

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT/SUPERINTENDENT

PRESIDENT'S CAMPUS UPDATES



May 28, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Another week is coming to a close and I hope it was a productive and meaningful one for each of you. Below you will find a brief update.

Budget Update

In last week's message to you, I provided a brief overview of the severe cuts to the statewide budget. The state currently projects a budget shortfall of \$54 billion; as a result, **the college is bracing itself for a 16 percent cut to our overall budget for the next fiscal year, which is only one month away**. Cerritos College has never faced an immediate budget cut of such magnitude. It will take a strong group effort to mitigate the impact of an **approximate \$9 million budget cut** in the coming fiscal year. To put this number into context, our current general fund budget consists of roughly \$111 million in salaries and benefits, with the remaining approximately \$11 million allocated for operational expenses (utilities, maintenance, supplies, travel, and so forth). To sustain this budget cut, we simply cannot spend at the same rate we are spending today. To be able to absorb a cut of **\$9 million**, we must decrease expenses and dig into our reserves. The college will continue to do all that we can to protect the wellbeing of our students, employees, and institution as a whole. Please know I will continue to keep you informed as updates occur. I encourage you to also keep in touch with your constituent group leaders who meet with college administration every week to receive the latest information and provide feedback.

Virtual Commencement – June 23

Despite public health concerns that restrict us from holding an in-person ceremony, we are excited to celebrate the **Class of 2020** via a virtual commencement on **June 23**. You can access the ceremony through **June 30 online**. No matter how different the format is from our traditional way, recognizing the hard work and determination of our students is extremely important. For many of our students, graduating from Cerritos College signifies the first time achieving a long-term goal. This is a huge milestone that we do not want to miss for our students. The Student Services team has done a great job in planning a few graduation activities leading up to the Commencement. Please encourage graduating students to participate and check out the [Commencement webpage](#) for more information. Join me in helping to create a memorable experience for the Class of 2020 and their families.

Nursing Graduates Volunteer in Response to New York's COVID-19 Emergency

When times get tough, Cerritos College grads are always willing to go the extra mile. Meet **Gabriel Leyva, Paiton Rivas, Rose Saenz, and Jaime Zamora**. They all graduated from the Nursing Program in December 2019, and have been recently licensed as Registered Nurses in February and March 2020. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, these brave nurses volunteered to help treat patients in New York City, the U.S. the epicenter of the outbreak. On April 5, the four boarded a plane together to New York to begin their career and help combat COVID-19. While in New York, they were placed in a hotel in Times Square and were given daily food vouchers and allowances. Within 24 hours, they were given assignments at Bellevue County Hospital. These nurses took a 21-day consecutive assignment, including 12-hour shifts in the ER, ICU, medical-surgical, and oncology. They received one day of orientation and went right to work. On top of their work assignments, they remotely participated in their fourth-semester student class and spent time talking with nursing seniors and the faculty about their experiences. Nursing Chair Kelly Brooks tells us that there wasn't a dry eye on Zoom. I'm beyond proud of **Gabriel, Paiton, Rose, and Jaime!** Their bravery and passion for nursing and for helping others is remarkable. Go Falcons!

Support the Omar Ruiz Memorial Scholarship for Men in Child Development

The Omar Ruiz Memorial Scholarship for Men in Child Development was created to honor the memory of a beloved student in the Child Development program. Omar passed away earlier this month. As a student, he was determined to follow his passion to work with children and families. Omar was known for his kindness and fun-loving spirit that will be always be remembered. He is survived by his parents, Aurora and Armando, sister, Leilani, and brother, Armando. The Foundation is currently accepting applications for full- and part-time male students with a 3.0 GPA or higher. Please encourage students to apply in the fall. Thank you to child development faculty members who have pledged the lead donation of \$1,000 to this scholarship fund. Follow the link <https://cerritoscf.org/fund-scholarships/> and select Omar Ruiz Memorial Scholarship in the drop-down menu for more information.

End-of-Semester Highlights

It's hard to believe we are already at the end of spring 2020 semester. This is definitely one semester that we will never forget! As a college, we started the year celebrating the **20th anniversary of our award-winning Teacher TRAC** program in January. By early March, we held a successful **Economic Development Summit**. But by March 20, we refocused our efforts to ensure each other's continued safety in a time of uncertainty. We moved our classes to an online format and transitioned all of our services to a remote environment--all of this over the course of a couple of short weeks. All of us continue to make incredible adjustments to every aspect of our lives; this is especially true for our students who have counted on Cerritos College as a pathway to a better life. Through these unforeseen challenges, I have observed our staff, managers, faculty, and administrators rise to the occasion to keep the campus running. I've heard from students that although this is a tough time, they are pushing through the uncertainty and anxiety to finish their educational plans. Our students have shown such resilience and determination to "Stay the Course and Finish Strong," and I am excited that they remain engaged and active with our campus. Thank you for accommodating the transition and continuing to keep Service Excellence in mind to support our students and our colleagues. There is no doubt that these are unprecedented times, but we will get through this together.

Have a great weekend! Feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Jose

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President/Superintendent