Dear Colleagues:

We are in full preparation for the return of the 10-month employees and our faculty members. The summer has been pleasant, but way too short. Within one month we will have completed the second week of classes. We have a lot going on and a lot waiting for us to accomplish.

In this SP DIRECT, you will read about our budget situation. It is fragile at best, but we do not want to alarm you. We have been weathering this storm, and with a great crew in the Administrative and Business Services office, we will do our best to ensure that we keep things moving.

The coming academic year is a great one for us on the accreditation side of the institution. We have a report due in October and a Self-Study due at the end of summer 2011. Executive Vice President Arturo Reyes and Dean Jeffrey Lamb have been working diligently to get things moving, and I cannot say enough about the support from CCA/CTA/NEA President Tom Grube and CSEA President Cynthia Simon in terms of the work they have put in for the 2010 report. There were several other staff and faculty members who also worked hard to keep the report on track: Amy Utt, Zafer Sun, and Sandra Rotenberg. Student Lillian Nelson has also been very diligent at helping us through the accreditation process. I apologize in advance for the others I might have forgotten. Yes, Academic Senate President Thom Watkins also helped us a lot.

We cannot and have not let accreditation consume us. We also have great things ahead for the next year:

- Vacaville Center Opening, including the incorporation of the School of Aeronautics at the Center
- Vallejo Center, including Sonoma State’s offering classes at the Center starting in January
- Conversation leading to a commitment to environmental stewardship and climate control (recycling, energy, etc.)
- Discussions on faculty hiring
- Hiring of new classified staff
- Hiring of new maintenance staff
- Reviewing our administrative staff and perhaps studying a different model for academic administration
- Restructuring certain areas to build capacity with fewer employees
- Providing greater insight into the budget
- Implementing the Banner project to its full potential
- Implementing our strategic plan
- Seeking greater community investment in the College
- Beautifying the Fairfield Campus and maintaining the Centers well
- Enhancing our global outreach

The list can go on and on. You can see why we cannot wait for you to come back.

I look forward to updating you on August 13th and continuing the progress we have made thus far.

Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President
Changes in at the College

There are some changes that have occurred that will enable the College to position itself to move forward. Student Development, which Dr. Shirley Lewis led for many years, will now be led by Mr. Mostafa Ghous. Mr. Ghous has been leading the MESA program for many years. The transition there will not be as dramatic as he will continue to be affiliated with the program. We are losing Dr. Joseph Conrad to the classroom; this loss is ameliorated by the fact that his division views him as one of their best teachers. Dr. Betsy Julian is taking over for Dr. Conrad as Dean of Math and Science.

There are also changes to both accommodate the reorganization and the sudden retirement of some key personnel. The following is a highlight of some critical changes:

- Academic Affairs has joined the Student Affairs group in Building 400. Nancy Blanc, Executive Assistant for Academic Affairs; Pei-Lin Van’t Hul, Curriculum Analyst; and Tina Abbate, Scheduling Specialist, have all moved to Building 400.
- The Institutional Advancement office has taken over the offices of Academic Affairs in Building 600.
- The Academic Senate office is returning to Building 600 as per the wishes of the Academic Senate.
- Other changes went to the Shared Governance Council at a special meeting on July 14 and were approved by the Governing Board on July 21.

Development of the Centers

The approval of moving the Centers to the next level by reclassifying the Directors as Deans, has allowed us to have leaders at Vacaville and Vallejo who are well suited to help develop the Centers to their full potential. The development of the Centers should serve Dixon, Winters, and Vacaville, as well as Benicia and Vallejo very well. At a recent Shared Governance Council meeting, the College discussed assigning the programs that are housed at the Centers to the Center Deans. This will allow them to work more closely with the faculty. It will, in essence, flatten the organization by allowing faculty easy access to their academic administrators.

Special Message Received by the President

The following is a message received by the Superintendent/President’s Office via email.

“I just wanted to let you know how beneficial your swimming program has been for rehabilitation following my partial knee reconstruction. I have researched all the possibilities in Fairfield and your program is far the most beneficial and affordable for me. I hope you keep it going. I would like to see you add an afternoon lap swimming program open to the public.”
Accreditation and Substantive Change

A meeting has been scheduled for the Board’s Accreditation Committee on August 4th so the Board members may learn more about what is going on with accreditation. No action will be taken at this meeting. The members of the subcommittee are Vice President A. Marie Young, Trustee Sarah E. Chapman, and Trustee James M. Claffey. Our faculty and staff leading the accreditation process will share a lot of details with the committee.

