

One Hundred Days and Beyond
October 15, 2009
Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President

Recognition of All trustees

- Mrs. A. Marie Young, President
- Mr. Dennis Honeychurch, Vice President
- Trustee Jim Claffey
- Trustee Rosemary Thurston
- Trustee Phil McCaffrey
- Trustee Sarah Chapman
- Special Trustee Henry
- Student Trustee Lillian Nelson

Recognition of the Members of the Foundation Board

Recognition of Elected Officials

Recognition of the faculty and staff present

Recognition of the One Hundred Days and Beyond Committee

A Glimpse into SCC:

In order to know where we are going or where we have the potential to go, it is appropriate to ascertain where we have been. In that sense, I am proud to share with you a few of the accomplishments the college has experienced over the past few years. The one slide that is not here is the success of our Debate Team. But, we have a great team and they excel year in and year out.

Enrollment and Transfer: We have experienced record enrollment, despite the shadow that existed on the college for accreditation. We thank the parents and community leaders who reassured our potential students that SCC was going to be fine. We continue our strong tradition of transfer as we support the transfer of almost 500 students to the four year institutions in the area.

Sports: Your sons and daughter who competed in high school are provided opportunities right here in the county to compete in over half a dozen sports. Not only do they have a chance to participate, they have been excelling.

Theater: Our award-winning theater program continues to not only win awards, but to help students achieve to a high level and access some of the best responsible positions in the workforce. Students such as Special Sergeant Sean Baston who is in charge of communications aboard Air Force Two, working with the Vice President of the US and the Secretary of State.

Ranking: The ranking we are sharing with you came from data submitted by all the colleges and universities that award Associate Degrees. There are over 3000 of these institutions and the community colleges alone have 1200. In the state of California alone we have one hundred and ten colleges. The ranking we are sharing with you shows how well Solano's education has surpassed some in the nation. We certainly have the proof of it. Just imagine how much more SCC can be successful. Imagine with your investment in SCC, how much higher our students can fly and our faculty can maintain the margin of excellence we have on other institution.

Accreditation:

We are attending to our accreditation. While we came close to the precipice, we remained accredited. One major issue we had was our relationship with the creditors. We have attended to that and feel that we are moving in the right direction in all other fronts. We recognize that we have a lot of work to do and we are not just satisfied we are on the right track. We want to go further. My colleagues and I are determined to be off accreditation sanctions. Led by our Academic Vice President, Dr. Robin Steinback and support of our faculty, staff and students, we are forging ahead.

Recap of First Hundred Days

- Internal SCC family
 - The faculty, staff and students have welcome the new leadership of the college in a grand way.
 - French Club
 - Students at orientation
 - Students from the UMOJA program
 - The student government leaders
 - Students from the MESA program
 - Students from NESBET
 - Faculty who just stop by to meet us
 - Staff who go out of their way to make things happen
 - Response to newsletters and general feedback have been encouraging

In Haiti we say “bat men ankouraje chen.” “applauding encourages the dog”. It has certainly been the case for me. The encouragement I have received from our employees and students has exceeded my expectations. I have truly found my academic home. I pledge to you again that it my desire to complete my career as your Superintendent/President. I recall most of the promises I made to you at my open forum. I pledged to be resourceful, to seek your advice, to be involved and to be welcoming. I hope that you have seen some of that already. Almost every day I recall my comment to one of our students when I said, “If you hire me, I will be the best president you ever have,” I have been doing the best I can to be an excellent president to the college. Faculty, staff and students, thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve you.

Community Welcome Mat Placed Out

The Solano community has done its part to make both Marie-Claude and me feel welcome to the county. We have met very friendly people, helpful people, and welcoming people. We feel at home here and we want to thank our new community for rolling out the red carpet for us.

As your president, I feel well accepted by the business community and by the political leaders. I am not sure where else I could be and receive this type of reception. Here are some examples:

- The League of Women Voters and the American Association of University women asked me to moderate candidates' forums for them. What an honor to have spent that time in the city of Benicia fulfilling my duties of a citizen to help expand voters' education.
- The Mayors Conference in Suisun City invited me to be their guest speaker. I had an opportunity to present to the Board of Supervisors and to interact with their members. The list of places where I have either invited myself to go or where I have been invited to speak is quite extensive. But in all, my commitment is to make the college more attractive to the community and the community more appealing to the college. The relationships we are building will bear fruit for both the college and the partners we are forming.
- I want to express a special gratitude to CC and Regina Yin for opening their home earlier in my tenure for me to meet with the community. There were over one hundred people who turned out for the party and I spent two straight hours speaking and exchanging business cards. CC and Regina have continued to be supportive as Yin's McDonald's and the Association of Chinese American contributed \$10,000 for students' scholarships with a promise to do a whole lot more.

