

## We'd Like to Hear from You!

The News is e-mailed to District employees monthly from August to May. If you have news items to suggest, please contact Suzanne Fox at [sfox@4cd.net](mailto:sfox@4cd.net) or at (925) 229-1000, extension 1292.

SPOTLIGHT

## Customer Service and Technology Are Key in Admissions and Records

The Admissions and Records (A&R) offices at the colleges do more than just enroll students. The offices also provide enrollment verification, help facilitate graduation activities, oversee all admissions and registration information, request and evaluate high school and college transcripts, process certification for veterans' benefits and lead the colleges in the use of technology.



**Making sure the admissions process goes smoothly, CCC A&R staff (left to right) Shondra West and Marissa Greenberg give one-on-one assistance to students.**

number, 1-866-455-TREG (8734), and the option of registering in either English or Spanish.

"Two of our staff members, Lorena Herrera and Alma Cardenas, helped to translate information for the Spanish registration line," West said. "We hope the addition of a toll-free number and the Spanish-language option will make the registration process even easier for our students."

**The CCC A&R staff is proud of the wide-range of services they provide. Pictured are (front row, left to right) Joanne Solano, Alma Cardenas, and Mouan Saeyang and (back row, left to right) Kay Armendarez, Tamara Green, Norman Lopez, and Shondra West.**

"Our office remains very busy throughout the year," said Shondra West, CCC senior admissions representative.

As the main point of entry for all new students, the A&R offices maintain strong customer service skills and a "students first" policy. Extended hours are offered at all offices to accommodate both day and evening students. As an example, the Contra Costa College A&R Office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., and closes at 3:00 p.m. on Fridays. The A&R offices at the other colleges offer similar hours of operation.

"At peak registration times, our staff will walk the enrollment line to determine the services needed by students in an effort to shorten wait times," West said. "We also strongly encourage students to register online."

Telephone registration has expanded its services just in time for spring enrollment with the addition of a toll-free



West, Herrera, Cardenas, Kay Armendarez and Joanne Solano staff the CCC A&R Office. The college is currently searching for an A&R director and hopes to have the position filled by January.

In addition to helping students with requests for admission, waivers, and transcripts, A&R staff at CCC and LMC also process applications for their nursing programs. Processing applications for the popular programs can prove to be a daunting task when you consider that CCC received 400 applications from prospective nursing students last spring and LMC received over 650 applications.

Staff at both CCC and LMC A&R offices also play an integral part in graduation ceremonies by gathering information for the commencement programs, assigning seating, and ordering caps and gowns.

At DVC, Gary Fincher was named director of



**The DVC A&R staff offers outstanding customer service. Pictured are (front row, left to right) Beatrice Alvarado, Monica Simmons, Bihn Do, Farrah Coleman and Dana Paniagua, and (back row, left to right) Denise Hamilton, Mariya Piatravets, Christina Chellow, Trinidad Ledesma, Gary Fincher and Noha Basilious. Not pictured are Kim Cherry, Sonia Herz, Kim Hughes, Marianne Martinez, Linda McEwen and Sonja Nilsen.**



the college's A&R office this past January. A former project manager with Datatel, Fincher believes that his technology background will help assist all the District's A&R offices to fully utilize the Datatel system.

"We're in the process of developing a degree audit program, which will soon include transfer credit, where we can verify online that a student has met all the requirements needed for their specific degree or certificates," Fincher said. "I think it's important to keep abreast of new technology and to constantly assess whether there are ways we can streamline processes."

Fincher adds that customer service is the number one priority for the DVC A&R Office.

"Our office has the slogan 'We deliver world-class service' below our e-mail signature line," he said. "I want our students to hold us to this."

Fincher says having a staff of 15 full-time and eight hourly employees helps in rotating staff who are working at the office window and serving as the first point of contact for students. "It can sometimes be stressful working with students all day long, especially if you hear complaints," Fincher said. "By rotating



**The LMC A&R staff is a caring and supportive team in all phases of admissions services. Pictured are (left to right) Gail Newman, Susie Purdy, Melissa Keane (interim), Leetha Robertson (back), Stephanie Alves and Linda Maniscalco (interim). Not pictured is Carole French.**



employees who serve in this position, our staff can maintain a fresh attitude.”

