Dear Colleagues:

This is your January 22 SPDIRECT. It is a way to keep you informed of what is going on with the college and the different activities we are involved in.

I want to wish you the very best for the New Year! Thank you again to our support units for your efforts in keeping the college moving in the right direction. I want to thank the faculty for your dedication and efforts to mold the minds of the county for a better tomorrow.

**A Noteworthy Anniversary:** January 18 marked the thirtieth year of my arrival in the United States. Arriving in Kansas in the dead of winter, I experienced cold that I never knew existed, not even in a freezer, and never thought I could endure. Thirty years has taught me many valuable life lessons. The opportunities I was shown and of which I have availed myself have transformed my views, my interests and my outlook on life, education, family, country, poverty, wealth, life and death. Among many immigrants and international students, I was one of the luckiest.

Being informed two days before I was to leave Haiti for good, I hustled to get to an opportunity I had previously declined. I taught my last class in Haiti on Saturday afternoon, January 16, and left Port-au-Prince on Sunday morning, January 17. I arrived at Kansas City International Airport at 4:30 a.m. on Monday the 18th, taught my first class at the University of Kansas at 8:30 a.m. and attended my first class in a master’s program at 10 or 11.

I left a very good teaching career and became a full-time graduate teaching assistant making $1,800 for the first semester and $4,500 the next year. As my classmate Nathanaël said to me that Sunday morning as I was begging him to cover my classes in Haiti for me, “How foolish it is to leave such a great situation, a nice car, popularity as a teacher and accept a small fraction of your earnings to go study.” I responded that I was going to invest in myself to be able to do much better. I was taking a step back so I could leap forward. Not only have I done better financially, but intellectually and culturally and in leadership opportunities my life has been enriched because of that foresight. Friends, colleagues, supporters and students (Kansas, Minnesota, Maryland, Nevada and California) and supporters by giving me the opportunity to serve you, our communities and our students, you have contributed to making this January 18th an even better anniversary for me. Thank you!
**Student Services Council Meeting:** The Student Services Council met last Tuesday. In addition to the regular agenda, we hosted Dean Morinec and Professor Genele Rhoads from the Mathematics department. Maire had approached the council and held some discussions about changing the admissions process for the Nursing program. She and the Student Services professionals worked out a compromise to modify the change and make it more timely for students and staff. Professor Rhoads shared with the staff the course she is teaching for which students receive credits and part of their assignment is experiential learning at some elementary schools. The students offer mathematics and science to elementary school children. She would like more students to know about the possibility and avail themselves of it. This course helps students develop excellent leadership skills and get a taste of teaching that tells them whether the profession is for them.

**Appearance in Front of ACCJC:** President Thurston and I appeared in front of the Commission to share with the commissioners the progress the college has made since the team visit and the plans we have for meeting the recommendations the team made. We expect a decision by the Commission at the beginning of February.

**Redistricting Open Forums:** The college with CCLC and the redistricting partners held three forums to share the maps and the process of the redistricting. The forums were held at the Vallejo Center, the Fairfield Campus and the Vacaville Center. The final map was approved at the board on January 18. Trustees will no longer represent broad areas, but specific regions or districts.

**ALG Meeting:** The ALG members held a two-hour meeting last Thursday to review the accomplishments to date of the strategic plan for this year. We also saw a demonstration on a new relational database that will allow our planning to be done more effectively. The greatest significance of the work was the opportunity to learn the best statements of outcomes and measures. Charo Albarran, HR Manager, shared with us a wellness program that will be starting in the next few weeks at the college to help employees exercise.

**Vallejo Business Alliance:** The Alliance held its January meeting on Friday. The group approved its constitution and continues to be a good group for education and business to interact and work together.

**Martin Luther King Celebration:** This year’s event was more special to SCC as two of our colleagues were honored with a lifetime achievement award. Dr. Karen McCord and Trustee A. Marie Young were honored by the committee.

**Meeting on Service Area Outcomes and Student Learning Outcomes:** I held several meetings with the academic administrators and the Student Services leaders to review where we are in the development and implementation of outcomes for both our courses and our services. We held these meetings as study sessions where we looked at the issues, looked for best practices in other places and evaluated where we are as a college. We recognized we have made some progress, but that as the team said to us in the exit forum, we must speed up our efforts in these areas in order to be compliant with ACCJC requirements by the fall of 2012. There is a strong commitment from the leaders that this will happen and we will not regress as we did before.
Faculty and Staff Honored on Tuesday, January 17: I had the pleasure on Tuesday of recognizing 15 outstanding individuals at the college among our faculty, staff and administrators. These women and men deserve our admiration for their hard work and exemplary performance. I started in 2009 by recognizing three or four employees whose work I knew was special, but since then the list has grown to 15 every semester and I do not need to duplicate the same names because there are always new ones who impress me. As a matter of fact, the list for the fall is already compiled and I am ready to start working on the ones for next spring.

The true story of Solano Community College is written every day by over 150 full-time faculty, 300 or more adjunct professors, over 100 staff and administrators, seven trustees and thousands of students. The faculty members do not stop thinking of the best ways to reach our students after they leave the classroom. They think of the current and future students to see how they may help them achieve better. The staff who deal with students or who support faculty do so by thinking constantly of how they can enhance their services. Our students are proud to be Falcons and perform well as alumni in their places of employment.

