

# ACADEMICALLY SPEAKING

A PUBLICATION OF THE LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT ACADEMIC SENATE



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2008

## Summit Presenters Call for a Revolution in Thinking

"SUSTAINABILITY: CHALLENGE AND Opportunity" was the theme of this year's Summit, held Friday, Sept. 26, at Trade Tech (moved there at the last minute due to a surprise strike at the MWD Building). The distinguished panelists at the general session called on the 175 faculty, students, and administrators in attendance to take the threats to our environment with the utmost seriousness. "If you get one thing out of this conference," said S. David Freeman, President of the LA Board of Harbor Commissioners and a legendary figure in the energy world, "it is to renew a sense of urgency...you are our hope, you are the educators." Freeman spoke powerfully about the end of civilization as we know it, if we don't take immediate and drastic steps to combat global warming. He said we are still nowhere near concerned enough, citing as evidence the morning paper's page 22 article on dire new climate change studies.

Joining Freeman on the panel were Fran Pavley, author of AB32 (the Global Warming Solutions Act); Bharat Patel, the chief consultant for the district's sustainability policy; Titus Levi, a USC professor and China expert; and Don Gauthier, Chair of Earth Science and Anthropology at Valley College. Pavley spoke about legislative action in Sacramento and the key role of community colleges: "California is leading the way to a clean energy future, and this district has the opportunity to educate the workforce of tomorrow." Patel added, "Thank goodness for the community colleges, for offering the hope of transforming lives through better jobs with higher wages...We need to retool our entire workforce through curriculum development and training. We're in a new economy." Levi focused on the special role of China in terms of environmental damage, and, in an impassioned final speech, Gauthier urged the audience to embrace the



**TOP: Summit guest panelists (l. to r.) Titus Levi, Bharat Patel, S. David Freeman, Fran Pavley.**



**LEFT: Don Gauthier, Senate President at Valley College, urges attendees to commit to the sustainability effort.**

profound transformational challenge presented by Freeman.

Breakout sessions covered a variety of topics. In a session on designing green curriculum, John Grimmer and Randall Adsit (East) and Marcela Oliva (Trade) shared new courses they were developing, Vice Chancellor Gary Colombo talked about infusing sustainability across the curriculum, and Don Gauthier discussed an Environmental Studies course that

he has just completed. It will be offered at Valley in the spring.

In a session on green careers, participants learned about the multitude of jobs available in Los Angeles in renewable energy, construction, and clean technology. "The green revolution will revitalize the economy," predicted Marcy Drummond, VP of Workforce Development at Trade Tech. "Do your homework to see what the new jobs are in your area and find your niche." She suggested that colleges create new programs or alter existing courses to "green" them and that they partner with four-year colleges by providing the first two years of a four-year program and

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## CAMPUS REPORTS

### LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

Ken Sherwood, Academic Senate President

City has been busy preparing for the combined grand opening of the Martin Luther King Jr. Library and the inauguration of Dr. Jamillah Moore as college president on October 7. We are well into the process of requesting Ed Center Status for the North East campus and hope to have approval in time for its opening next Fall. The new parking structure was completed in time to be used by those who attended the first DAS meeting of the new school year.

### EAST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE

Alex Immerblum, Academic Senate President

East highlighted Student Success on Opening Day, specifically focusing on the academic skill level of our students and what we can do in the classroom to improve their ability to think critically and progress in their studies. The event was again held at Almansor Court, with presenters from Chabor College and Los Medanos College leading afternoon breakout sessions.

Through a coordinated Student Success and professional development effort, we are about to launch our first New Faculty Institute, which will be part of a year-long orientation. With our 18 probationary hires, we hope to develop a cohort of instructors who explore and use effective lesson planning and classroom management practices.

### LOS ANGELES HARBOR COLLEGE

June Burlingame Smith,  
Academic Senate President

Flex Day at Harbor was very successful this year, with a second session of the World Café. Building on a workshop held last spring, faculty, staff, administration, and students attended energetic, project-producing sessions on how to inculcate essential skills into the classroom, with participants identifying roundtable topics. One of our academic

deans, Dave Humphreys, will be guiding our basic skills committee in implementing these new approaches to learning.

Our enrollment looks strong for the fall, so we are looking forward to a successful academic year.

### LOS ANGELES MISSION COLLEGE

Angela Echeverri, Academic Senate President

Mission College recently hired seven full-time faculty members. We are very excited about these new additions to our college and the positive impact they will have on our academic programs. We also held a leadership retreat to develop a college-wide strategic plan. The Senate Executive Board also worked closely with the administration to develop an application process for the use of CTE Innovation Funds.

