A Big Step Forward

We’ve cleared a big hurdle.

For months, you’ve heard me speak about the work taking place to develop a Master Plan for Facilities. Many of you also know that a team of planners from Gensler has been working with us to develop this Master Plan. I am pleased to tell you that work is now complete. At an informal reception last month, College Council and I accepted Gensler’s “Arroyo Plan” as our blueprint for the future expansion of the college.

I could not be more pleased with the plan we have developed. When fully realized and completed several years from now, it will enhance the beauty of a campus we already feel is the most attractive in the district. The plan makes maximum use of the land available to us; apportions space for our Proposition A-funded facilities (media arts, culinary arts and fitness center); and addresses the issue of parking, which has created past problems between us and our neighbors.

Just as important are the aesthetic features of the Arroyo Plan. The people of Sylmar have long told us they value open space, nature and recreation. Our plan, with a landscaped arroyo running diagonally across the campus and a design that preserves our view of the mountains, affirms our commitment to these same values. As you may know, our plan to acquire adjacent parkland to make expansion possible calls for us not just to relocate the displaced ball fields, but to improve them and surrounding recreational facilities. These negotiations are moving forward smoothly.

We now begin a period of intense environmental review of the plan, a process that will result in our completing and submitting an Environmental Impact Report (EIR). We hope for public hearings on the plan and EIR by next spring, and approval by the district’s Board of Trustees by next June. Under this ideal timeline, we would hope to begin work on our next Prop A project – a parking structure on the south end of the campus – by next summer.

I want to thank Chuck Seeger, Marty Borko, Nellie Reid and the rest of the Gensler team for the fine plan they have developed. Of course, they would have had little to work with had not so many of you contributed your thoughts and suggestions as to what the future look of the college should be.
When it came time to decide whom to honor at this year’s employee holiday brunch, the choice was clear, said Staff Development Committee chair David Jordan. “How could the college function without the Reprographics Unit?” he explained. Pictured below left to right, honorees Sally Romano, Yvonne Tascione, Jeannette Serna, Vee Jackson, Arshaluys Nazaretyan, and Omaruddin Sarajzada (and, not pictured, Susanna Bagasaryan) do it all for the staff of the college. In addition to making mass copies of flyers, notices, tests, memos, and lessons, the unit is also responsible for distributing U.S., college and district mail to faculty and staff. When things slow down a bit, repro staffers catch up on accounting duties: keeping track of printing and postage expenditures by departments.

Concerned about the recent increase in child obesity, adjunct nutrition instructor Jackie Berg hopes to do something about it. Berg has been awarded a $4,000 mini grant by a statewide collaborative for family and consumer studies to offer a special kind of class this spring. Class members will form a teaching team that will visit a local elementary school. The team will offer lessons to children on making better food choices, based on examples of healthy meals and snacks featured in “Kids’ First Cookbook,” published by the American Cancer Society. “Obesity puts our children at risk for diabetes, heart disease, hypertension and some cancers,” said Berg. “There is a definite need to educate them about eating healthy.”

Former ASO President Jose Oliva (2001-02) reports that he is doing well at UC Santa Barbara. In addition to his academic challenges, Oliva is employed as a director in the Isla Vista Tenants Union, an organization that attempts to resolve tenant-landlord disputes involving housing used by students. The job, said Oliva, can be sometimes trying but always rewarding. Oliva is considering dual majors in business economics and global studies. He invites Mission College students interested in attending UCSB to contact him at joseo@as.ucsb.edu

Seven culinary students have won scholarships of $400 and $300 from the International Food Service Executive Association. Scholarships were awarded based on the best gingerbread cookies submitted. As an “entry fee,” contestants submitted two dozen cookies, half of which were sold to raise the scholarship money, the other half donated to MEND (Meet Each Need with Dignity), a Pacoima volunteer group. Scholarship winners were Cathye Ryan, Gwendolyn Bailey, Naomi Riley, Tricia Robins, Keith Lewis, MaryAnn Shenouda, and Melody Thomas.

Classified employees recently joining the college include Dani Mildred Condon, an SFP program technician in the Tech Prep program. She began November 18. Also, Denise Marie Prince joins Mission College as a buyer in the Bookstore. She began on November 25.

Proud of Mom
Dean’s List student Charmaine Blackwell displays the certificate of recognition she received at recent Honors Ceremony, to the delight of her seven-year-old daughter, A’Jah. Nearly 600 students on the Dean’s List and 80 others on the President’s List were honored at event.

For the latest campus news, visit www.lamission.edu/news

For a listing of planned campus activities, click on: Upcoming Events