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## Former Student Trustee Selected for Provisional Appointment

At their November 29, 2016, special meeting, the Contra Costa Community College District Governing Board unanimously approved the provisional appointment of Gary Walker-Roberts of Antioch to represent Ward IV. This position became available after the unfortunate passing of Governing Board member John T. Nejedly.

Mr. Walker-Roberts will be seated at the next regular Governing Board meeting on Wednesday, December 14, 2016. Other applicants considered for the provisional appointment were non-profit manager and educator Carl Nichols, litigation attorney Jerome Pandell, barber college owner Frank Quattro, and Director of the STEM-Workforce Initiative of the Contra Costa Economic Partnership, April Treece.

An excited Walker-Roberts said, "I'm looking forward to serving Ward IV, from East Contra Costa County all the way around Mt. Diablo to Southern Contra Costa County. I appreciate receiving the confidence and support of the Governing Board for this position."

Walker-Roberts is a Los Medanos College alumni with A.A.'s in both Behavioral/Social Science and in Arts & Humanities. He also earned his B.A. in Ethnic Studies: Gender & Sexuality from California State University East Bay, and is currently working on his master's degree in English. In addition to his education, Walker-Roberts was the 2015-16 student trustee, LMC student body president in 2014-15, and the student representative to the United Faculty. Walker-Roberts will finish the remainder of Mr. Nejedly's term which ends in 2018.



Gary Walker-Roberts

## Governing Board Tribute to John "Jack" Carhart



The Contra Costa Community College District (District) sadly announced the passing of retired chancellor John (Jack) Carhart on Friday, November 4, 2016. Mr. Carhart was chancellor from 1984-1991, and previously was the founding president of Los Medanos College (LMC) from 1970-1984.

"Mr. Carhart was devoted to LMC, the District, and the communities served by the District," said chancellor **Helen Benjamin**. "He provided the foundation on which our District stands today, and we are most grateful for his contributions. Our sincere sympathies to his family for their loss."

Hired by the District in 1970, he led the planning and construction of the LMC campus which became an innovative national model of designing educational facilities that blended instructional needs with supporting student services.

"Jack Carhart was a truly inspirational educational leader and his vision led to the creation of LMC," commented **Richard Livingston**, a founding LMC faculty member. "Based on a sound educational philosophy and student-centered approach, the college was designed to improve students' lives and, in the process, our society."

Mr. Carhart's leadership as chancellor guided the District through post-Proposition 13 budget reductions, while expanding student access to the three colleges. He was a mentor to hundreds of educators, touched the lives of hundreds of thousands students throughout the county, and is remembered as a person of integrity, ideas and warmth.



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## New Chancellor Chosen

In a special public meeting on Friday, November 4, 2016, the Governing Board announced their unanimous decision to select **Dr. Fred E. Wood** as the next chancellor. The announcement was made following a nationwide search that began in May 2016. Potential candidates were reviewed and 3 finalists were selected to participate in public forums and final interviews.

“All three finalists demonstrated strong leadership skills,” said Governing Board President Vicki Gordon. “In the end, Dr. Wood was chosen because of his focus on student success, building programs and services to help community college students successfully transfer to a four-year institution, experience working collaboratively with business on career technical education, and successful fundraising abilities.”

On behalf of the Governing Board, President Gordon also recognized the dedication and work conducted by the Search Committee, and thanked the faculty, staff, managers, and community leaders who attended the public forums and provided input on the candidates.

Dr. Wood previously served as the Chancellor at the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC). Dr. Wood joined UMC after a 26-year career at the University of California, Davis, where he served as vice chancellor of student affairs from 2007 to 2012. A graduate of Diablo Valley College (DVC), he transferred to UC Davis earning his B.S. and Ph.D. in Chemistry.

“I am humbled and extremely honored to be selected to serve as the next chancellor of the Contra Costa Community College District,” says Dr. Wood. “My DVC experience changed my life, and I am living proof of the power and impact community colleges can make. I am excited to work with my colleagues throughout the District to transform the lives of all our students who strive to achieve their higher educational goals with us.”



**Dr. Fred E. Wood**

## CCC Opens Veterans Center

It was a beautiful day out as Contra Costa College (CCC) celebrated the grand opening of its new Veterans Resource Center (VRC) the day before Veterans Day. Over 100 people attended the event including community leaders, veteran's organizations, and District and college employees. Several elected officials were in attendance and gave congratulatory remarks about the District's commitment to helping veterans.

Veterans now have a home on campus where they can study, network, and support each other. Veterans will also have access to Admissions and Records staff to guide them through the enrollment process and a certifying official to assist them in using their veteran benefits.

“It was important for CCC to create the VRC for a couple of reasons,” said dean of Enrollment Services **Dennis Franco**. “First, to have a private, centralized location that veterans could congregate in. Second, to provide a space that veterans could receive counseling, benefit assistance, and also assistance from outside agencies like the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Concord Vet Center, and more.”

