Dear Colleagues:

The summer has started with the sadness of losing many of our colleagues to retirement and to other opportunities. We have over a dozen faculty, staff and administrators who have taken advantage of the early retirement incentive. They will be leaving us at the end of the month. We are, though, pleased that Mr. Charles Shatzer had pledged his retirement incentive to the foundation. These funds will be used to establish a scholarship in his name to honor his long service to the College.

We are also very happy that some new colleagues will be joining us starting July 1 or shortly thereafter. These include:

- Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Mr. Arturo Reyes (7/1)
- Dr. Frances (Betsy) Julian, Dean of Mathematics and Science (7/15)
- Mr. Peter Bostic, Executive Director of Institutional Advancement (7/12)
- Dr. Jeffrey Lamb, Dean of Academic Success and Learning Resources (7/1 part-time; 7/23 FT)
- Dr. Shirley Lewis, Dean of the Vacaville Center (7/1)
- Ms. Karen Ulrich, Director of Human Resources (7/6)

These positions were part of the reorganization or replacement plan. One additional change is the return to the classroom of Mr. John Urrutia, Dean of Business and Career Technology. We thank him for his service as dean and his contribution while leading the division.

I want to thank Dean Joseph Conrad for his leadership as Interim Dean of Mathematics and Science. He stepped in at a critical time and helped keep the division moving. I also want to express the College’s gratitude to Dr. Trudy Largent for the leadership she has provided to the Human Resources Office. She has re-established an excellent working relationship with the unions and has improved many of our processes. She put us on a track to make the best of our opportunities for the College.

The budget is being debated in Sacramento with different level of concerns. Thus far, the enrollment funding increase is still in place between 2.21% and 2.25%. There is still a state budget gap of $19B. We are watching the debate and planning to ensure that we respond to the budget when it is approved. A budget forum took place Monday, June 21, at 2:00 pm. The Board will receive the budget on June 22. The short timeline for this forum is due to the recency of our fiscal leaders in their role. It was not certain they could have put together a budget draft for us this soon. There will be other opportunities to weigh in prior to the final adoption of the budget.

Last week, FaBPAC and Shared Governance Council met in a joint session to hear the budget and give feedback on it. I shared with your representatives the news that we have a deficit of over $1M to fix. Using suggestions that have been made at prior budget forums, we will propose the cuts and modifications to be made to balance the budget. I am still accepting ideas for savings and cuts.

I hope that you are doing well and enjoying your summer break. Please keep in touch!

Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Superintendent/President
Summer Classes

Summer classes began on June 14th. We are anticipating healthy enrollment in those classes with the cutbacks we had to orchestrate.

Grant Application

The college has applied for a Green Innovation Challenge grant through the California Energy Commission. Five grants in the amount of $4 million each will be awarded statewide. I want to express my gratitude to Nora O’Neill, Chuck Eason and the leader of the group, Paul Fair, for their dedication the time they have devoted to this application. As the reporter said about the US goal that should not have been scored, “you miss every time you don’t kick on goal.”

Loans from Solano County to SCC

Dr. Laguerre wrote a couple of editorials to inform the community of the situation at the college. Here is a sample.

Why Did Solano Community College borrow from the county?
By Jowel Laguerre
June 15th, 2010

The Solano County Board of Supervisors approved a one-day loan to help Solano Community College with its temporary cash flow issues recently. The loan was repaid the next day. This action generated a lot of questions in the community, in the media and at the college. Although this appeared suddenly, state supported institutions have used different ways to deal with this same issue.

The county and the college used a provision in the law that allows the county treasurer to advance the college 85 percent of the tax revenue it collects on behalf of the college as a loan to be repaid. In the most recent past, the college availed itself of Tax and Revenue Anticipation Notes. These loans are used by other community colleges in the state.

This option is a good way to keep the college running in difficult times and it allows an agency to support another with the assurance that the loan is secure. Although this was a loan to be repaid, in many communities in the country the county government apportions some of its revenue to support the community college within its borders and often softens the blow of funding cuts from the state.

The state of California has deferred payments to colleges in the state. While this is not a new issue, it is often a challenge to deal with. The deferment makes our cash flow at some times in the year very difficult to handle. It makes meeting some financial obligations a bit more challenging. Our vendors are patient with us, but we cannot defer payments to them indefinitely. We had an unfortunate timing with the one-day-loan issue. As the state payment was arriving a day later than our payroll was due, we had to have sufficient cash on hand.

One may wonder if the reserve of the college shouldn't have been enough to support its obligations. By board policy the college has a reserve of 5 percent. Many institutions have reserves over 10 percent. They exist for times like these when revenue may not be readily available and bills need to be paid.

Our reserve wouldn't have been sufficient for our cash flow issues of last month. This is a policy the Board of Trustees and I will need to remedy over the long haul. Until we do and as the state continues to defer payments, we will return to the county for short-term loans. They keep your community college running and meeting its financial obligations.

Dr. Jowel C. Laguerre is Superintendent-President of Solano Community College.
Meeting with Travis Unified Schools

On Friday, June 11th, Dr. Laguerre met with Superintendent of Schools, Kate Wren Gavlak and two of her administrators. We discussed the concept by which students could start taking college courses taught at Vanden High School starting in the ninth grade and then transition into the middle college high school that could be developed at the Vacaville Center. We envision a lot of partners in the concept, including Dixon, Vacaville and Winters, as well as some CSUs. We are going to explore the idea with a specific funder in mind. We will keep you informed as we move forward.

Commission on the Future (COTF)

This commission completed its work last week. There are several recommendations to encourage our institutions to attend to student success in a meaningful way. There is also an emphasis on helping students who do not have the means to access college. The work of the commission is not done, but will continue in a different form over the next few years, including the implementation of the goals.

