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## State of the District

Over several weeks in September and October, county representatives, elected officials, educators, business owners and community leaders gathered across the District to attend the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual State of the District Meetings. Hosted by the Governing Board at each of the five campuses (San Ramon Campus, Diablo Valley College, Los Medanos College, Brentwood Center and Contra Costa College), attendees heard updates about the District and the respective colleges.

At the Diablo Valley College meeting, Chancellor **Helen Benjamin** shared accreditation information and thanked community members for their continued support of the District's bond program. Interim executive vice chancellor of education and technology **Andrew Jones** spoke about the changing student population and enrollment challenges faced by the District, while executive vice chancellor of administrative services **Gene Huff** highlighted the District's budget. Over 100 community members attended one of the five meetings.

*Governing Board member Tim Farley shares District updates with Diablo Valley College community members.*



## America's College Promise



At the start of this year, President Obama made many promises to the citizen of the United States. However, there was one promise that the Contra Costa Community College District strongly supports: the promise of free community college for responsible students. Under his America's College Promise proposal, President Obama aims to create a new partnership with states to help them waive tuition in high-quality programs for responsible students, while promoting key reforms to help more students complete at least two years of college.

The proposal is spearheaded by Heads Up America which calls for support of the free community college proposal. Obama's College Promise requires everyone to do their part; community colleges must work to strengthen academic programs and increase graduation rates; states must increasingly invest in higher education and training; and students must take ownership and responsibility for their education by earning good grades, and staying on track to graduation. Fulfilling this promise would benefit an estimated 9 million students and save full-time community college students an average of \$3,800 in tuition per year.

To learn more about the Heads Up campaign, please visit <http://headsupamerica.us/>



## DVC English Professor Keynotes Conference



*In addition to his professorship, DVC's Adam Bessie also works as a graphic essayist. One of his comics is shown above.*

Diablo Valley College (DVC) English Professor **Adam Bessie** has been chosen as the keynote speaker for the English Council of California Two-Year Colleges (ECCTYC) conference. This year's conference takes place October 29-31, 2015, in San Jose, California, and will explore the theme, "Peril and Promise—Writing and Reading the Future." Bessie, a longtime professor at DVC, is also a graphic essayist and plans to share his most recent work in his keynote address. His essay, titled *This College is Not a Pipe*, will focus on how the language of economics has colonized community colleges and their English departments.

Without his experience at DVC, Bessie believes he wouldn't have received such an honor. "What drew me to teaching here from my first day, nearly a decade ago, was the commitment to freedom of speech, and a shared governance founded on that commitment," he shared. "This experience

has enriched my perspective on the democratic and social mission of the community college, and inspired my advocacy on its – and our students – behalf."

ECCTYC is a professional organization whose membership includes departments of English and their faculty in all public and private two-year colleges in California, including the 113 community colleges.

For more on Bessie's speech, visit <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/21690-this-school-is-not-a-pipe>.

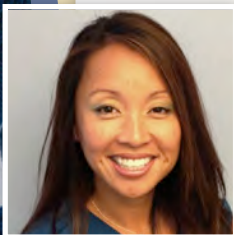
## Personnel Moves at the District

The District Office welcomes both new and familiar faces with several personnel moves. Newly appointed Executive Foundation Director **Cindy Goga** and Diversity, Inclusion and Innovation Officer **Tammeil Gilkerson** have both moved from their respective colleges to join the District Office leadership team.

Goga, who has extensive experience working with the Diablo Valley College Foundation, is now expanding her expertise to all three colleges. "I really want to see the foundations work more closely together to attract bigger donations," she said. "I also hope that all staff members get a new perspective on the critical role that the foundations can play in making the colleges successful."



*Executive Foundation Director, Cindy Goga*



In her new role, Tammeil Gilkerson is helping integrate diversity, inclusion and innovation as central to districtwide strategies and operations, with the recognition that diversity is more than just an outcome. "Diversity leads to better learning and inclusion inspires innovative experimentation which creates opportunities to generate new responses to student learning and achievement challenges in our District," said Gilkerson.

*Diversity, Inclusion and Innovation Officer, Tammeil Gilkerson*

A new face joining the District is Director of Environmental Health, Occupational Safety, and Risk Management, **Herbert Lester**, who will develop, monitor and manage the District's health safety, and emergency preparedness programs. "I think this is a great opportunity to establish a comprehensive safety program based on sound best practices that will enhance the safety of every District employee, student, employee and visitor," said Lester.



*District is Director of Environmental Health, Occupational Safety, and Risk Management, Herbert Lester*



## District Joins Forces with Sentinels of Freedom

**A**t their September 9, 2015, meeting, the Contra Costa Community College District (District) Governing Board accepted a letter of intent from the Sentinels of Freedom Scholarship Foundation (Sentinels) to partner with the District and establish Veterans' Resource Centers (Resource Centers) at Contra Costa College (CCC), Diablo Valley College (DVC), and Los Medanos College (LMC). Sentinels has a national reputation of partnering with companies and colleges nationwide to establish on-campus veterans' resource centers where veterans can support one another as they transition from military service to civilian life into higher education and pursue their career goals.



"We are honored to work with Sentinels of Freedom Scholarship Foundation, a nationally recognized organization serving veterans," says Governing Board president John T. Nejedly. "It is partnerships like these that help us successfully serve the diversity of students who come to us for affordable and quality higher education."

Sentinels will be responsible for raising \$50,000 per site to outfit the Resource Centers with computers, furniture, copy machine, refrigerator, and other essential items.

"The opportunity to partner with the District on this project has been phenomenal," said Sentinels Chairman and CEO Mike Conklin. "Every step of the way, the District has been professional and supportive to make this project a reality. They understand the growing numbers of veterans who will be coming home and making the transition to civilian life along with the pursuit of their education, and the value Resource Centers can make in completing their educational journey."

The Sentinels of Freedom Scholarship Foundation is a non-profit organization and provides 2-4 year, multi-faceted scholarships to severely wounded post 9/11 veterans who pursue higher education after transitioning from the military.

For more information, visit their website at [www.sentinelsoffreedom.org](http://www.sentinelsoffreedom.org).

### Board Report

To review highlights of the Governing Board Meeting held on September 9, 2015, click on the link below:

[http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board\\_reports/October%207,%202015.pdf](http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board_reports/October%207,%202015.pdf)

### Cabinet Highlights

To review highlights of the Cabinet meetings held in September 2015, click on the link below:

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

## District Welcomes New Employees

Please welcome the following new employees who were approved by the Governing Board in September:

### Regular Managers

Location	Name	Title
DST	Ines Zildzic	Associate Chief Facilities Planner

### Regular Monthly Classified Employees

Location	Name	Title
DVC	Richard Humphreys	Grounds Worker/Gardener II
DVC	Terrance Leak	Grounds Worker/Gardener II
DVC	Justine Pojanowski	Counselor Assistant
DVC	Cynthia Ruiz	Financial Aid Assistant I

*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.*