

## Highlights:

Accreditation Press Release

AB 86 Summit

2015 Budget Forums  
Scheduled

DVC Faculty Member  
Publishes Book on Elder  
Abuse

CCC's Norma Valdez-  
Jimenez Wins Writing  
Contest

District Welcomes New  
Employees

February 2015 Board  
Report

February 2015 Cabinet  
Highlights

## Accreditation Press Release

All three colleges of the Contra Costa Community College District (District) – Contra Costa College, Diablo Valley College and Los Medanos College – received accreditation affirmation from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (Commission) earlier this month.

The Commission notified the colleges that their accreditation has been approved for another six-year term and required each college to submit a follow-up report by October 2015, followed by a visit by Commission representatives.

“I am so proud of our colleges for attaining an excellent response from the Commission,” stated Chancellor Helen Benjamin. “The accreditation process requires participation and tremendous effort by faculty, staff, and students, and tells the communities we serve that our colleges are doing the right things to serve our students successfully.”

Preparation for the accreditation visits began in 2013 and included a comprehensive review and self-evaluation that is submitted to the Commission. The self-evaluation reports, along with the visits by Commission representatives, provide the foundation for the Commission’s decisions.

“During the past 20 years as a member of the Governing Board, I can attest to the incredible ongoing effort necessary to achieve this recognition of excellence,” said Governing Board President John T. Nejedly. “The Commission’s recognition to affirm all three colleges’ accreditation is a testament to the employees of the District who work so hard at providing the best for our students.”

The accreditation process is conducted not only to assure the quality of the institution, but also to encourage institutional improvement. Commendations and areas of improvement are included in the decision, and all accredited institutions are expected to use the report to improve their educational programs and services.

Accreditation is a voluntary process colleges and universities undergo to evaluate and assure the quality of education used by the American higher education community – and to subsequently make those results known to the public. The Commission is one of 8 regional agencies that evaluates and accredits public and private postsecondary institutions that offer two-year education programs and award the associate degree.

For all the details of the accreditation process and reports, visit the following links.

Contra Costa College:

<http://www.contracosta.edu/home/about/accreditation/>

Diablo Valley College:

<http://www.dvc.edu/about/accreditation/index.html>

Los Medanos College:

<http://www.losmedanos.edu/accreditation/>



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Contra Costa  
Community College  
District

500 Court Street  
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welcome. E-mail the  
Communications and  
Community Relations  
Office at [info@4cd.edu](mailto:info@4cd.edu).

## AB 86 Summit



CONTRA COSTA COUNTY  
ADULT EDUCATION CONSORTIUM

When Governor Brown first proposed the state's community colleges to work with K-12 in streamlining the delivery of adult education, many of the K-12 districts that have been doing this work in the county were leery and worried. Fortunately, part of the plan was to initiate conversations between community colleges and K-12 with a focus to discuss and plan improvements that would lead to efficiencies and a revamping of services provided.

Fast forward to 2015 and after the passage of Assembly Bill 86 that funded this work, a lot of countywide conversations have already taken place at all levels to find regional solutions to improve the delivery of adult education in specific program areas. Although there is still more work to be done, participants in the process are feeling that progress is being made.

"When we first began meeting, I think the K-12 districts who have traditionally provided adult education were concerned about community colleges taking over all the programs and services for this population," says interim Contra Costa College president and co-chair of the county's AB 86 Adult Education Consortium (Consortium) Mojdeh Mehdizadeh. "Nothing could be farther from the truth. As the conversations took place, both entities learned so much about one another and focused on our shared interest is creating pathways for adult learners that lead to college-level work, certificates and degrees."

Last month, an AB 86 Adult Education Summit was held to update trustees, administrators, faculty and staff on the progress made by the Consortium. One of the highlights of the summit focused on the improving collaboration of community college ESL faculty and their K-12 counterparts.

"We didn't know much about them, and they didn't know much about us. Through the conversations we realized that a student who attends both adult education and community college will see and receive a very different educational experience from each," says Diablo Valley College English professor and English Learning Center co-coordinator Katy Agnost. "If we want these students to be successful with us, we need to understand what that experience entails. For example, most work in adult education is completed in the classroom while in community colleges students are expected to do more work outside of the classroom. We need to find better solutions in helping these students make the transition."

The Governor's 2015-16 budget proposal includes \$500 million for adult education. While still less than what was spent prior to 2013, a spirit of collaboration and optimism is helping to motivate the Consortium to find innovative solutions to serve quality educational opportunities for the county's adult education population.

For more details on the Consortium, visit their website at <http://ccaec.org>.



Presenting at the AB 86 Summit are (left to right): **Katy Agnost**, DVC English Professor, **Keri DuLaney-Greger**, DVC English Professor, **Paige Endo**, Vice Principal of Mount Diablo Education and **Tricia Ouillette**, Program Coordinator of MDUSD Adult Education

## 2015 Budget Forums Scheduled

The 2015 Budget Forums schedule has been established. Led by Chancellor **Helen Benjamin**, Executive Vice Chancellor, Administrative Services' **Gene Huff**, Associate Vice Chancellor/Chief Financial Officer **Jonah Nicholas**, and Director of District Finance Services **Arzu Smith**, these sessions offer employees the opportunity to understand the District's financial picture for the current academic year, and what may be in store for 2015-16.