Leon Watkins, the CCC veteran club president, said this was an important event because “it was the joining of two communities; the Veterans and the campus of Contra Costa College.”

The Sentinels of Freedom, a national non-profit organization assisting veteran's transition back to civilian life, collaborated with CCC and its veterans club to create the VRC. With Sentinels of Freedom's help, each of the District's three colleges now have a resource center for veterans.



*Performing the ceremonial ribbon cutting at the Veterans Resource Center grand opening were: (left to right) Richmond Mayor Tom Butt, CCC President **Mojdeh Mehdizadeh**, Governing Board members John E. Marquez, Greg Enholm, Vicki Gordon, Sentinels of Freedom's Mike Conklin, and CCC's **Trinidad Ledesma**.*

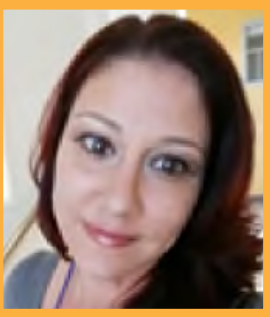


## Community College Success Stories

**P**resident Obama proposed America's College Promise, offering two years of free community college for responsible students. The Heads Up Campaign, a movement launched to support the Promise proposal, gained momentum as community colleges nationwide joined in the dialogue.

Retired Chancellor **Helen Benjamin**, who chaired California's College Promise Leadership Committee, put out a call for employees to share their story in order to highlight the tremendous value community colleges provide. The News will feature a few of the stories submitted every month.

**Nicole Westbrook**, Counseling Faculty, Los Medanos College, Merritt College, Oakland, CA



I was 20 years old when I started at Merritt College in 1998, after dropping out of high school in the beginning of my 11th grade year. By 1998, I had a 2 1/2 year old son and no future, very few resources, and very little support. I decided to explore my options at Merritt, but with literally no idea that there was even an option to attend/transfer to a university. I was under the impression that the only way to attend a university was strictly through a straight path from high school after graduation. I assessed into basic skills math (pre-algebra and even went back further to study arithmetic), but I placed into college-level English somehow. I joined as many student programs as I could, including Puente, EOPS, CARE, and eventually Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. I received so much support and guidance from counseling faculty, classified staff, as well as, instructional faculty during my educational journey at Merritt. They

took an interest in me as an individual student. They encouraged me, they reflected my own potential to me, and they became my mentors and my educational support network. With this type of support in place, I was able to excel academically. I was able to earn a 3.9 GPA over the course of my study there. I was also nominated by the vice president of student services for the Gates Millennium Scholarship, which I was subsequently awarded upon transfer. I was even accepted into every University of California (UC) campus that I applied to, including UC Berkeley, UC Santa Barbara, UC Santa Cruz, and UC Davis; where I accepted admission. I earned my bachelor's degree in sociology in 2000 and immediately entered Saint Mary's College of California to begin a graduate program in counseling, with a dual emphasis in marriage and family therapy and college student services. At commencement, I was also awarded the Outstanding Master's Thesis in 2007, which is one of my greatest accomplishments academically. Early on in my graduate program, one of my mentors from Merritt encouraged me to pursue community college counseling and although I am extremely passionate about the therapy field, I am equally passionate about teaching and counseling because my experience as a community college student literally changed my life. It provided me with the ability to instill the value of education into both of my sons, as well as, provide them with a standard of educational opportunities and access. My oldest son is currently a junior studying environmental management at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. I truly believe that my experience as a community college student has already created at least two generations of scholars in my family that will continue forward for years to come. Beyond that, I was inspired to become a counselor because I knew that I had to give back to students in the same ways that were given to me throughout my own process. Those experiences truly made all the difference in my world. So it was necessary to me to follow this path, almost as if, it was a calling. I am both proud and honored to have been a product of this educational system, as well as, a faculty member today.

**Reed Rawlinson**, Benefit Analyst, District Office, Solano College, Fairfield, CA

I started my academic career at Solano Community College, transferred to Sacramento State University and earned a bachelor's degree. Because I am very proud of my grassroots start at a community college, after completing my bachelor's degree, I completed the remaining requirements for an associate's degree at Solano Community College. Next, I earned a M.B.A. from Golden Gate University and am now in the dissertation phase for a Ph.D. from Capella University, a fully accredited online school. My goal is to be able to tell my daughters, Gabrielle (5) and Noelle (7), if Dad did it, so can you. I even met my wife at a community college and she is a community college graduate.

