



Las Positas Connection

The President's Monthly Report to the Board of Trustees, Campus, and Community | October 2015

LPC Students Reach Their Goals in Record Numbers

LPC's Office of Institutional Research and Planning Director Rajinder Samra reports that our students are completing their goals in record numbers. In 2014-15, LPC awarded its highest number of associate degrees and its second highest number of certificates, and had its highest number of students transferring to the University of California and California State University systems. "These data are important indicators that LPC is advancing its mission of helping students to complete their educational goals," Mr. Samra said.

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In Memoriam: Dr. Barbara F. Mertes, 1930-2015. Celebrating the Life and Legacy of LPC's Founder

The LPC community mourns the loss of Barbara Francisco Mertes, Ph.D., a beloved founder of LPC, who also served as a long-time pillar of CLPCCD and a tireless champion of higher education in the region. Through her many years of service, she leaves a lasting legacy of excellence in higher education, benefiting East Bay residents for generations to come. Dr. Mertes passed away on September 4th at the age of 85.

Hundreds of people gathered to remember Dr. Mertes in a Celebration of Life held on September 26th at LPC. Fittingly, the celebration took place in the Barbara F. Mertes Center for the Arts, named in her honor when it was dedicated in October 2010. Another opportunity to remember Dr. Mertes, a "Gathering of Friends," hosted by the Board of Trustees, will take place from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. before the Board meeting on October 20th in Room 1726 at LPC.



CLPCCD Photo

Dr. Barbara F. Mertes

A lifelong resident of Livermore, Dr. Mertes served CLPCCD in many key roles, including Trustee, Vice Chancellor of Institutional Planning and Facilities Development, Dean, and Faculty. Most notably, she was the founding Dean of the Chabot College Valley Campus, which would later become Las Positas College, due in large part to her efforts. She also held leadership roles in the community with ValleyCare Health System and the Livermore Chamber of Commerce and was instrumental in forging key partnerships between CLPCCD and businesses and public agencies. Additionally, Dr. Mertes had a passion for theater and wrote and directed many acclaimed theatrical productions, which were performed at LPC, winning three Northern California Emmy Awards.

Dr. Mertes was also a supporter of the LPC Foundation, which was co-founded by her late husband David Mertes, Ph.D., a former Chancellor of the California Community Colleges. Together, they were champions of the district and of community college education in California. District Trustee Emeritus Barry Schrader, a close friend of Barbara and David Mertes for more than 30 years, described her as, "A brilliant educator, a gracious lady.... She was indefatigable in her efforts to make Las Positas College a fully-accredited campus and should be credited with its founding and ultimate success as the fine institution it is today."

LPC Awarded Two Grants for STEM and Technology

LPC's strong STEM programs just got stronger. The college recently was awarded two competitive grants in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) and technology to help prepare students for career and transfer opportunities. In addition to serving our students, the grants also benefit our local, regional, and state economies by providing business and industry with skilled workers.

Silicon Valley Engineering Tech Pathways Grant

LPC and educational partners have been awarded a \$13.1 million grant for Silicon Valley Engineering Tech Pathways, with paid internship opportunities at organizations including Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories and NASA Ames Research Center. Pathways lead to degrees and certificates in the following areas: Computer Information Science, including Software Development, Network Administration, and Cyber-Security; Engineering, including Engineering Technology and Bioengineering;

and Advanced Manufacturing, including Machining and Forming, Biotech Manufacturing, and Laser Tech. The grant is part of the California Department of Education's \$250 million Career Pathways Trust program. As a testament to LPC's success, this is our second round of funding from the program.

Gateway to STEM Success for Hispanic Serving Institutions

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded LPC a \$2.3 million grant, Gateway to STEM Success for Hispanic Serving Institutions. Because our Hispanic student population exceeds 25 percent and the college demonstrated student need, LPC qualifies as a Hispanic Serving Institution and was eligible to apply for the grant. The grant ensures that high-need students, regardless of race or socioeconomic condition, get the specific, individually-tailored support they need to be successful in remedial basic math and STEM prerequisite courses.

Guests Visit for New President's Speaker Series



CLPCCD Chancellor Jannett N. Jackson, Ph.D., (left) and LPC President Barry A. Russell, Ph.D., welcome Peruvian artist Claudio Jimenez Quispe to LPC last month. An internationally renowned maker of retablos (folk

Mary Lauffer



Gustavo Romero

art in the form of portable boxes), Mr. Quispe visited as part of LPC's new President's Speaker Series. The series also features art lecturer Gregorio Luke, who spoke on October 1st, and famed pianist Gustavo Romero, who will perform at 7:00 p.m. November 10th in the Mertes Center. The events are part of LPC's semester-long Hispanic Heritage Celebration, which also included the October 4th award-winning folk dance ensemble El Ballet Folklórico de James Logan High School accompanied by Mariachi Mexicanísimo.

Math Jam Counts the Ways Students Succeed

The numbers are in and they add up to success for the 117 students in LPC's spring 2015 Math Jam, a free, intensive, one-week Math program offered the week prior to the start of the spring and fall semesters. Math Jam helps students complete their degree or transfer faster, while introducing them to a community of support and free resources. Here are the results: Students who attended Math Jam were more likely to succeed in their math course than students who did not participate. Math Jam participants in Math 107 PreAlgebra had a success rate of 80% compared to 46% in the general population. In Math 65 Elementary Algebra, the success rate was 79% compared to 51% in the general population. In Math 55 Intermediate Algebra, the success rate was 71% compared to 48% in the general population. Math Jam participants who retook the Assessment Test and placed into a Math class one level higher had an 81.8% success rate in their higher course. Math Jam participants had to take a rigorous diagnostic exam, and 89% of them improved their score when reassessed at the end of the week.

