

Dr. Jose Fierro
President's Message
May 27, 2017

Dear All:

As we close yet another semester, I want to take a moment to celebrate a few of our latest achievements and thank you for your hard work, commitment, and dedication to our students.

My hearty thanks to our staff, faculty, and administrators who attended and assisted in coordinating Friday's historic commencement ceremony, and a very special thanks to the entire Student Activities team for your hard work. I am extremely proud to report that the College awarded over 3,000 students with degrees and certificates, making the Class of 2017 the largest graduating class in Cerritos history. That is an astounding increase of 20 percent more graduating students than last year. And that's not all – we also awarded 908 Associate Degrees for Transfer (AA-T/AS-T). That's 36% more than we did last year! As many of you know AA-T/AS-T degrees guarantee admission for eligible students and gives them a clear pathway to transfer to the California State University system. To say the least, this is a very proud and important moment for the College. It reinforces the idea that each and every day, we make a great investment in the lives of our students, making it possible for them to cross the finish line and reach their goals. On that note, I would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of our faculty and staff who undoubtedly helped our students succeed. We know that every effort towards completion starts with a dream, and I thank you for your service and dedication when it comes to helping our students reach their goals.

As we enter the summer term, we can all take pride in the achievements of our students. Many of them will be going on to some of the country's best colleges and universities, including Columbia University, Stanford University, University of Chicago, University of La Verne, Loyola Marymount University, USC, UC Berkeley, UCLA, among other notable schools. Additionally, 92 percent of students in the College's Scholars' Honors Program were admitted to UCLA this year, a 20 percent increase from 2016.

Congratulations to the women's track team for winning the state championship for a third year in a row! The women's team belongs to a small club of campuses to win three back-to-back championships in the state. The team also broke several track records over the weekend. Congrats to all!

Federal and State Legislation

Earlier this month, the federal government approved an omnibus spending bill that includes Pell Grant funding year-round. This funding will provide additional financial support for many of our students. Regarding state bills, the College is supporting two bills that are currently moving through the State Legislature:

- Senate Bill 577 (Teacher Credentialing Program) would expand teacher credentialing programs to California Community Colleges. Since 2002, our Teacher TRAC program has been a national model for preparing and exposing students to a career in education. Many of our students go on to complete their undergraduate degree at Cal State Long Beach and obtain a multiple or single-subject credential. Moreover, our alumni go on to teach in many of our local school districts, reinvesting in their communities. Though we have made significant gains in training future educators, California continues to project shortages of over 100,000 teachers in the next decade. We believe our Teacher TRAC program is well positioned to meet the statewide shortages.
- Assembly Bill 705 (Multiple Measures Reform): the Board of Trustees adopted a resolution

in support of Multiple Measures Reform at its May 3rd meeting. AB 705 would require California Community Colleges to use high school transcript data in student assessment prior to enrollment. Current state law does not mandate that a community college utilize a comprehensive assessment of a student's college readiness, oftentimes resulting in inaccurate assessment and placement of students, creating significant hardships in their path to success. The College has taken steps to address the matter, including our Accelerated Instruction in Math and English (AIME) program. AIME has shown successful outcomes through coordinated counseling, assessment, and supplemental courses in English and math.

Trustee Area 3

This Wednesday, May 31, the Board of Trustees will have a special meeting to review and select the finalists for the Trustee area 3 vacancy. Interviews of the selected candidates will take place during the Board of Trustees regular business meeting on June 7. The selected candidate will take the oath of office during the June 21 Board meeting.

Again, thank you for all of your hard work this semester; I hope you enjoy a wonderful summer!

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