Recommendations 1 and 8 Subcommittee Meeting - This group has virtually completed most of its work. Led by Dean Jeffrey Lamb, the emphasis will be shifted toward institutional stability and planning, two important issues for the College to address.

The College submitted several substantive changes to The Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) in late spring. In particular, Solano Community College needed the commission to recognize the following moves:

- Change of location of the Vacaville Center
- Change of location of the Vallejo Center to the Columbus Parkway site
- Change of location of the School of Aeronautics to the Nut Tree Airport

These changes were all approved.

The ACCJC is requesting budget details for the following programs to approve their new location:

- Programs that will be offered more than 50% at the Vacaville Center, especially Fire Technology.
- Programs that will be offered more than 50% at the Vallejo Center.

Dr. Laguerre is very pleased that the ACCJC has acted on these changes for the College. Dr. Jerry Kea and Rob Simas, Retired Director of Research and Planning, were both instrumental in making these happen.

In Memoriam

Larry Nikkel, our long-time groundskeeper, was killed in a fire. Several faculty and staff members participated in the “Celebration of Life” held for Larry Nikkel on Thursday, July 22. His colleagues from all aspects of Solano came out in force to pay their respects and express their admiration for Larry. The event was well attended and several faculty and staff spoke, including Jim Dekloe, Jeff Lehfelt, and several others. The message from all was that Larry was someone to know, and he will be greatly missed.

Discussion on eCollege

The College uses eCollege as its Learning Management System to offer distance education. Dr. Jowel C. Laguerre; Executive VP Arturo Reyes; Dean Jeffrey Lamb; and Interim Chief Information Systems Officer Jim Ennis, met with eCollege representatives to discuss the College’s partnership with them. They shared news of new products and how the College can take better advantage of what they offer. eCollege’s new partnership with SunGard will also help smooth some issues staff has had with the management of the product. The College made a request for a $20K discount, and it was granted.
Dialogue with Vallejo Leaders

The College recently had an opportunity to have a dialog with business, education, and political leaders in Vallejo. The College has had such interaction with Vacaville for over 25 years. What emerged from the discussions was to initiate a Vallejo Education and Business Alliance. The group will meet again in August to better refine its direction and intent. The College may be able to add a trustee to the group as well.

Budget Update

Mr. Roy Stutzman and his team continue to work on the fiscal affairs of the College, making sense of the numbers. The help of an additional finance person, Mr. Ron Cox, has been brought on board to assist the team with a variety of tasks in order to close the books and be ready for the audit. The College has a renewed sense of optimism for the finances to be well understood. The September study session for the Board will focus on finance, updating the progress of the team, and looking deeper into the different aspects of the budget.

At the joint meeting of FaBPAC and the Shared Governance Council, the committee discussed the replacement of faculty and staff. However, it was noted that there is a need to hold off on future replacements so as to not harm the College’s financial situation in the long run.

An open forum was held to inform the College community about the budget. The latest numbers and the impact of the state budget discussions were shared. The College is facing a $1.2 million dollar deficit at this time and will keep the College community informed of the latest developments. The College will be working on the reductions with the ideas that were generated last year.

The legislature adjourned without approving a budget. This is a month-long break for the legislators. According to the League, the treasurer will not issue payments to the colleges without an approved state budget. It means that the College’s cash flow issue could be exacerbated, but Ms. Terri Ryland and Mr. Roy Stutzman are working hard to prevent it from happening. Our open loan with the County will also help us. Dr. Laguerre will be arranging some strengthening sessions with our state legislators. Our message will be simple: approve the governor’s budget for the community colleges and express our concerns for the cuts we are sustaining in categorical funding.

Old Vacaville Center Building

The College met with the property managers of the old Vacaville Center Building and discussed the potential for the College to keep the old center until the owners can negotiate some other terms with the College. More information will be forwarded as it becomes available.
Meeting with Basketball Coaches

Dr. Laguerre and Dean Bob Myers met with basketball coaches Matt Borchett and John Nagle to discuss partnering with the Filipino American Chamber of Commerce to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Chamber with a basketball tournament to be held at the College. The coaches and Dean Myers are excited about the possibility of generating a lot of community participation in this activity and to involve our players.

Meeting with the California State Department of Education

Dr. Laguerre had a productive meeting with Phil Lafontaine and Jim Greco from the California Department of Education. They discussed how the College could support a consortia of schools to access resources from the Department. Many of these programs are for Mathematics and the Sciences. They also discussed the College’s participation in teacher preparation programs.

