Southern California, however. Prior to accepting the post of Treasurer, Marin served as mayor and councilwoman of Huntington Park. Her government experience also includes service with the state – as Deputy Director of the Governor's Office of Community Relations, and as Assistant Deputy Director of the California State Department of Social Services.

"Ms. Marin is a perfect speaker for our college," said Dr. Adriana Barrera, college president. "She got her start in a community college and is now at the highest level of government. She will be an inspirational speaker for

our graduates."

Marin began her academic career at East Los Angeles College before graduating from California State University, Los Angeles. She is also a graduate of Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government Programs for Senior Executives in State and Local Government.

The treasury official will speak to a class that will include about 320 graduates, 70 percent of them women. Two-thirds of the graduates are between the ages of 18 and 30, but a significant number (nearly 50) are 41-years of age or older. The youngest graduate is 18; the oldest 70. The graduates are earning degrees in 22 different programs.

José Febré, an Addiction Studies major, is the class valedictorian.

Commencement will begin at 5 p.m. on the campus Quad. About 1,200 people, including graduates, their friends and relatives, and other guests, are expected.

COLLEGE DEDICATES NEW COLLABORATIVE STUDIES BUILDING



Chancellor Mark Drummond and Eriana Guerrero, daughter of Guadalupe S. Ramirez, unveil plaque naming building in honor of the late community leader.

In a quiet ceremony that included members of the family of Guadalupe Ramirez, Mission College dedicated its new classroom building in honor of the woman credited with bringing an institution of higher learning to the northeast San Fernando Valley.

The new, 12-classroom building opened its doors to students at the start of the Spring semester in February. Last week's ceremony marked the official naming of the facility as the Guadalupe S. Ramirez Collaborative Studies Building.

During the 1970's, the late Mrs. Ramirez successfully organized the northeast Valley community behind an effort to convince officials to place a then-proposed community college in the San Fernando-Sylmar area.

"I think the building will stand as a symbol of Guadalupe's belief that everyone has a right to higher education, no matter where you live or how poor you are," said Irene Tovar, executive director of the Latin

American Civic Association. "And because of her efforts, the building will always stand for the community's right to make that happen."

The new building contains 20-thousand-square feet of space, capacity for 650 people, nine faculty offices, a conference room and two bathrooms. On each floor, two classrooms can be converted into a single, large community meeting room. Eventually, all 12 classrooms will be "smart" classrooms, equipped with a slide-down projection screen and an audio-visual unit that will allow instructors to show materials from videotape, DVD, CD Rom, or PowerPoint. At present, one of the rooms is serving as a pilot room to test the system before expanding it to the others.



Los Angeles Mission College's Collaborative Studies Building is named in honor and memory of the inspirational, committed activist whose dream of bringing an institution of higher learning to the northeast San Fernando Valley was fulfilled twice – with the founding of the college in 1975, and again when the campus was built at its present location in Sylmar in 1991. She died in January 2000 at the age of 84.

REMEMBERING GUADALUPE S. RAMIREZ

The Mission College family will best remember Guadalupe S. Ramirez for her strong-willed campaign to place a community college in the San Fernando area. Because of her determination to fulfill this dream, she became affectionately known as "the mother of Mission College." But she led many other efforts on behalf of educational causes and the disenfranchised.

Mrs. Ramirez helped found the first Head Start childcare program in the Valley and the Chicano Studies Department at Cal State University, Northridge. She also helped develop the North Valley Occupational Center, the Northeast Valley Health Corporation and, along with her husband of 47 years, Manuel C. Ramirez, helped

found the San Fernando Valley chapter of LULAC, the League of United Latin American Citizens.

"My mom was a visionary who knew that education was empowerment," said daughter Eriana Guerrero.

Ironically, Mrs. Ramirez's own formal education ended in the seventh grade when her mother fell ill and she became her parent's caregiver. Perhaps that is why Guadalupe Ramirez so cherished education.

After her mother's death in Texas, Mrs. Ramirez relocated to California and married Manuel in 1936. Though Guadalupe Ramirez became the more publicly known of the two, the couple worked equally on many causes, sharing strategy and boosting each other's morale. As politically active as they were, the couple also found time to care for more than 35 children, including their own, those of family members and foster children!

"Mom used to say she didn't care if someone was purple, orange, or green," said Guerrero. "Children are children, and they need to be loved and they need to be educated!"

Shortly after her death, the Los Angeles Community College District Board of Trustees voted to name Mission College's new Collaborative Studies Building after Mrs. Ramirez.

"The naming of this building for her will serve as an on-going reminder of her dedication to education and to the people of the northeast San Fernando Valley," said Guerrero.

After 34 years with the district, Carlos Nava is retiring as Vice President for Student Services. Mr. Nava can affectionately be called one of the “founding fathers” of Mission College, having been here from the day the college opened its doors at a San Fernando storefront in 1975. In this column, Mr. Nava looks back at the history of the college...and forward to his hopes for the future of Mission College.

LONGTIME VP LOOKS BACK ON COLLEGE’S HISTORY



I joined the Mission College staff as the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in 1974. When I came on board, the administrative staff was housed above a bank in San Fernando. One of our first concerns was to locate facilities in which to offer our instructional program and house the administrative functions of the college. We also had to select and hire the instructional and support staff. Despite these many challenges, we met our goal of opening in the Spring semester of 1975 – with an enrollment of nearly 1,400 students.

From the beginning, then Chancellor Leslie Koltai shared with us his vision of building Mission College in one phase, with all of the buildings in the same architectural motif. He urged us never to use temporary facilities, which invariably tended to become permanent. But before that day could come, we had to improvise. We rented all available facilities to house our classes, services and activities. At one point, we had more than 30 locations supporting the college effort. The classrooms were housed in storefronts, churches, shopping malls, and even next to bars. It was not unusual to see the Mission College faculty carrying their equipment and materials to their work locations. Family and Consumer Studies teachers would carry sewing machines and ironing boards, while geography instructors would carry maps and world globes to their classrooms.

