

# The NEWS

## 4CD EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER



April 2021

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**Contra Costa Community College District**

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## Contra Costa College Foundation Pays Graduating Students' Debt

The Contra Costa College (CCC) Foundation has provided the Class of 2021 an unforgettable gift by paying off all outstanding fees owed by students graduating May 2021. The debt paid nearly totaled \$13,300, with an average debt of \$214 per student. Of the graduating class, approximately 62 students were assisted by the Foundation's Finish Line Fund, a program developed to ensure students who owe money to the school are able to receive their diplomas.

"It's so important because for many of our students, figuring out how to come up with \$433 for lingering fees to receive their diplomas means deciding between putting food on their tables and reaching that finish line," shared Sara Marcellino, CCC Foundation Director of Advancement.

The Foundation's aim to help students get through financial barriers is key to ensuring students gain access to an education no one can take away. The Foundation's *focus on racial and social justice* includes conceptual and tangible strategies implemented to help close these opportunity gaps. The Finish Line Fund is an extension of that work and the Foundation's mission, joining several projects and funds supported like the robust scholarship program, Wrap Around Emergency Grants, technology supports such as laptops and internet access, campus initiatives such as the African American Male Symposium and Dreamer's Conference to name a few.

Marcellino credits the CCC team of staff who were willing to work with the Foundation to figure out how to implement and execute the Finish Line Fund at the college. She encourages the greater community to contribute to the Foundation, in any way possible.

"I think it's particularly impactful to cancel this debt given how hard we know it is for many of our students to actually get to that place where graduation is in sight. For some it has been a years-long journey. Now that the debt is lifted, the next phase of their lives can begin with a clean slate."

Learn more about the CCC Foundation [here](#).

*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*



## Diablo Valley College Brings Telehealth to Students

For community college students who often face an array of challenges during their educational journey, the need for mental health and wellness support is ever growing. However, with resources remaining a challenge, many colleges have struggled to make this desire a reality. At Diablo Valley College (DVC), generations of Associated Students of DVC (ASDVC) leaders worked diligently to bring health services to campus. Two years ago, ASDVC found a solution in utilizing Student Activities funds to bring a nurse to campus once a week to meet with students. With the help of DVC's Student Affairs department, led by Dean of Student Affairs **Emily Stone**, ASDVC developed a plan and completed the process in Spring 2020. As the search for vendors began, the pandemic hit. The plan for on-campus services would be significantly delayed, bringing the students' carefully laid plans to a jarring halt.

ASDVC student leaders suddenly had to rethink everything. Rather than hold onto their original plans, which were years in the making, the students quickly pivoted, reaching out to Student Affairs for help. After learning about a telehealth service already vetted by California Community College State Chancellor's Office, student leadership and DVC administration reached an agreement to launch TimelyMD, an independent telehealth service that provides virtual health care support to college students. To bring the service to its students, ASDVC contributed \$150,000 of their budget alongside DVC federal CARES institutional funds in the amount of \$87,875.

"We were trying to make the best decisions based on the circumstances and options available," said ASDVC's President Gerardo "Panda" Del Torre. "We want to make sure that when students feel like their health will be a barrier to success or their well-being that they have a support service."

Launched February 1, 2021, TimelyMD provides free telehealth visits for all currently enrolled students and their dependents as part of the DVC Health Services program. Under the new program, students have access to an unlimited number of free, virtual visits with doctors who can diagnose non-emergency medical conditions and prescribe medications. They can also chat with licensed mental health practitioners 24/7. This is the first time DVC has offered health services either in person or online. This pilot program is currently funded for one year through January 31, 2022.

The launch of DVC's new telehealth service is one of many efforts the college is working on in an effort better support students' basic needs. Stone has been leading the Basic Needs Advisory workgroup since January 2020, which includes faculty, staff, administrators and students who are focusing on providing DVC students increased health/housing, food insecurity, and financial support. Learn more about the Basic Needs work of the college by visiting [www.dvc.edu/basic-needs](http://www.dvc.edu/basic-needs).

