

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT/SUPERINTENDENT PRESIDENT'S CAMPUS UPDATES



January 31, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

It is hard to believe that January has come and gone so quickly. We had a very productive month with lots of early successes to start the year.

Advocating for Students at the Capitol

On Monday, January 27, members of the **Board of Trustees**, Marisa Perez, Martha Camacho-Rodriguez, Zurich Lewis, **Student Trustee** Valery Escobar, the Public Affairs team and I visited the State Capitol to participate in the Community College League of California's Annual Legislative Conference. We spoke with elected officials about policies and resources that would help meet the basic needs of our students. Some of the topics we discussed are included in the Governor's proposed budget:



- **Addressing Housing Insecurity** – last fall, I announced an exciting project to address student housing insecurity. I am happy to report we are getting closer to finalizing our transitional student housing development in the City of Norwalk. Due in part to a successful collaboration with the County, we will officially acquire a small property over the next several weeks that will provide housing to some of our students who face housing insecurity. This was welcome news to our state officials in Sacramento. We will continue to work with our elected representatives to secure more support and resources to make our housing development successful over the long haul.
- **Faculty Diversity** – the District supports the creation of a statewide fellowship pilot program to help improve faculty diversity at community colleges through recruitment and mentorship. The state would allocate \$15 million in one-time dollars from Proposition 98 funds.
- **Dual Enrollment** – the District supports the allocation of \$5 million for instructional materials for dual enrollment students. This would support our efforts to incorporate Open Educational Resources (OER) to reduce the cost of textbooks for students.
- **Assistance for Undocumented Students** – in order to assist our undocumented students, the District supports the ongoing allocation of \$5.8 million to fund hiring Dreamer Resource Liaisons, per Assembly Bill 1645. The bill mandates all community colleges within the system to hire a Dream Resource Liaison.
- **Mental Health Support** – the three most common diagnoses our students report is depression, anxiety, and PTSD. We asked lawmakers to grant us more support to help our students.

Governor's Budget

Now that the governor has released his proposed budget, there are a few additional points I want to highlight from my last budget update that will impact Cerritos College:

- **No Change to Student Centered Funding Formula for 2020-21.** Although the budget makes no change to the formula at this time, the governor supports the recent recommendation of the Student-Centered Funding Formula Oversight Committee to include a metric reflecting first-generation college students within the formula. The administration notes that incorporating this metric first requires the collection of first-generation student data aligned with the Committee's recommended definition. The Chancellor's Office is expected to develop guidance and work with districts to collect this data for inclusion in the formula in the future. A minimum of two years of data would be needed for the Finance Department to produce reliable projections.
- **Growth and Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) Provided.** The proposal includes 0.5% growth in access, and a 2.29% COLA for apportionments and selected categorical programs.
- **Expands Zero Textbook Cost Pathways.** The budget includes \$10 million in one-time funds to expand zero textbook cost (ZTC) pathways using Open Educational Resources (OER) and other materials that are free of charge to students.
- **Student Financial Aid.** The budget does not include major proposals related to state financial aid. However, the administration indicates it will review a forthcoming report from a work group convened by the California Student Aid Commission on how the state's financial aid programs could better serve the needs of students. Specifically, the report is expected to address strategies for mitigating students' total costs of attendance, including non-tuition costs.
- **Expands Work-Based Learning.** The proposed budget includes \$20.4 million one-time in the current year and \$27.8 million ongoing in the budget year to support projected increases in apprenticeship instructional hours.
- **Addressing student needs.** The proposed budget includes \$11.4 million ongoing to support food pantry programs at colleges and \$5 million ongoing for instructional materials for dual enrollment students.
- **Deferred Maintenance and Instructional Equipment.** The proposed budget includes \$17 million in one-time funds for deferred maintenance and instructional equipment.

Celebrating 20 Years of Teacher TRAC

As you know, we celebrated the **20th Anniversary of**

Teacher TRAC on Tuesday, January 21. The presentations left me thinking about the true impact the program has on students. What was especially memorable was hearing **Roy Juarez, Jr.'s** story. Roy served as the keynote speaker and delivered an emotional and powerful testimony recounting his painful truth about homelessness, personal trauma, but most of all his triumph. His story is still fresh on my mind. Roy is an activist and motivational speaker who travels the country living homeless by choice to raise awareness about homeless youth and access to higher education. As a

student, he spent several years without a steady place to live. Roy repeatedly spoke about the "massive impact" and influence teachers, professors, counselors, administrators, and staff have on students like him at the very moment they arrive to campus. He challenged us to "be prepared for whoever walks through our doors" and to



make sure we “see,” acknowledge, and engage our students. Roy’s story represents the lives of so many of the students we serve, and should inspire us to bring the best versions of ourselves to work. When your days get tough, remember our students count on us. More importantly, each of us has the opportunity to change a student’s life simply by showing that we care. I added Roy’s book *Homeless by Choice: A Memoir of Love, Hate, and Forgiveness* to my summer booklist to learn more about his journey and his recommendations on ways to improve the student experience on campus.

Diversity through APIDA

We started the new year and our semester with our first diversity celebration, featuring **Asian Pacific Islander Desi American Awareness Week** on January 27-30. I hope you were able to participate in the week’s festivities that were filled with unique activities such as Chinese chess, a Bollywood performance, and cultural presentations. It is important to continue our commitment to creating a culture of respect and appreciation for diversity. Thank you to our APIDA team for organizing a great celebration.



President’s Spring 2020 Speaker Series

Today, we kicked off the first workshop in the **President’s Spring 2020 Speaker Series: A Guide to Personal and Professional Excellence** with the **2020 Vision** session. Building on our Service Excellence model, our presenters shared tips on how to deliver great customer service to colleagues, guests, and students; mindfulness and work etiquette. A special thanks to **Professor Eric Doucette** and **Dr. Cynthia Lavarriere** for helping me lead the workshop. I hope you will participate in the next session scheduled for **Friday, February 21** where we will focus on finding balance. To register for each series, please login to the [Flex Reporter](#). For additional information, please visit the [President’s Speaker Series website](#).



Thanks,
Jose

Jose Fierro, D.V.M., Ph.D.
President/Superintendent