LMC has two position vacancies in their office and is currently operating with a staff of 3.5 full-time and multiple hourly employees.

“It’s a real team effort in our office,” said Gail Newman, LMC’s A&R director. “We have a terrific staff who are committed to helping our students succeed.”

“Our office is unique in that we have primary responsibility for coordinating the graduation ceremony for the college,” Newman said. “We work closely with the Campus Graduation Committee to coordinate student speakers, music, the commencement program, and all other aspects of the ceremony.”

Utilizing new technology has helped the office better serve students.

“We have been able to access and retrieve all student information instantly for the past two years,” Newman stated. “In addition, we are always looking for new ways to improve the process. This spring we are introducing changes in our online registration program that we hope will improve access for both students and faculty.”



# San Ramon Campus Welcomes a New Location and Name Change

**D**iablo Valley College's San Ramon Campus moved to its new facility at 1690 Watermill Road in the Dougherty Valley area of San Ramon on November 6.

The new campus comes with a modified name change notes Executive Dean Kevin Horan. We're changing our signage to Diablo Valley College's San Ramon Campus," he said. "Our goal is to build upon the strong reputation that DVC has in the community while also letting people know where we are physically located."

The new campus features many amenities that weren't available at its former San Ramon facility.

"We have a beautiful new fountain at the front of the campus where students have been gathering to study or chat with friends," Horan said. "We didn't have any areas where students could congregate at our former campus. Now we have a learning commons area where students can use computers, utilize one of our small group study rooms or our open study area, access vending machines, and enjoy a snack in an eating area."

The new campus also features an expanded bookstore, four science labs (2 biology, 1 chemistry, and 1 physical sciences), three computer labs, a physical education studio, and a ceramics studio. The San Ramon Campus has also entered into a joint-use agreement with the Dougherty Station Library, located next door to the new campus, to provide library resources and services to students.

The campus is open Monday-Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and on weekends from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Students can complete their associate of arts degree by taking a variety of general education classes at the new location. In the coming months, the campus will be expanding its curriculum and holding a series of open houses for the community.

"In January, we plan to hold a grand opening where District personnel can tour our new campus," Horan said. "We will hold a formal dedication ceremony in the spring, and also plan to offer a series of targeted open houses for high school students and local businesses."

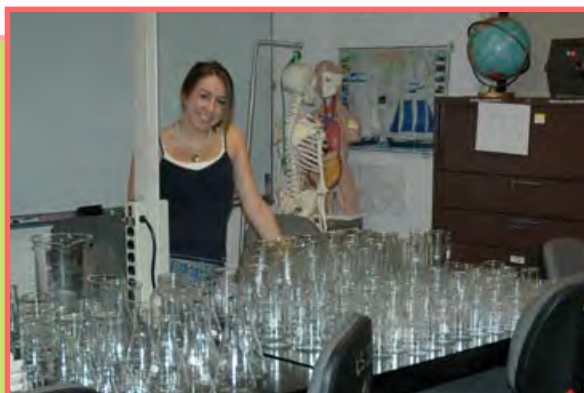


**Satellite Business Services Manager Allen Fitzgerald and Executive Dean Kevin Horan welcome the students and community to the new location of the San Ramon Campus.**

## "Moving Day Gallery"



**Chris Wilson, Computer Network Specialist, and Engjellushe Vani, Computer Center Tech II, oversee move and installation of computer equipment.**



**Tamara Vileshina, student helper, uses the utmost care as she assists with moving lab equipment. Tamara hopes to transfer to UCLA.**

**Cecilia Graber, Education Center Secretary, puts a finishing touch on one of the office spaces.**



**Acting Division Dean Kim Schenk gets a "leg up" on moving day.**

## Stargazing Parties Offered at Contra Costa College

**T**he Astronomy Department at CCC is sponsoring a series of stargazing parties for faculty, staff and students.

Held on the observation deck of the Physical Science building, the parties have attracted approximately 40 or more people who enjoyed viewing the planets and moons through the college's new state-of-the-art telescope.

Our Astronomy instructors are on hand at the stargazing parties to explain what can be seen on each particular evening," said Jon Celesia, Astronomy Department chair. "We also held a daytime event on November 8 to see the planet Mercury transit the sun, where we had over 100 people in attendance." The new telescope was set up for the event with a solar filter sending the image wirelessly to the planetarium where viewers could see the image on the college's new 42" HD LCD monitor.