I thank President Thurston, VP Chapman and Trustee Young for helping me with the recognition. Here is the list of faculty and staff we recognized on January 17, 2012:

Zandra Gilley Human Resources  
Jim Ennis Chief Information Technology Officer  
JR Robinson Data Base Specialist  
Judy Anderson Executive Administrative Assistant (Retired)  
Jim Anderson Counselor  
Pat Ceja Computer Lab Assistant  
Ann Short Administrative Assistant (Community Education)  
Marcie McDaniels Counselor  
Mostafa Ghous Director of MESA and Student Development  
Jerry Kea Dean of the Vallejo Center  
Genele Rhoads Professor of Mathematics  
Abla Christiansen Counselor  
Lou McDermott Adjunct History Professor  
Kristie Iwamoto Adjunct English Professor  
Gail Kropp Foreign Language Professor
We honor them and thank them for their service to Solano Community College students, faculty, staff and the community.

**Address to the College Community:** As customary, I had the opportunity to address the faculty and staff on Tuesday prior to the beginning of the semester. My remarks covered the following areas:

- My gratitude to the faculty and staff for their support of the work of the college.
- CSEA and SCFA were singled out for their support during the accreditation visit.
- Though we could not recognize everyone, I thanked members of Local 39 for their continued good work to support our infrastructure and the deans for carrying their new workloads.
- The deans’ assistants were recognized for their leadership and hard work because of the reorganization and the shifting of their duties.
- I addressed the budget in light of the challenges we will face this coming year with over $2M in cuts. I challenged us to look at a variety of ways to strengthen the fragility of the budget by building a strong corporate training program that can help us as it builds a strong fund balance; aggressiveness in grant writing; and assertiveness on the part of the foundation.
- I closed with a plea to the college community, especially the faculty, to help us meet the challenges of assessment by the fall of 2012. A similar effort is needed by the service areas.
- To support the work in assessment, I decided to suspend the Program Discontinuance process and called on the Academic Senate to work with us to reform the process by coupling it with the Program Review process. The new process would have three strong outcomes: A program is doing well and it continues; a program is in need of retooling and it is recommended that it improve itself; or the program is no longer viable and it is suspended. The whole process should be less time-consuming than the current one. By taking the measure to suspend the Program Discontinuance process, I am asking the faculty to focus their efforts on assessment of learning outcomes.
- I have asked that funds be allocated to support the work by providing assistance at the level of each school to support the faculty and to provide clerical aid to accelerate the work.

**Update on Facilities Master Plan:** Several of us met with Rob Berthelman who is the main person responsible for our Facilities Master Plan. We discussed our vision and how we would like to see the plan go, and shared some of the most crucial needs of the college. We agreed to keep the board and the college community informed of our progress. Here is a synopsis of communication with the board and the college community:

“Master Planning Process from the Firm

- Meetings with Dr. Laguerre
- Minimally, meet once per month
- President’s cabinet – regular basis to be determined
- Board of Trustees
- Need study session to do same conversation with them
- And, regular input (every two months)
• Look to potential interface/meeting in first week of March
• Management Group, meets once per month, need to meet with them, too
• Interface with faculty and staff
• Need to make them feel part of the process”

County Superintendents’ Meeting: I met with the different superintendents of schools in the county at our monthly meeting. We discussed the issues of redevelopment and what we should do together to ensure that with the many changes occurring we continue to receive the funds that come to us and are required by law. VP Ligioso is working with the County Treasurer’s staff to make sure we are kept in the loop about the upcoming changes.

Meeting with Support Areas: On Thursday several areas of the college joined Peter Cammish and me to study our service area outcomes. We came out with a commitment and a better understanding of what we should do with student learning outcomes and service area outcomes for experiences outside of the classroom. Peter is developing appropriate forms for the staff to start working.

Report from the January 18 Board Meeting:

(a) The board swore in Ms. Anamaria Eljack as student trustee: She joined the college from Miami, Florida and is majoring in biology with the expectation to transfer in the fall and major in medicine. She replaced Lexi Parmer who resigned in the fall.
(b) Adoption of the Proposal for Redistricting 2012: The board adopted a redistricting plan to be in place for the November 2012 elections.
(c) Extension of Agreement with Kitchell CEM, Inc., for Construction Management Services: The board extended its contract with Kitchell to continue the projects from the Measure G Bond funds.
(d) Approve Appointment to Measure G Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC): The board appointed Vallejo Councilmember Hermi Sunga to the Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee replacing Stan Arterberry who resigned in the fall.
(e) Proposed Agreement with Accountemps DBA Robert Half International: The board approved a request from VP Ligioso for a contract with Accountemps to provide accounting services.
(f) Resolution Proclaiming January 2012 as National Stalking Awareness Month at Solano Community College: The board approved the above resolution for the month of January as a support of our students and employees.
(g) Resolution Proclaiming February 2012 as Career and Technical Education Month at Solano Community College: The board approved the above resolution for the month of February to celebrate Career Technical Education.
(h) Resolution Proclaiming February 2012 as Black History Month at Solano Community College: The board approved the above resolution for the month of February in celebration of the heritage and contributions of African-American to society.
(i) Second Reading – Review of Student Services Policies, Series 5000: The board approved the submitted policies.

• The board also received a $450 donation from the American-Filipino Chamber of Commerce based in Vallejo for scholarship for Business students. The funds are derived from the Chamber’s Annual Business Symposium.
• Professor Dale Crandall-Bear and Coordinator of Distance Education presented the process of the adoption of the new Learning Management System (LMS) to the board. Gratitude was expressed to him and the members of the committee that narrowed the number of systems to two.
• Professor Melissa Reeve was approved as Basic Skills Coordinator.