A Note of Thanks from Winters

“Kimo,

I just wanted to drop a note of thanks for your help in getting the computers to Winters High School. They’re here and in the process of being set up for use for next year. They will replace a number of machines in our lab that are significantly older and barely functional, so your “trash” is most certainly our treasure in this case.

Please contact us here at WHS [Winters High School] if you should ever find this type of opportunity in the future. I really appreciate your help, and the students next year will be grateful as well.”

From: George W. Griffin, Principal, Winters High School

Facilities

Dr. Laguerre had a conference call with KMD Architects, whose money we have withheld for errors and omissions. We are working on an agreement to finalize payment.

Meeting with the CEO of Solano Transportation Authority (STA)

Through the Solano Economic Development Corporation, the College was able to meet with CEO Daryl Halls and discuss several partnership possibilities between the College and STA. The College will be scheduling follow-up discussions. In particular, the College is concentrating on ways to tie transportation among the three sites; Vacaville, Fairfield and Vallejo. Also, the College is discussing how to make it easier for students from Dixon and Winters to access the Vacaville Center.

Meeting with Water and Education International (WEI)

Dr. Laguerre and Dean Shirley Lewis met with Edward Anderson from WEI. They discussed the membership of an advisory board to help make decisions for the use of the funds raised by the College.

Mission Statement

Solano Community College prepares a diverse student population to participate successfully in today’s local and global communities. We accomplish our mission by providing:

- quality teaching
- innovative programs
- effective transfer preparation
- a broad curriculum
- services that are responsive to the needs of our students
- life-long learning
- economic and workforce development
Horticulture Program Open House

The faculty of the Horticulture program held a very successful open house. It was well attended and the faculty demonstrated the tremendous work they are doing with students and the community. Board Vice President A. Marie Young and Trustee Rosemary Thurston were in attendance in addition to Executive Coordinator Nora O’Neill and former Dean Joseph Conrad. Dr. Laguerre appreciates the work of Mr. Ken Williams and Ms. Sandra Diehl’s work with this College resource.

Dinner at Dr. Laguerre’s House for Football Team

Several young men from the football team along with their coaches, came to Dr. Laguerre’s house. They had the opportunity to welcome many freshmen and some returning student athletes. Dr. Laguerre shared with them how important academic achievement is to the College and how the College needs to graduate 1M more students by 2010. He pointed out how the athletes and students can contribute to those numbers positively. One of the players shared with Dr. Laguerre that he chose SCC because of the emphasis Coach Floyd Bumsed put on academics and academic support when Coach Bumsed visited his high school in Napa.

SCC Theatre Touring Company

The touring company performed at the Centennial Celebration of the California Community Colleges. Dean Leslie Rota and Retired Research and Planning Director Rob Simas, accompanied the students. The following is a thank you from the Community College League of California.

“On behalf of Scott Lay, myself, and the entire staff of the Community College League of California, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU...for Solano College Theatre Touring Company’s incredible performance at the League’s Centennial Dinner, Friday, June 18th. It was truly a memorable evening and the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive! The Chorus was definitely a highlight of the event...attendees were very impressed and truly in awe of your skill and the quality and professionalism of your performance.

In all honesty, the success of the evening was due in great part to the student entertainment. Solano Touring Company outdid themselves...they were stars! We cannot thank you enough for the hard work in preparing, for the burden of travel and most of the expense, the long day and the hectic atmosphere once you arrived. Your group is professional, incredibly talented and a wonderful testament of the great work being done at your College.

We are so very proud of Solano Community College and of the Solano College Theatre Touring Company. You are the reason we do what we do...and we wish you all continued success. Thank you again for traveling to Sacramento to be a part of the Centennial Celebration. We literally could not have done it without you.”

Scott Lay,
President & CEO

Cherie Savage, Director
Meetings & Events

The California Community Colleges are one hundred years old and have provided direction and life-improving opportunities for millions of students. We have provided these same opportunities to citizens of our County for 65 years.
Presentation at Future Leaders Conference

Dr. Laguerre was invited to present his experience as a first-year president to aspiring presidents at a conference in Newport Beach, CA. He shared his experience; including what surprises he found when he came to SCC. Two other community college presidents participated in the presentation. Dr. Laguerre was invited to also write a chapter for a book to be published by the Presidents’ National Roundtable.