Members of the community, you have been exceptionally warm to my arrival and to the college. So, we thank you and pledge to do our best for you.

Measure G: Bond funded projects

One other way you have supported us is in our Measure G Bond funds. Your generosity and your vote gave the college a facelift that will be permanent as we were able to construct three new buildings to date and renovate several instructional buildings. The Centers of Vacaville and Vallejo would just not exist without your vote and your support.

I have selected a few pictures to show you the progress we have made.

1. The Vacaville Center that will be completed in early 2010
2. The Vallejo Center that was completed in 2007
3. The Student Services Building that was completed in 2008?

We want to share with you the long list of other projects that have been completed and the few remaining priorities for us:

Resources

The State of California does a pretty good job at providing funding for the college. Your property taxes also contribute to our funding base. This funding, tells us how many students we may accept and how many students we must turn away. The college uses a variety of means to supplement the funding to care for the education, the training and the retraining of our county. Consequently, we are pleased to share with you a few resources we have attracted to the college over the past few months:

- Thanks to the work of our Green Council Team, we obtained \$418,000 from the state of California to start a program to train veterans, and unemployed and underemployed workers for jobs of the future;
- We received two contracts from the Workforce Investment Board
- Our Theater program received \$25,000 for a student scholarship endowment.
- We received a contract for over \$100,000 from the county government to provide training for small businesses.

These have helped, but they are not enough. In turning away over 400 full-time students due to budget cuts, we need a whole lot more to continue our mission of access and success. That is why I have made and will continue to make very difficult sacrifices to have a team of individuals who can help us attract more resources from the outside: Federal, state, private and individuals. I am cutting directly into my support staff so we may have enough staffing to bring forth more resources that will in turn serve our students and our community better.

As the economy falters and jobs are lost, you need your community college more than ever. And we have seen more and more people turn to us in their time of change in hopes of improving their situation and possibly starting on a new education or career path. Though we have had issues with accreditation that you are aware of, overall, Solano County, you have been with us and you tell us how important the college is to you. We need your support more than ever before. Your presence here shows that you are not fair weather friends and you are with us. Be patient and you will be happy to have stuck by us. With the state support we can be good. With your support added to the state funding we can be excellent.

During my first address to the college community, I called the college to action. My plea to the college community was to look at the needs of the county and participate in problem-solving. Our institution is challenging itself to be a more visible and integral part of the county.

The future:

I see a future for Solano County that is filled with exciting opportunities, despite our financial challenges. Our future is nothing without you. We exist for our community and what we see coming reflects your dreams and aspirations:

- Agriculture-related programs at our Vacaville Center
- A state of the art homeland security training programs: protective and fire training facilities in Vacaville
- Partnership with the biotech industry for regional programs in Solano County
- A regional higher education center in Vallejo to train the new generation of automotive maintenance and repair technicians and to house four-year partners.
- A large science building at the Fairfield Campus to provide opportunities for students to do research and for our faculty to instruct and to support the county's goal of being a life science focus.
- A state of the art library and learning resource center to allow for adequate space for our students to study and for our community to gather.

- A renovated Theatre building to continue to provide unchallenged access to the great artists we have in the community and to welcome you to larger community events there.
- The opportunity to partner with Sacramento State University to provide bachelor's degrees at our Vacaville Center or with Sonoma State or Cal Maritime to provide bachelor's degrees at our center in Vallejo or with Touro University or Chapman University or the University of Phoenix to ensure smooth transition into their signature programs for our students.
- Enhancing our partnerships with our school districts and the County Office of Education to provide more well-tuned pathways for our students from secondary to postsecondary.

Above all, Solano Community College is seeking partnerships with all of you. The College wants to do what its community needs. We want to be present and listen to what you want us to do and focus on. We are excited about the future and want to push our institution to its maximum ability. We hope that you and the college have found some new inspiration to greatness.

Based on everything that I see and know about the college, the overall sentiment in the county is that the college is loved. There have been times when we did not act the best we could. But, you have proven to be a good friend. As Lawrence J. Peter said "" You can always tell a true friend, when you make a fool of yourself he doesn't think you've done a permanent job."

We thank you for your friendship of the past and ask for your continued commitment of this great institution for the good of your sons and daughters, your workers who need to be retrained or trained, for those who want to change their careers or even their lives. You need Solano Community College to be here for you: You have invested enough in it. Please continue to be with us as we go through this journey. We shall not disappoint you.

Thank you!