



LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

District Update

September 25, 2012

I hope all goes well with you and that, with summer memories fading, you are enjoying fall in Los Angeles. Maybe like me you are wondering, "Where did the summer go?"

I'm writing to share some news about the District and underscore the importance of a few items that you may already know about. The most important news remains the budget. And, as is true across the higher education community in California, we are anticipating the outcome of Governor Brown's November 6th tax initiative, Proposition 30. The District's Board of Trustees, Presidents and I remain optimistic that with voter approval of the tax initiative the District will avoid a loss of \$31 million in state revenue this fiscal year, on top of cuts we've assumed already.

In response to increasing questions about the possible impact on community colleges with the tax initiative's failure, LACCD's colleges have planned budget forums or other educational events which will provide information about the pros and cons of Proposition 30. I encourage you to check with your college's administrative leadership to find out when your particular college event has been scheduled. Significant numbers of students, staff, faculty and members of the surrounding community are expected to attend these budget forums.

Despite budget uncertainty, the District's colleges opened last month to thousands of students taking classes to meet their educational goals, proving that even in an extreme financial context, you rise up to help students improve their lives through education. The larger "takeaway" on this point is that the District's revenue picture will not deter us from our core mission. Many offices and the people who populate them make that point emphatically. Earlier this summer, two of the District's Financial Aid managers, Anafe Robinson and Dennis Schroeder, gave an informative presentation to the Board of Trustees outlining the trends and funding levels in federal aid for LACCD's students. In addition to identifying the critical changes in federal financial aid, they communicated the manner in which their roles have evolved from merely financial aid processors to advisors upon whom students rely to help chart and accomplish their educational goals. They and other financial aid staff perform critical functions with student success by helping students understand ways to pay for college.

Another example of staff supporting students' efforts to make progress can be seen in Trade Tech's Veteran's Center. Led by coordinator Kookie Murray, the Vet Center processed 340 students for the fall semester, 120 more students than in spring 2012. I have been told that, at the Vet Center, "Everyone gets treated like a hero and everyone gets the proper information." I applaud the Vet Center's achievements and I have no doubt that our staff serving veterans at Trade Tech and other colleges will continue to ensure that LACCD's students receive the services necessary to complete their programs successfully.

Sometimes the use of general terms fails to make a connection with us. For example, when we talk about a term like “student support,” it’s sometimes hard to understand what we mean without a specific example, without “putting a face” on the term. Well, some news from Harbor College makes clear that student support can involve unusual, but specific practices. For example, one exceptional student, Carlos Alvarado, has been receiving some academic support from Harbor President Marvin Martinez. Carlos is one of nine students, nationwide, who has been selected to participate in the 2012 *Hispanic College Quiz Show*, sponsored by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU). President Martinez acted as the *Quiz Show* coach and accompanied Carlos to Chicago for the show’s taping on July 23rd. The competition, which seeks to promote an appreciation of Latino/a heritage by all people, highlights Latino/a contributions to art, design, film, media, performing arts, music and theater. Please watch for the televised half-hour *Quiz Show’s* airing across the country during Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15th – October 14th, 2012.

In other news, the LACCD Board of Trustees met on September 19th, 2012 at the Van de Kamp Innovation Center (VdK). The Board and members of the community, chiefly students, parents and teachers of Alliance Environmental Science & Technology Charter High School, heard details related to the future use of the VdK site. (The charter high school has been located at VdK since 2009.) The Board will consider future occupancy alternatives after the District has completed a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), as required by judicial order. The report will include commentary on how the following VdK use options would impact the environment:

- 1.) District-wide Academic Programs
- 2.) Relocation of Existing Office or Business Functions
- 3.) A Long-term Lease to the Alliance Charter High School
- 4.) Long-term Tenancy Related to Partnerships with Four-year Universities

An update will be provided down the line, noting the Board’s planned course of action.

I know you are aware of the accreditation issues the District is facing. For your information, the Institutional Effectiveness Committee of the Board of Trustees will meet on October 1st to review progress being made toward recommendations (findings) affecting the District Office and three of our colleges, WLAC, LASC and LAHC. Fresh from a meeting today on preparation for this meeting, I believe we are making very good progress in our efforts – and this includes the efforts of many of you reading this update – to address the Accreditation Commission’s recommendations fully.

Finally, I do encourage you to vote on November 6th. Many of us vote consistently, while others may be less involved with the democratic process. I am certainly not alone in my feeling that voting does make a difference in our lives, whether, for example, it’s selecting an elected official or using our voices to answer questions presented as ballot-box initiatives.