The students were just as determined. They managed to find the class locations, no matter where we put them. And the students kept coming, bearing out Guadalupe Ramirez’s belief that if we placed a college in the northeast San Fernando Valley, the community would leap to the opportunity.

The average age of our first students was in the mid-thirties and most were evening students taking one or two courses at most. Our first graduating class in 1976 had a sum total of one student. But we were on our way!

Our enrollment kept growing, though not as rapidly as we liked. We felt if we could show a large enrollment, it would speed the building of our permanent facility. Then along came Proposition 13, and in the process, Mission College nearly got the axe. That’s when our community came to the rescue. They sent a delegation to see the Governor and members of the Legislature to demand that their college not be cancelled. Their voices were heard, and Mission College survived. Eventually, plans were developed and our college opened (with three buildings) at its present location in 1991.

Over the last decade, we have enrolled a greater number of younger students, newly graduated from high schools. And we now see more full-time students. Our enrollment has shifted dramatically but seems to have settled on a pattern of steady growth. I attribute this to our instructional and support staff and the reputation they have in the community for being understanding and supportive of our students and their goals.

I look back on a 34-year career with the Los Angeles Community College District and my role at Mission College with pride and satisfaction. Despite many obstacles and drawbacks, a lack of space, facilities and budget, we started a college! And we survived because the staff and the faculty were resilient and determined to offer higher education to the northeast San Fernando Valley. My recommendation for a successful future is to continue to hire the best staff, individuals who share in our pioneer spirit and who wish to add their contributions toward the completion of the dream.

I wish all of you continued success. I thank you for your friendship and for the many wonderful memories I will take with me.



Carlos Nava revisits the San Fernando business that was the first home of Mission College in 1975.



YOUR DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

All of those great campus events, lunchtime speakers and seminars don’t just happen by themselves. They’re planned by the college’s Diversity Committee. The committee invites new members to sign up. Pictured left to right are Alex Nikolaychuk, David Jordan, Bonnie Sherman, Lilamani de Silva, Melaney Love, Vickie Oddino and Gary Probstak. Committee members not pictured include Ed Casson, Robert Crossley, Roxann Dalrymple, Carmen Lord and Rick Scuderi.

WE’RE MOVING IN SOON!

Expansion of the student services wing of the Instructional Building is nearing the final stages of work. The return to the Instructional Building by student services staff is set for early August.





LOS ANGELES MISSION COLLEGE

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calendar of UPCOMING EVENTS

Date	Event
5/25	Last Day of Classes
5/27	Memorial Day, campus closed
5/28-6/3	Final Exams
5/31	Commencement, 5 p.m., Quad
6/10	Summer Session A begins
7/13	Summer Session A ends
7/15	Summer Session B begins
8/17	Summer Session B ends
9/3	Fall semester begins

MISSION STUDENTS HELP RUN BUSINESS

Mitch Brijil seems to have done it in reverse. Usually, college comes first, followed by the degree and then the big job with lots of responsibility.

The degree is coming. Brijil will pick up his Associate's degree in computer science at commencement later this month – probably after another busy day at the office. For the last year-and-a-half, Brijil has served as information systems supervisor for Hamilton Direct, a \$10-million a year direct mail marketing company primarily serving the cable television industry. The 24-year-old Brijil is responsible for overseeing Hamilton's data system and for providing tech support for all of the company's computers.

He started at Hamilton two-and-a-half years ago, when he saw a Mission College job posting for a computer programmer at the Chatsworth firm. Within a year, he had been promoted to supervisor.

"When I started at Mission College, I hit hard on all my computer science courses," said Brijil, relaxing in the company's Management Information Systems office. "So I had all those skills down when I started working here. It's been my general requirements that have taken longer because I go to school at night."

But why even continue at Mission, if he was already well placed in the career field of his choice?

"A degree was a goal I had set for myself years ago," he said. "It will definitely help me further my career, whether here or somewhere else."

Working alongside Brijil is Steve Flores, also 24 and also an LAMC computer science

student. Flores has his eyes set on an A.A. degree and then a university program in computer science.

But it's not just the "techie" who are making their mark at the company. Ira Terrones, a 29-year-old Mission College multimedia student, was hired by the company as a graphic artist three months ago. Like Brijil, Terrones will be picking up his degree at commencement this month. Terrones said he began his education at Mission as a talented artist, but one without tools.

"I've been drawing ever since I was a kid," he said. "I had a natural art background, but I went to Mission to learn how to use the computer and how to depict art in a digital format."

At Hamilton, Terrones uses his knowledge of applications such as QuarkXpress, Photoshop, and Illustrator to create colorful brochures and direct mail flyers for a variety of clients.

Brijil and Terrones say they're looking forward to commencement – before getting back to their careers the following Monday.



Mission College students who work at Hamilton Direct, left to right, are Ira Terrones, Mitch Brijil and Steve Flores.

focus on MISSION PEOPLE



Got a payroll problem? Talk to **Ronn Gluck**. He's the administrative analyst in charge of Mission College's new SPOC Campus Customer Service Center. SPOC stands for "single point of contact," meaning that if you have a problem with a late or inaccurate paycheck, Gluck is the one to see about it. He is located in the Administrative Services office. His number is (818) 833-3310. Or email him at mission.payrollhotline@laccd.edu.

Art and multimedia student **Orlando Martinez** has been awarded a paid summer internship at the Getty Center. Throughout the summer months, Martinez will design Web pages for the Getty. He will also participate in an internship program, sharing his experiences with other students and professionals involved in the arts.