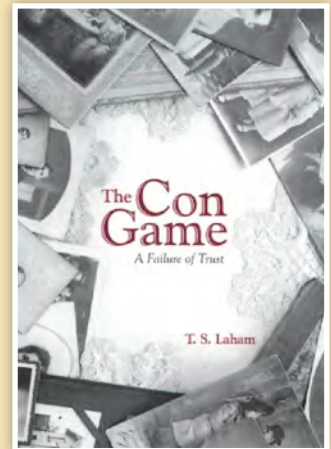
2015 Budget Forums			
Location	Date	Time	Room
DO	4/21/15	9:00am – 11:00am	Board Room
DVC	4/21/15	2:00pm – 4:00pm	Diablo Room
LMC	4/23/15	3:00pm – 5:00pm	L-109
BWC	4/27/15	3:00pm – 5:00pm	Room 6
SRC	4/29/15	2:00pm – 4:00pm	W-204
CCC	4/30/15	1:00pm – 3:00pm	LA 100

The sessions are open to all employees, so pick the date and time that works best for you!

## DVC Faculty Member Publishes Book on Elder Abuse

Diablo Valley College (DVC) professor **Martha T. S. Laham** has published a new book, *The Con Game: A Failure of Trust*, which explores the troubling epidemic of elder abuse in America.

Laham, who teaches business at the Pleasant Hill campus, received widespread encouragement and support from her DVC peers. "Two colleagues directly participated in the work: business division professor **Carolyn Seefer**, who was my copyeditor and proofreader, and business division professor **Tim Murphy**, who was a reviewer," she shared. "And even our DVC students have gotten involved through DVC's Film and Broadcast Communication Arts program, where production instructor **Helen Scheer** gave her students an opportunity, as an assignment, to develop an elder abuse PSA."



Laham's book aims to raise elder abuse awareness on a national scale and help people prepare for their future and the future of their loved ones.

"After a decade-long exploration of the subject matter, I realized that even though researchers, clinicians, and other professionals engaged in a robust dialogue on elder mistreatment, a public discussion of the topic was still limited in scope," said Laham. "*The Con Game: A Failure of Trust* came into being in an effort to expand the dialogue."

*The Contra Costa Community College District, founded in 1948 and governed by a publicly elected five-member board, is one of the largest multi-college community college districts in California.*

*The mission of the District is to attract and transform students and communities by providing accessible, innovative and outstanding higher education learning opportunities and support services.*

## CCC's Norma Valdez-Jimenez Wins Writing Contest

Contra Costa College (CCC) counselor **Norma Valdez-Jimenez** has a reputation as a passionate student services advocate, but she is now being heralded for another passion: poetry. Valdez-Jimenez was recently selected as the poetry winner for the 10th Annual San Miguel Writers' Conference & Literary Festival which took place in San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato, Mexico.

"I am honored and ecstatic about this prize, said Valdez-Jimenez. "I enjoyed the opportunity to engage with other writers in San Miguel in ways that nurture and grow my writing."

The San Miguel Writers' Conference aims to introduce great English and Spanish writers to the local Mexican community as a way of raising literary awareness. Now in its 10<sup>th</sup> year, the conference has featured world-renowned speakers such as Alice Walker, Gloria Steinem, Richard Blanco and Angeles Mastretta.

For Valdez-Jimenez, her affinity for writing came much later than most.

"Whereas many writers begin writing in their 20's, I didn't begin taking myself seriously as a writer until almost age 40," she admitted. "In the summer of 2009 I enrolled in my first Poetry Workshop through U.C. Berkeley Extension's Writing Program. Poetry became a transformative artistic practice; one I entered in search of a deeper understanding of the human experience, particularly my own as a Chicana/Latina, a daughter of immigrants, a mother, a woman."

To read some of Valdez-Jimenez's poetry click on the following link:

<http://asitoughttobe.com/2015/01/10/saturday-poetry-series-presents-norma-liliana-valdez-3/>.

For more information on San Miguel Writers Conference visit <http://sanmiguelwritersconference.org/>.



**Norma Valdez-Jimenez**

### Board Report

To review highlights of the Governing Board Meeting held in February 2015, click on the link below:

[http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board\\_reports/February%2025,%202015.pdf](http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board_reports/February%2025,%202015.pdf)

### Cabinet Highlights

To review highlights of the Cabinet meeting held in February 2015, click on the link below:

[http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/chancellors\\_cabinet/February%202015.pdf](http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/chancellors_cabinet/February%202015.pdf)

### District Welcomes New Employees

Please welcome the following new employees who were approved by the Governing Board in February.

#### Regular Managers

Location	Name	Title
DST	Kathleen Halaszynski	Director of Construction Program Controls

#### Regular Monthly Classified Employees

CCC	Leticia Mendoza	Counselor Assistant
LMC	Taruna Sharma	Science Laboratory Coordinator
DST	Jeanie Smith	Senior Computer and Network Specialist
DVC	Yani Webster	Admissions/Records Assistant I

#### Tenured Faculty

DVC	Mary Canada	Counseling
DVC	Mohamed Eisa	Business
LMC	Kasey Gardner	Speech Communication
LMC	Louie Giambattista	Computer Science
DVC	Kevin Leeper	Art
DVC	Mary Mazzocco	Journalism
CCC	Jennifer Ounjian	Counseling; Ethnic Students; Psychology
LMC	Christine Park	Library Science
LMC	Matthew Stricker	Mathematics