Universities Recruit LPC Students at Transfer Day

Representatives from approximately 50 public and private four-year colleges and universities filled the Quad for Transfer Day on September 28th to talk with LPC students about transfer opportunities. Assemblymember Catharine Baker was also on campus to visit with students and make them aware of her

office's services and internship opportunities. Kudos to the Transfer Center for organizing this important student success event. This semester, the center is also offering Transfer Tuesdays to help students with questions and transfer applications. LPC has one of the highest transfer rates in the state.

Photos by Mary Lauffer



Students Excel in Visual and Verbal Communications

Accomplished LPC students are making a name for themselves far beyond our campus: journalism students, who study in our Mass Communications and Visual Communications programs, and speech team students, who study rhetoric and forensics in our Speech program. Here's the latest news about students in the spotlight:

Two Journalism Students Become Finalists in International Contest. Two students have been named finalists in the Associated Collegiate Press competition, which honors the best journalism in the U.S. and Canada at both two- and four-year colleges. Tami Shepherd is a finalist in 2015 Photo Excellence for her photo in LPC's award-winning *Naked Magazine*, competing with students from institutions including DePaul University, Baylor University, and the University of Texas. Jesus Mesina is a finalist for the

2015 Design of the Year in Illustration for his drawing in *The Express* student newspaper, competing with students from UCLA, University of Miami, and Indiana University. This year marks the fourth time since 2010 that LPC student journalists have been honored in this highly-competitive contest.

Talk Hawks Kick Off the Year by Winning Their First Tournament. Our soaring Talk Hawks forensics team is up to its winning ways right from the start, capturing first place at the Golden Gate Opener Speech and Debate Tournament. Winning the first place Sweepstakes Award for total points earned, the Talk Hawks competed with 32 two- and four-year colleges, including UC Berkeley, University of Texas, and CSUs. Team members took home 32 awards in two days. Congratulations to the Talk Hawks, a team with a long history of local, national, and international awards!

key dates...

Please visit our website for more details about the latest news and events.

October

- 16-24 *Welcome Home, Jenny Sutter*: Fridays, 8 PM; Saturdays, 2 & 8 PM, Black Box Theater, Mertes Center**
- 20 “Gathering of Friends,” honoring Dr. Barbara F. Mertes, 3-5 PM, Room 1726, hosted by the Board of Trustees
- 22 Jazz Concert Benefit, 7 PM, Mertes Center**

November

- 4 LPC Veterans Read Their Stories, 6:30 PM, Mertes Center; reception, 5:30-6:30 PM*
- 5 LLNL/LPC Science & Engineering Seminar, 6 PM, 2420*
- 10 President’s Speaker Series: Pianist Gustavo Romero, 7 PM Mertes Center*
- 11 Veterans Day Observance. Speaker event, WW II: European and Pacific Theaters, 10 AM, Mertes Center, three speakers: Brian Thompson, Department of Education, Military Services, OEF Veteran; John Shirley, WW II, European Theater, POW; and Mickey M. Ganitch, WW II, Pacific Theater, Pearl Harbor survivor*

***Free and open to the public**

****Ticket info at laspositascollege.edu/performingarts**

Parking permits are required on campus.

Please visit the Athletics website for Basketball, Cross Country, Soccer, and Water Polo schedules and results. *Go, Hawks!*

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Theater Program Presents Drama about Veteran Returning Home

LPC’s Theater program will present *Welcome Home, Jenny Sutter*, which explores the life of a marine returning home from a tour in Iraq. Performances are Fridays and Saturdays, October 16th through 24th, in the Mertes Center Black Box Theater. Friday shows are at 8:00 p.m. and Saturday shows are at 2:00 and 8:00 p.m. Instructor Wendy Wisely, who is directing the production, said she chose the play because of her experiences at LPC. “I have noticed over the last 10 years the dramatic increase in my students who are veterans,” she said. “Last spring, I attended an event hosted by the amazing LPC Veterans First Program which featured a panel of women veterans talking about their experiences both in and out of the service. I felt it was important to do a play that might speak to the experiences of these amazing students in our midst.” Tickets are \$15 for general admission and \$10 for students, staff, seniors, and military.

LPC News Notes: Health, Veterans, BSU, Training, Alum, Welding

Health Center First in State. LPC is the first California college campus to be listed as a National Healthy Campus 2020 Partner.

LPC Veterans Read Their Stories. Hear LPC student veterans read stories of their personal journeys at 6:30 p.m., November 4th, in the Mertes Center, with a reception from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. For a preview, please visit www.lpcvetstories.com.

LPC Hosts Black Student Event. LPC hosted the United Black Student Unions of California Northern Region Leadership Roundtable on September 19th. Members of LPC’s Black Student Union Club participated. Student Services VP Diana Z. Rodriguez welcomed the students and Dean Dyan Miller served as the keynote speaker.

LPC Campus Used for Emergency Training. LPC was the site for the Alameda County Urban Shield training event for the East County Tactical Team and the Livermore and

Pleasanton Police Departments. The round-the-clock exercise on Saturday and Sunday, September 12th and 13th, provided a high level of training to numerous emergency service personnel from around the region and the world. Our campus was recognized as one of the best of 35 sites during the 2015 training.

Tri-Valley ROP Hires Early Childhood Education Alum. Fabiola Salceda, a graduate of LPC’s Early Childhood Education Program, has been named as the new Tri-Valley ROP Developmental Psychology of Children Teacher for Pleasanton’s Foothill High School. She earned her bachelor’s degree from CSU East Bay and is currently pursuing a master’s degree.

Welding Instructor Honored. Welding Technology Instructor Scott Miner recently was honored by the Cal Poly Materials Engineering Department as Alumni Who Exemplify Outstanding Engagement.



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