The Astronomy Department held several fundraisers and received a grant from Chevron to purchase the new telescope and make renovations in the planetarium.

"The telescope is portable so we've been taking it to community events and also inviting students from local junior high and high schools to our campus to promote awareness of our stellar science program," Celesia said. "With our Center for Science Excellence and our wide offering of science classes, students can obtain an excellent science education close to home."

**"Our Astronomy instructors are on hand at the star parties to explain what can be seen." –Jon Celesia, Astronomy Department chair**

## Diablo Valley College's Business Education Advisory Committee Celebrates Years of Service

**O**n October 18, members of DVC's Business Education Advisory Committee were recognized for their years of service in support of business education and opportunities for students.

The Business Education Advisory Committee has operated for more than 15 years. It is made up of local businesspersons that are willing to meet regularly to discuss existing and new programs, and to offer suggestions for connecting course content to today's workplace.

In the past year, the Committee's work has resulted in the implementation of small, three class certificates that provide entry-level skills to students entering employment (bookkeeping essentials, business essentials, and essentials for office professionals). Members have been influential proponents of tiered levels of educational attainment that offer recognition for fulfillment of specific learning milestones.

Committee members have also helped identify internship opportunities, scholarships for business students, and workplaces for students to visit. The division faculty and staff are most grateful for the work of this volunteer group!



**The Business Education Advisory Committee includes (from left to right) Billy Wigley; Judy Foster, DVC instructor; Andrew Neugebauer; Judy Ottaviano; Ruby Taylor; Jan Maddock; Krista Johns, DVC dean; Pamela Hawkins, DVC instructor; and Tim Murphy, Business Administration Department chair.**

## Japanese Exchange Students Attend Classes at Los Medanos College

Two students from Shimonoseki, Japan, are spending the year attending classes at LMC as part of an exchange program between the District and Shimonoseki City University.

"Shimonoseki and Pittsburg are sister cities," said Aleks Ilich, District International Education director. "This is the first educational exchange between the two cities."

Ilich, who just returned from a visit to Japan, said that educators in Shimonoseki are very interested in expanding the program.

"We hope to send an LMC student to study abroad in Shimonoseki next year," Ilich said. "In addition, the city plans to send four more students to the Bay Area next year, and this time two of the students will study at CCC."

Last summer, Shimonoseki City University sent a group of students to attend a short-term language program at DVC.

"The Japanese educators were very impressed when they visited our college campuses," Ilich said. "They also have sister cities in Korea, China, Australia, and Turkey, but the exchange program with the District is the largest in terms of scope and student length of stay."

Michiyo Shiomi attended the DVC language program last summer and was selected to be one of the first exchange students to attend LMC. A Business management major, Shiomi is taking five classes and is impressed with LMC's students, staff and faculty.

"Everyone has been very friendly and helpful," she said. "This visit is allowing me to experience different cultures and opinions and to broaden my ideas. I think the exchange program has been very good for me."

**"The Japanese educators were very impressed when they visited our college campuses,"**

**—Aleks Ilich, District International Education director**



**International Education Director Aleks Ilich (left) joins LMC Vice President Dan Henry (2<sup>nd</sup> from the left) and LMC President Peter Garcia (2<sup>nd</sup> from the right) in welcoming Pittsburg/Shimonoseki, Japan, Educational Exchange Program students Maiko Yamao and Michiyo Shiomi (center). Also welcoming the students is Harue Takanashi Carbaugh (right) International Education Program assistant.**



## Around the District...

- **The Governing Board welcomes your attendance** at their meetings:
  - ◆ December 13, 2006
  - District Office ~ 500 Court Street, Martinez, 6<sup>th</sup> floor Board Room, 7:00 p.m.
  - Open Session, Organizational meeting
- **The last Chancellor's Chat for the fall semester is scheduled for December 14** at the new location of the San Ramon Campus at 1690 Watermill Road in San Ramon. To schedule a 15-minute appointment between 1:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m., e-mail Pat Kaya at [pkaya@4cd.net](mailto:pkaya@4cd.net) or phone (925) 229-1000, Ext. 1204.
- **Dr. Ron Rusay was thanked** by the National Science Foundation (NSF) for his participation on a panel that reviewed proposals submitted to the Course, Curriculum, and Laboratory Improvement (CCLI) Phase I program. In a letter to DVC, NSF Division Director Daniel M. Litynski noted that the experience of serving on a review panel is a valuable professional activity for the participant that benefits both them and their organization. NSF is grateful to reviewers, such as Dr. Rusay, and their organizations that support this important activity for the nation.
- **Two Contra Costa College students** were featured in the California Community Colleges CalWORKs Program "Portraits of Student Success" 2006 publication. The students, Kristine Fogerty and Steven Robinson, were recommended for the recognition by CalWORKs Director Camille Parker.