Mission College continues to grow in enrollment, surpassing 10,000 this fall for the first time in its history. Our new Center for Child Development Studies, set to open its doors early this fall, will serve a large number of children from the community.

The Academic Senate has been actively involved in planning a Faculty Academy that will take place this year.

### PIERCE COLLEGE

Tom Rosdahl, Academic Senate President

Convocation Day started out with department meetings followed by a BBQ lunch. The afternoon included several exciting breakout sessions, with activities culminating in an all-faculty meeting. The college welcomed 12 new full-time faculty members to its ranks for the fall semester. Currently the college has 49 probationary faculty, with a plan to hire eight more tenure-track positions by next spring.

Within the past year the college enrollment has grown by 2,500 students and is now over 23,000 students. Fortunately, a new parking

lot with over 700 spaces was completed just prior to the beginning of the fall semester to help handle the influx of new students.

### LOS ANGELES SOUTHWEST COLLEGE

Alfred Reed, Jr., Academic Senate President

LASC recently hired three new faculty -- Dr. Tamara Howard, Political Science, Dr. Kristine Wright, Sociology, and Guadalupe Ramos, Math.

With Prop A/AA funds, we have completed the Tech Lab building. Early this Spring 2009 the new Student Services Activity building, Field House, and Stadium will be completed.

Faculty are working hard on updating their course outlines and adding SLOs.



**Faculty and administrators at Trade Tech College kicked off the academic year with a stimulating convocation.**

### LOS ANGELES TRADE TECH COLLEGE

Kindra Kinyon, Academic Senate President

This year's Convocation had a standing-room-only faculty turnout. We were honored with a presentation by Trustee Mona Field on "Finding the Faculty Voice" and a speech by President Chapelaine on "Building Community."

Trade-Tech is undergoing some administrative changes. Marcy Drummond has been moved into the newly created VP of Workforce Development position, and the search is on for her replacement as VP of Academic Affairs. A search has also begun for a new VP of Administrative Services. Meanwhile,



**Opening Day at Valley College began in the patio of the new Allied Health and Science Center.**

another hiring committee has been formed to hire a Basic Skills Coordinator. Trade is also in the process of filling six new full-time instructor positions for the spring.

#### **LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE**

Don Gauthier, Academic Senate President

The Senate at Valley has just approved our Basic Skills action plan and our accreditation follow-up report. Enrollment is up over 9% for credit and an impressive 25% for noncredit classes. We have hired nine new full-time faculty this Fall.

Valley is looking forward to two events in November – hosting a DAS meeting and holding a ribbon cutting ceremony for our new Allied Health and Science Center.

#### **WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE**

Rod Patterson, Academic Senate President

West has initiated several new programs under its basic skills initiative. They include UMOJA, FACE, and Puente – all designed to serve the needs of special student populations. These learning community programs are generating a lot of excitement.

This semester we expect to have an enrollment of over 12,000. New certificate programs designed to respond to labor market needs are drawing a high level of interest. Online instruction continues to flourish. Several Business degrees and certificates are now offered completely online.

The faculty looks forward to participating in the college's 40th Anniversary activities in the coming year. We are proud of the progress we have made, and we are filled with anticipation about the future of the college.

## **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

BY DAVID BEAULIEU, DAS President

**T**he most important upcoming event for the district, of course, will be the election, especially given Prop J, our \$3.5 billion bond measure. Passage would allow us not only to finish the projects promised under Prop A and AA, but fully develop our facilities master plans. We could then offer our students the full range of transfer and job opportunities that they deserve.

The Chancellor, senior staff, and the DBC are trying hard to protect the district's financial position in the face of dire economic news, with the collapse of the credit markets, the worsening economic situation in California, and the spurious resolution of the state budget deficit. Sacramento's punting of the deficit problem over to next year will certainly lead to greater difficulties for us then. In fact, they could well lead to mid-year cuts. One thing we can do now is continue to try to improve our own operations. The functional flow charts of district operations, discussed in our last issue, are about ready to go online. They should make it easier to spot inefficiencies. In addition, an ad hoc group has been formed, tasked with scrutinizing each of the district's centralized accounts in a search for savings. This is long overdue, since it hasn't been done in over ten years.

Meanwhile, a new DBC sub-committee, the Fiscal Policy and Review Committee, was formed in June. It is a reworking of an earlier group, the Allocation Grant Task Force. One of its main tasks is to closely monitor colleges running deficits. The presidents of Harbor, Valley, and Southwest appeared before the subcommittee on Sept. 24, explaining how they intend to reduce their projected deficits for the current year. The FPRC is a larger committee than its predecessor, and its deliberations are more transparent and candid. The Chancellor has made it clear to the colleges that he won't tolerate their continuing to run deficits, and they're getting the message.