*(continued on page 4)*

*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.*

*Contra Costa Community College District is committed to equal opportunity in educational programs, employment, and campus life. The District does not discriminate on the basis of age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, parental status, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in any access to and treatment in College programs, activities, and application for employment*

## Community College Success Stories *(continued)*

**Katrina Keating**, Professor of Mathematics, Diablo Valley College, Laney College, Oakland, CA

I enrolled at Laney with no idea what I wanted to do. My very first semester I had cultural anthropology. It was challenging, intriguing, and fascinating. I was hooked! Dolly the sheep had just been born, and the class would get so entrenched in interesting, but tangential, conversations, that the (part-time) teacher held special hours after class so we could have space to continue the discussions. I became an anthropology major because of that teacher; I just wish I could remember his name! I even took archaeology at UC Berkeley, thanks to concurrent enrollment. The support of the mathematics faculty at Laney turned me into a double major. I transferred to San Francisco State University and a National Science Foundation (NSF) scholarship made me a mathematics professor. One (part time!) community college teacher completely changed my life, and today, I'm the teacher that's changing lives. All thanks to Laney College and the NSF!

## LMC Unveils Remodeled Gym



This fall, Los Medanos College completed their \$1.5 million gymnasium renovation with enhanced functionality and a completely new and modern look. The renovation included: motorized ADA-compliant bleachers, new paint throughout, new sound system, a refinished and repainted wood floor. This is the first phase of a massive upgrade for the physical education and athletic facilities.

**Kevin Horan**, LMC's Vice President, shared, "We are excited that the project is now completed and our athletes have a 21st century facility for their practices and games. We appreciate the amazing support our community has given the college as we create modern, safe, and inspiring facilities for our students."

Some student athletes are featured in large graphics above the gym's bleachers with the hope of inspiring other students.

Margot Vrana of the LMC Women's Basketball team commented, "Having my photo on the wall makes me feel honored and that I represent the school and team. I am proud to be attending LMC!"

Funding for this project comes from the 2006 Measure A bond measure.

## San Ramon Celebrates 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

San Ramon Campus (SRC) celebrated its tenth anniversary of serving affordable and quality higher education in South County on November 17, 2016.

"It was great to see the staff, faculty, managers, at this important event," said SRC senior dean **Mike Holtzclaw**, "We wanted to celebrate this important milestone, and honor the employees and community members who helped make this campus a reality."

Assemblywoman Catharine Baker was on hand to thank SRC for the services it provides to the city of San Ramon. The program also included comments from former executive dean **Kevin Horan**, who described the effort and work it took for SRC to become a recognized center, and gave special thanks to Bill Harlan, who was the first director of the SRC.

Holtzclaw discussed the growing SRC student population and highlighted some of the new improvements being planned for the center including a new science lab, a new library space, expanded tutoring areas, a bookstore, and a food service area on campus.



Assemblymember Catharine Baker (left) presented a certificate to SRC senior dean Mike Holtzclaw (right) at the 10th anniversary event.



## Brian Copeland Performs at DVC

It was a powerful performance filled with laughs and deep moments of thought, as Brian Copeland performed his one-man show entitled “The Waiting Period.” Performed in front of a packed audience in the Performing Arts Center (PAC) at Diablo Valley College (DVC), Copeland led attendees through an emotional roller coaster as he told his story of suicidal depression. The title of the play “The Waiting Period” is in reference to the ten-day period he had to wait after purchasing a gun he planned on taking his life with.

Copeland’s performance was part of the DVC’s equity speaker series, designed to identify, discuss, and create solutions toward the academic and social challenges disenfranchised low-income and communities of color face.

“Mr. Copeland’s performance was part of the equity speaker series because equity encompasses many things including disabilities” said Vice President of Student Services **Newin Orante**. “Mental health is a growing issue and it is important for our students to understand that there are resources available for them.”

Some of the resources available to DVC students include programs and services offered by the Disability Support Services (DSS) office, **Christie Harrington-Tsai** a general counselor with an emphasis in mental health, and two interns from JFK University who are available for short term personal counseling.



*Brian Copeland is an award winning actor, comedian, author, playwright, television and radio talk show host based in the San Francisco Bay.*

## District Welcomes New Employees

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

### **First-Year Contract Academic Employees**

Location	Name	Title
LMC	Elizabeth Green	English
CCC	Micah Meltzer	Biological Sciences

### **First-Year Monthly Classified Employee**

Location	Name	Title
DVC	Olivia Delao	Counselor Assistant

## Board Reports

To review highlights of the special Governing Board Meeting held on November 4, 2016, click on the link below:

[http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board\\_reports/November%204,%202016.pdf](http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board_reports/November%204,%202016.pdf)

To review highlights of the Governing Board Meeting held on November 9, 2016, click on the link below:

[http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board\\_reports/November%209,%202016.pdf](http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board_reports/November%209,%202016.pdf)

## Cabinet Highlights

To review highlights of the Cabinet meetings held on November 15, 2016, click on the link below:

[http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/chancellors\\_cabinet/November%202016.pdf](http://www.4cd.edu/crpa/chancellors_cabinet/November%202016.pdf)