Kristine Fogerty completed a Dental Assisting certificate in June 2006 and is currently employed. Her five-year goal includes attending CCC's nursing program, while continuing her employment in the Business Office Technology Department. After which, Kristine plans to apply to Children's Hospital where she can work either as a dental assistant or a nurse.

Steven Robinson completed an Administration of Justice certificate in June of 2006 and is currently working in his area of study. Robinson plans to pursue a bachelor of science degree in Criminal Justice and to seek employment within the juvenile probation department. He would like to help others in their unfortunate situations through counseling and motivation of their self-worth.

### Contra Costa Times Column – Reprinted from November 12, 2006

## CONTRA COSTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE ROUNDUP

Two-year colleges help students move on and up

**O**MARI FULLER attended De Anza and Pinole Valley high schools in West County, but he did not feel ready for a four-year institution when he graduated.

He went to Contra Costa College, intending to be an English major. Then he heard about the Center for Science Excellence. To be eligible for membership in the CSE, Omari changed his major to physics and soon met his life-shaping mentor, Dr. James Conrad. Omari found Conrad's passion for physics infectious. With motivation from his mentor and strong support from fellow CSE students and staff, Omari earned straight As in his physics courses. He transferred to Columbia University and earned a bachelor's degree in physics.

The CSE is just one of many programs offered in line with the Contra Costa Community College District's mission of transferring students to four-year institutions to complete their undergraduate degrees and beyond. Each of the colleges in the district has programs and staff who work with transfer-bound students to ensure that their freshman and sophomore classes will be accepted by their chosen universities.

This is important to all students but vital to those who are the first in their families to attend college. Such students may not have the support at home to help them make these critical decisions. Transfer centers at each college provide information for public and private universities in California as well as nationwide.

Contra Costa, Diablo Valley and Los Medanos colleges also offer transfer admission agreements with specific four-year universities, including UC Davis, UC Santa Barbara, and UC Riverside. A TAA is a contract between a community college and a four-year institution that guarantees students early admission to the university if they meet all academic, course and personal statement requirements. Contra Costa College transfer center coordinator Jim Sweeney said, "Students should sign their TAA with the universities one year prior to transferring," usually in September.

In addition, university representatives visit the colleges to talk directly with prospective students. They meet with students to discuss eligibility requirements and specific details about majors and programs offered at their campuses. For instance, Cal State East Bay will visit Contra Costa College on Nov. 13 from 10 to 11 a.m. and Los Medanos College on Nov. 16 from 2:20 to 4:20 p.m. St. Mary's College will take on-the-spot admissions at Diablo Valley College on Nov. 16 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Since he transferred from Contra Costa College to Columbia, Omari's career has taken him on a year-long work-study venture in Venezuela and employment with a top-tier environmental firm that has sent him on assignments from Kansas to China.

"Without a doubt," Omari said, "CSE helped me get where I am and keeps pushing me to go further. At the same time, they keep me grounded in my roots at CCC and inspire me to give back to the community to which I owe so much."

Whether the goal is transfer to UC or Cal State or to a private school, support services are available at each college. Prospective Contra Costa Community College District students are also invited to contact transfer centers to learn about articulation agreements, transfer support services and campus visitations.

Contacts for each campus are Jim Sweeney at CCC, 510-235-7800, Ext. 4584; Nicola Place at DVC, 925-685-1230, Ext. 2896; and Marie Karp at LMC, 925-439-2181, Ext. 3282.

Laurie Laxa is a Contra Costa College public information officer. Reach her at [columnists@4cd.net](mailto:columnists@4cd.net).

**T**ransfer centers also provide application and personal statement workshops to guide students through their application process.