Board Retreat and CEO Evaluation

There will be a board retreat on June 22nd, there will be other items included at the end of the Meeting and the CEO evaluation is scheduled to take place during the early part of the meeting.

Commencement

Thank you to those who participated in commencement. Your presence was appreciated. Faculty and staff did a tremendous job and I was very pleased with the overall event. The Commencement Committee met to debrief on the outcomes of the 2010 Commencement. We agreed to change the venue for next year and to shorten the event. Several other suggestions will also be implemented, such as relocating faculty seating for the event.

End of the Academic Year

Many faculty are staying away from their offices during the summer; however, several endeavor to stick around not only to teach summer school, but to be available to attend FaBPAC and Shared Governance meetings throughout the summer. These two groups are schedule to meet at least once a month in June and July.
Meeting with Committee on Accreditation

The subcommittee for recommendations 1 and 8 met the end of May. We had a lot of discussion about the progress the board has made and areas where the committee feels the board needs to be more vigilant so it may sustain its progress. The committee interacted with Special Trustee Henry and asked for his support in helping members of the board to move forward in a way that supports the commission’s expectations. Using Dr. Pam Fisher’s help, we will discuss how to continue to make more progress toward our October deadline in regard to the board.

Presentation to Vacaville City Council

Dr. Laguerre gave an update to the Vacaville City Council about the college and particularly about the Vacaville Center. There is a lot of excitement about the possibilities for the Vacaville Center and the college.

Classified Staff BBQ

Several of our administrators: Arthur Lopez, Joe Conrad; just to name a few, joined by Trustee Chapman, participated in cooking for the classified staff. Trustees Thurston and Young also attended the event. The staff was very appreciative of the event.

Nursing Pinning

Trustees Thurston, Young and Honeychurch attended the Nursing Pinning ceremony. Dean Máire Morinec, expressed her appreciation for their presence to help honor the graduates.

Inaugural Annual Student Awards Ceremony

This event was a tremendous success. Dr. Lewis and several of the deans helped put it together. The majority of the honorees were present and they were very grateful for the recognition. We thank faculty and staff who nominated the students. Let’s plan to have a bigger event next year recognizing more students for their successes.
Retirees’ Event

Led by Pat Cordry and former Superintendent/President Gerry Fisher, the retirees returned to the college to reminisce and enjoy one another’s company. We were able to have bricks installed that they had paid for several years ago. I want to thank Nora O’Neill for not only ensuring that the event was successful, but for catching up with the bricks. Over fifty retirees were in attendance.

Baccalaureate Speaker

Dr. Laguerre was the baccalaureate speaker for students graduating from Fairfield-Suisun high schools. The program was sponsored by Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority at St. Stephen Methodist Church. Several students are going to attend Solano Community College. My remarks were well received by students and family members.

Meeting with Vallejo Times

Dr. Laguerre met with Ted Vollmer of the Vallejo Times. I learned that he is a community college graduate and is proud of that and supportive of the community colleges. We discussed the potential of my writing opinion pieces for the paper. He has now interacted with all the newspapers in our service area.

Vallejo Together Parent Summit

The college co-sponsored this event with Vallejo Together. The event was not well attended, but those who were in attendance enjoyed being at the college. We discussed plans for future gatherings and joint sponsorship.

Building 600 Meeting

President Honeychurch, David Froehlich and I met to discuss steps for Building 600 renovation in preparation for the committee. We received a timeline from David and will be convening meetings for discussions in early summer.
Speaking at Winters Rotary

Dr. Laguerre addressed the Rotary Club in Winters. The presentation was well received. There was a lot of interest in the development of the Vacaville Center and in some programs that could serve the area. Professor Richard Kleeberg made this opportunity available to us.

Meeting with Suisun City Manager

City Manager Suzanne Bragdon and the Superintendent/President discussed partnerships with the college in regard to the theatre and our lease. We are exploring different avenues for the college to remain in the building without having the city pay too much for maintenance.

Nut Tree Airport Master Plan

Dr. Laguerre attended the meeting for the expansion of the airport and its effect on the surrounding community. This expansion has the potential to limit what we can do on our Vacaville Campus. It may also provide us opportunities to enhance our operation at the airport.

Employee Retirements

Thank you all for your service to the SCC and Solano County. Please join the Retirees Association

Delbert Bump, Instructor, Music – 29 years of service at SCC
M. Bruce Clark, Instructor, English – 39 years of service at SCC
Mary David, Admin. Asst. III, OAR – 30 years of service at SCC
Diana Haley, Extended Campus Assistant – 13 ½ years of service at SCC
Dorothy Hawkes, Instructor, Mathematics – 22 years of service at SCC
Donald Hoggan, Instructor, Computer Science – 20 years of service at SCC
Gary Martin, Instructor, Computer Science – 30 ½ years of service at SCC
Walter Mikolajcik, Instructor, Music – 35 years of service at SCC
Mary Ellen Murphy, Assessment Center Specialist – 12 ½ years of service at SCC
David Nourot, Instructor, Welding – 35 years of service at SCC
Maile Omellas, Instructor, Telecommunications – 31 years of service at SCC
Sharon Pabst, Reading/Writing Lab Tech – 25 ½ years of service at SCC
Charles Shatzer, Instructor, Business – 30 years of service at SCC
Robert Simas, Director, Research & Planning – 23 ¾ years of service at SCC
Ella Tolliver, Counselor – 22 years of service at SCC
Elizabeth Tsai, Librarian – 19 years of service at SCC
Jeff Yterdal, Bookstore Manager – 11 ½ years of service at SCC