Parking Process Receives Compliments

Laurie Cheatham from A&R received the following note from someone who was looking at our Web site:

“I am working on a document that highlights some of the activities that institutions have taken to guide students online when ordering their parking permits. Solano Community College is a great example of an institution with online permit sales which I would like to utilize in this document. Is it possible that I could schedule some time with either yourself or an appropriate staff member who could display and demonstrate the online screens that students access when ordering their permits?”

Meeting of Solano County and Winters Wellness Initiative

Several community leaders, including a representative from Travis Air Force Base and Superintendent Dee Alarcón, met with Brenda Harris from the California Department of Education to discuss the possibility of initiating the Wellness Initiative activity in Solano County. The response was overwhelmingly positive. The next step is to gather data and to search for resources to establish the organization.

Award Luncheon for Fairfield-Suisun Chamber

The Fairfield-Suisun Chamber held its annual board installation program and awards ceremony. Colonel James C. Vechery of Travis Air Force Base was the keynote speaker and did a marvelous job at tying Travis to the community. Also of note, Debra Russo, daughter of Billy and Louise Yarbrough, received the Citizen Award. The Yarbrough’s contributed to the building of our stadium.

Juneteenth Celebration in Vallejo

Dr. and Mrs. Laguerre were invited to sing the Haitian National Anthem at this event. Dr. Laguerre is proud to say Marie-Claude did a great job. A table with information from the College was also set up at the event. They were very pleased to have the participation of Professor Michael Goodwin from Criminal Justice, Mostafa Ghous from MESA, Board Vice President A. Marie Young; and, once again, Dean Shirley Lewis was there to support the effort. The difference is that she was not alone this time. The College’s Cabinet decided to provide opportunities for staff and faculty to help work in the booths at events. The public and former students are excited to see faculty and staff they can interact with.
More on the Budget...

As you are aware, the State of California is without a signed budget for the 2010/11 fiscal year. Legislative leaders and the Governor have not yet been able to craft an agreement to resolve a $19.1M state deficit. According to a Sacramento Bee report this morning:

“Exactly one year ago today, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a state budget package after nearly a month of IOUs and serious closed-door, cigar-fueled negotiations. And where are we now? Nowhere close.”

What is the impact of this delay on the Solano Community College District? Beyond the obvious, which is the uncertainty of revenue for the 2010/11 year for budget planning purposes, an even more immediate issue is that of cash flow. The largest portion of revenue received by the District is from state apportionment payments, which are regularly scheduled throughout the year. Absent a state budget, these payments are not being made. The District has taken the following steps to mitigate the delay in state apportionment payments in the short term:

In June the district requested that the County Board of Supervisors pass a resolution allowing the County Treasurer to advance up to 85% of 2010/11 anticipated District property tax revenue. This action is authorized under Government Code 23010, subdivision (b) and allows the County to advance up to $7.6M to meet district temporary cash-flow needs.

In addition, the College District is participating in a pooled Tax Revenue Anticipation Note (TRAN) program sponsored by the California Community College League which provides for temporary borrowing to meet cash-flow needs in the amount of $5M.

Both of these strategies do involve some interest costs to the District. Statewide, the projected interest cost is $5M, which, if spent on the educational mission, would fund 1250 course sections.

Although the temporary cash-flow measures identified will provide $12.6M of short-term funds to meet on-going cash needs for payroll and to pay for other necessary goods and services, the longer the state budget is delayed the more critical cash-flow issues may become. District disbursements historically average in excess of $4M per month. If, by late September, cash payment in the form of state apportionment is not received, the District cash-flow position could become acute.

District Fiscal staff continues to evaluate limited opportunities to conserve cash in the early months of the fiscal year and to investigate other short-term cash-flow strategies to mitigate the impact of the budget impasse in Sacramento. The only decent news about this is that Solano Community College is not alone, and all districts will have to join together to address this statewide issue.

By: Roy V. Stutzman, Consultant/Finance and Administrative Services
Last But Not Least—More Facilities

Over the past 3-4 weeks, Facilities has had major irrigation system problems, both with valves and computers/timers. This led to many areas going dry and browning out, both throughout the inner campus and on some of the athletic fields. As one can imagine, campus-wide this is an extremely large and complex system, with some fairly new, but many very old components. We are getting areas fixed one at a time, and are often running systems during the day, both to check out the individual system and also to try and get water back on the areas to “green” them up. Within a few weeks we should be fully operational and will be able to return to the more efficient night-time irrigation schedules.