"We are aware that many students are experiencing stress and strain during the pandemic which has made it clear that the college should support mental health support for students," shared Stone. "We hope this will help students to succeed in college by meeting their basic needs, including health and mental health."



## Los Medanos College Nursing Students Administer Vaccines

Arriving at a Covid-19 vaccination site can seem intimidating at first glance. County-run sites are bustling with volunteers of medical professionals, community members and staff who are doing their best to direct cars and foot traffic in an orderly manner. Individuals are asked to line up while adhering to social distancing guidelines, with long lines wrapping around busy vaccination sites. However, as individuals approach their turn, whether for the first or second shot, there's something else in the air.

Hope and gratitude; that is the mood the Los Medanos College (LMC) nursing team describe as volunteers at the Pittsburg Health Clinic vaccination site. Led by LMC Nursing Instructor Julie O'Brien, a newly-tenured nursing instructor with over 30 years of experience, the group of courageous students paint a picture of tentative optimism,

which feels new and inspiring.

For LMC nursing student Kelsey Squires, the capacity to help superseded any fear she may have felt about participating. "Even though it's scary and we didn't know what we were getting into, I think it was rewarding being part of the process and helping in whatever amount we could."

"It feels good knowing that you're the one that's helping with the change," said Sarah Cole, another LMC nursing student volunteering.

Known for her participation and involvement in the community, O'Brien reached out to the county back in February 2021 with a request that was twofold: she had several students in dire need of clinical volunteer work (which became scarce during the pandemic) and the site needed volunteers to administer vaccination shots.



Nursing instructor Julie O'Brien (left) assists Nursing students Kelsey Squires (center) and Sarah Cole (right) in transporting vaccination boxes.

"You get people that come in and they're crying because they're so happy to finally have it be their turn," shared O'Brien. "You're kind of calming their nerves and helping them realize the importance of moving forward to getting back to more of a normal life."

During the LMC Nursing program, students are required to participate in a variety of clinics and trainings, that prepare them to earn an Associate of Science Degree in Nursing and qualify to take the



Since February 2021, 16 LMC nursing students have rotated in and out of a county-run vaccination site where they've helped administer shots to up to 600 people a day.

## LMC Nursing Students *(Continued from page 3)*



*This May 2021, 40 LMC Nursing students are expected to graduate and earn their Associate of Science Degree in Nursing.*

State Board Exam (NCLEX-Rn) for licensure as a Registered Nurse (RN). But when the pandemic hit, hands-on clinical experiences became hard to find as the world shut down. In a swift attempt to ensure their graduating students met the requirement, the LMC nursing program turned to their Career Education department for help.

Through a collegial collaboration known to be the strength of most community colleges, LMC's Career Education department allocated funds to upgrade the nursing Simulation Lab and purchase a Virtual Simulation, allowing graduating nursing students to stay on the path to completion. Now, after countless hours of preparation and training, LMC nursing students are making a positive impact in their community at a time when it's needed the most.

"I think we're at the forefront of history and what is happening," said O'Brien. "It feels really good to give back."

## District Welcomes New Employees

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

### Regular Managers

Location	Name	Title
CCC	Timothy Harrison	Vice President, Business and Administrative Services

### Regular Academic Employees

Location	Name	Title
DVC	Melissa Wong	Learning Disabilities Specialist

### Regular Monthly Classified Employees

Location	Name	Title
DST	Allen Obiniana	Police Services Officer
DVC	Dominique Moss	Program Coordinator
DVC	Noelle Palmer	Program Coordinator
DVC	Douglas Phenix	Program Coordinator
DVC	Hilary Shen	Program Coordinator

## Board Report

To review highlights of the Governing Board Meeting held on April 28, 2021, click on the link below:

<https://www.4cd.edu/crpa/board-reports/2020-2021/April%2028,%202021.pdf>

## Cabinet Highlights

To review highlights of the Cabinet meetings held in April 2021, click on the link below:

<https://www.4cd.edu/crpa/chancellors-cabinet/2020-2021/April%202021.pdf>

## District Governance Committee

To learn more about the District Governance Committee, click on the link below:

<http://www.4cd.edu/about/committees/dgc/default.aspx>