



Week of March 17, 2008

Volume 16, Number 3

NEWS FROM THE MARCH 18 GOVERNING BOARD MEETING

Chancellor announces June 2009 retirement

Chancellor **Omero Suarez** announced his retirement from the district effective June 30, 2009. "I am honored to have had the opportunity to serve as the chancellor of this district for 10 years and to be part of the dynamic changes in this district," said **Suarez**. The governing board accepted his retirement on a 4-1 vote with trustee **Dr. Timothy L. Caruthers** opposed. Governing Board President **Bill Garrett** said, "I want to thank the Chancellor for what he's done for the district, and what he will do over the remaining months."

Prop. R offers model for state

For the third straight year, the Prop. R Bond Program received an outstanding evaluation. **Tony Fulton** of AF Consultants, the third party firm contracted to conduct the Program Performance Review, told the governing board, "This is one of the best run programs we've seen, in California or Texas," and commended the district, trustees, and the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee for their outstanding management.

Fulton said the review focused closely on the planning process, selection of contractors, project and construction management services, the procurement process, and funding and financial management. Fulton said the district's

errors and omission costs, change order costs, and project management costs are all consistently below average. He also commended the district for using Prop. R. funds to leverage \$84 million in State matching funds.

Budget battle looms

Sue Rearic, Vice Chancellor-Business Services, told board members the district received news from the State Chancellor's Office that \$1.3 million would need to be cut from the current year budget as part of a statewide cut to community colleges. **Dana Quittner**, Associate Vice Chancellor of Intergovernmental Relations, Economic Development & Public Information, said the budget situation for the coming year is "bad, bad, and getting worse." Both parties in the Legislature are digging in their heels, and there may be no statewide budget approved for many months.

Quittner said it will be vitally important for the district to document cost efficiencies and the steps it has taken to save money. Chancellor **Suarez** noted, "We are in a grim situation, and it is getting worse. We have been working hard through our leadership groups... It is important for everyone in the district to know about the fiscal impacts and how they affect students." **Suarez** called for increased communication on the budget issues and expressed concern about the impact of the faculty work to contract action on students.

Reports to the Board

Trustee **Deanna Weeks** renewed her call for a budget workshop, especially in light of the latest budget challenges. "A workshop is especially important now where we are looking at every dollar," said **Weeks**. Chancellor **Suarez** said this is a good idea, and he would be following up on it.

Trustee **Rick Alexander** attended the Grossmont College Foundation's A Fine Arts Affaire fundraiser, and the Classified Staff Appreciation Day event and congratulated the organizers.

Trustee **Greg Barr** said, as a follow-up to his request last month, that he, district staff, and Trustee **Rick Alexander** met to discuss the district's unique benefits and features, and are working on gathering data. **Barr** requested that an item be placed on the agenda in April for action regarding payment to hourly employees during the week of the wildfires. Governing Board President **Garrett** noted that this will happen.

Governing Board President **Garrett**, referencing student comments on the impact of the faculty work to contract action, expressed his concerns also about the impact on students. He said he understands the action was initiated after the district turned down the last offer and the mediator referred the parties to fact finding.

Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College Governing Board Members:

Rick Alexander, Greg Barr, Timothy L. Caruthers, D.C., Bill Garrett, Deanna Weeks

STUDENT MEMBERS: Crystal Bernier-Sudano, Audrey Causton

Chancellor: Omero Suarez, Ph.D. • Grossmont President: Sunita V. Cooke, Ph.D. • Cuyamaca President: Geraldine M. Perri, Ph.D.

Garrett also reported that he continues to work on the textbook pricing issue, and that it may make sense for the district to host a summit on the issue. He also reported that, following consultation with Student Trustee **Bernier-Sudano**, he would be forwarding a legislative proposal to Frank Fernandez, President, Student Senate for the California Community Colleges, to allow student trustees to be district employees, seeking his input.

Cuyamaca College Student Trustee **Audrey Causton** reported on campus events, including the LRC display on Women's History Month and the Health Fair scheduled for April 9 and said elections for ASCC offices will take place April 21-22.