Our Summit was well received. We're looking now at ways of getting more faculty involved in our discussions about sustainability. Student Success efforts are proceeding, of course. More about both of these projects soon.

Have a great rest of the semester!

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## Summit Wrap-Up

by offering the basic skills in math, business, and computer applications. "Our whole program at Trade has been revitalized, and it all began with one faculty member who was excited about going green," she said.

Rounding out the full day's program were breakouts on ways to engage student interest, on two successful models of college sustainability programs (Cal Poly Pomona and Lane Community College in Oregon), a review of the district's climate change commitments, and finally a presentation about what our colleges are already doing in terms of sustainability, focusing on best practices in architecture, energy, recycling, and landscaping.

At the end of the day, participants gathered to recap the key points of the summit and discuss next steps. Among them were to energize student activism and to give the issue more visibility.

Summit 2008 was the culmination so far of the work of the Sustainability Group. Consisting of faculty, administrators, staff, and students, it meets on a monthly basis to promote sustainability both within and outside of the classroom. For more information about the group, contact David Beaulieu at [www.laccd.edu/das](http://www.laccd.edu/das).

# Accreditation Decision Stirs Alarm

The recent controversial decision by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) to place Los Angeles Southwest College on probation has caused concern throughout the district. "The decision is perplexing for many reasons," commented Gary Colombo, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Effectiveness. "Not only did the college receive six commendations during its comprehensive accreditation visit in Spring 2006, but the college's actions show evidence of having addressed the four recommendations it received in good faith."

In addition, said Colombo, the ACCJC appears to have held the college to a higher level of expectation than communicated in the original recommendations. For example, while Southwest was told to "implement a process" for non-instructional program review, it was faulted for not having completed 100% of these reviews. "And even if the commission had concerns, the usual procedure is to place a college on warning first, not jump directly to the more serious sanction of probation," he said.

"Every comment made to members of the accreditation committees and to our president during the visit was positive, so this really came from out of the blue," commented Linda Larson-Singer, Southwest Curriculum Chair.

"The faculty I have spoken with are confident that we will do what is necessary to come off probation," said Todd J. Roberts, Academic Senate Vice President at Southwest. "All are in

good spirits and are looking at this 'bump' as an opportunity to grow."

Problems with weak leadership in the 1990's led to the college receiving 21 recommendations in 2000, but by 2006, the college had successfully addressed or made significant progress on all but one or two of these. The four recommendations from 2006 deal with non-instructional program review, retention and success of underprepared students, the connection of plans with actions, and the need to address the changing demographics of the community.

"Under the leadership of its president, Dr. Jack Daniels, Southwest is making significant progress in improving outreach, campus climate, and the quality of its programs," said Colombo. "All of these excellent efforts may be damaged by this undeserved decision."

The commission has taken an increasingly tough approach statewide. Some 21 community colleges are currently on the censure list. Surprisingly, the State Academic Senate has been less critical of the ACCJC, attributing their actions largely to threats from Washington that the commission itself would be de-accredited if it did not enforce the "two-year rule," a federal policy whereby colleges are required to resolve recommendations in that time period. Nonetheless, putting Southwest on probation seems excessive to David Beaulieu, DAS president, who noted that "the decision is disturbing, given the college's recent improvement and the lack of any warning."

## Faculty Academy To Launch This Fall

The Faculty Teaching and Learning Academy is being launched this fall. A creation of the Student Success Initiative Steering Committee, this innovative program will be a catalyst for higher standards of teaching and learning scholarship district-wide.

"The Academy is the centerpiece of a broader effort to invest in faculty through programs that explore effective instructional design and teaching practices," says Deborah Harrington, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness/ Student Success. "The FTLA's mission is to develop a widening community of faculty who test methods of teaching and learning, increase skills in new learning technologies, and contribute to an ongoing dialogue about pedagogy, curriculum, and technology."

The interactive professional learning program, set to begin in November, will be completed in tracks running at different times of the year and in different accelerations, with 35-40 participants in each. Following keynote presentations by expert innovators in teaching and learning, faculty will engage in hands-on activities, such as designing collaborative learning activities, creating syllabi that stimulate student motivation, increasing the development of critical thinking skills, and integrating campus support services and academic resources. "Most importantly, the Academy will give participants a chance to establish inclusive and long-lasting communities with our colleagues across the disciplines and the campuses," says Harrington. *Watch your emails for application information!*

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