Grossmont College Student Trustee **Crystal Bernier-Sudano** said she attended the Black Student Union Quiz-off and St. Patrick's Day event. She said debates are being scheduled prior to student elections for ASGC board seats in April. **Bernier-Sudano** had questions about the emergency preparedness and response report. Chancellor **Suarez** said he would schedule a meeting to discuss these.

Chancellor **Omero Suarez** commented that a difficult budget year lies ahead. He said his priorities will be to preserve positions, and "to serve every student we can."

Ben Lastimado, Vice Chancellor Human Resources and Labor Relations, said a training program called "Staff Training & Readiness Seminars" (STAR) is providing sessions to staff. The first covered sexual harassment.

Dana Quittner, Associate Vice Chancellor of Intergovernmental Relations, Economic Development & Public Information, said she is working with our congressional office to secure funding for scientific equipment for Cuyamaca and medical equipment for Grossmont.

United Faculty representative **Ezequiel Cardenas** said faculty are not happy about the work to contract situation, and hope to have a contract agreement soon.

Dave McDade, Classified Senate representative, thanked the board for its support of Classified Staff Appreciation Day and said the event had its best turnout ever.

Grossmont College Academic Senate President **Chris Hill** said the district will host the 2009 National Science Decathlon.

Cuyamaca College Academic Senate President **Jan Ford** reported passage of a resolution calling for the district to establish a task force to develop an equitable plan for office hours for part time faculty. Trustee **Alexander** expressed his support.



Grossmont College Report

- Vice President Student Services **John Colson**, representing Grossmont College President **Sunny Cooke**, reported that about 120 middle school students participated in the Southern California Regional Science Decathlon on campus.
- KGFN Radio production manager **Brian Bennett** placed second in the Broadcast Education Association audio production competition, besting 30 other competitors, some from 4-year schools.
- The Grossmont College Foundation hosted the San Diego East County Chamber of Commerce's First Friday Breakfast March 7, drawing East County business owners and community leaders to campus.
- Grossmont College will host the statewide California Learning Communities Conference April 10-12.



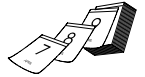
Cuyamaca College Update

- President **Geraldine M. Perri** said the 19th annual Turf Management Seminar co-sponsored by the Ornamental Horticulture program drew 170 industry representatives, a record number, to the event in the Student Center.
- The college hosted a two-day Southern California School Bands and Orchestra Association Festival in March, with 40 middle and high school bands participating in the Communication Arts Center Theatre.
- Ninety high school students participated in the 45th annual Senior High Math Field Day.
- An inaugural concert series in the Communication Arts Center is kicked off March 28 with a jazz piano concert.

Staff Notes

Welcome to new classified employees **Ismael Garcia**, Printing Operations Assistant; **Brook Harvey**, Instructional Lab Assistant, Intermediate; and **Marilyn Semaan** and **Vicky Trask**, Communications Equipment Operators; all at Cuyamaca College; also to **Anna Gonzalez**, Financial Aid Assistant; **Jeromy Jones**, Custodian; and **S. David Steinmetz**, Instructional Media Services Coordinator, at Grossmont College.

Calendar of Events



Wednesday, April 16 Health and Wellness Fair, Main Quad, Grossmont College

Saturday, April 26 Spring Garden Festival, Cuyamaca College

Next Meeting

The Governing Board's next regular meeting will be held Tuesday, April 15, 2008, at Griffin Gate, Grossmont College. The open session will begin at 6:30 p.m., following closed session, scheduled for 5:30 p.m.

Public Comment

Wendy Hutson, Associated Students of Grossmont College President, reported on campus activities including Black History Month events, Movie Night, and Irish History Month. She said ASGC is winding up its grant cycle this month, and has awarded funds for field trips and the Health and Wellness Fair. ASGC is working on mass transit options to help alleviate parking congestion during construction of the new parking structure.

Kelly Gordon, President of the Grossmont College Black Students Union, and **Wayne Beach**, ASGC Vice President, both expressed concerns about the impact of work to contract actions by faculty on students. **Beach** said two-thirds of clubs have faculty advisors and administrators are being asked to serve temporarily as advisors because of the work to contract.