

State of the College Address

January 25, 2008

INTRODUCTION

This has been an exciting week of meetings and workshops here in this new facility. I want to thank Deb Parziale and others responsible for arranging all of the sessions. I especially want to recognize the leadership of this new campus: Associate Vice President Leta Stagnaro, and interim deans Leslie Buehler and Gayle Carli. Working with staff and faculty assigned here, myself, the other vice presidents and deans of the district, these 3 leaders have put all of their energies and enthusiasm into a successful start-up next week for the Center for Health Sciences and Technology. I believe these many efforts will be richly rewarded in the form of greatly enhanced opportunities for student success.

As we look around us today, we can be very proud of the faculty and administrative staff who have worked so diligently over the past years to collaborate with the architects and builders to come up with this most impressive result. For my part, it is indeed a very rare opportunity for a college president to be able to play a role in designing and opening a new campus. One morning coming into work I heard a business leader being interviewed on NPR. I do not remember his name, but I do distinctly remember this comment: "The greater the vision a leader has, the greater the effort of execution is required for success."

The Newark Center vision is of course not mine alone so much as it is a collective consciousness of new opportunities made possible through this new facility. The philosopher Goethe said in another century that "It is simply not enough to understand, we must also act." The Ohlone College Newark Center for Health Sciences and Technology was a very big new idea which, to actually pull it off, presented a very big challenge to all concerned. This big idea has grown over the 4 years and continues to evolve as the people give it breath and shape and form and energy. It will keep evolving because we designed the building to be flexible and changeable as student needs and faculty

knowledge of learning continually emerge into the future. This new campus is a vehicle and not an end in itself. This vehicle is designed to take us to new places in our dedication to learner success and to new levels of awareness as to what it means to be in community with one another. This vehicle is designed to take us to an entirely new realm of commitment to environmental protection, renewal and sustainability. This vehicle is designed to span the globe, connecting the work and learning we do here with students and colleagues in other countries who likewise share the values and commitments we have come to collectively embrace.

I had a very enjoyable holiday break as I trust you all did also. I spent my time in Colorado at the beautiful new mountain home my son has built there overlooking a peaceful river valley in the foreground and magnificent mountain peaks in the background. We took hikes on the new fallen snow and I played a lot with grandkids and their cousins on the play station 3 golf and rock band games.

When they were off skiing, I also did a good amount of reading, including the book by Jared Diamond titled: Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed. Jared Diamond started out to write a book about how past societies made decisions regarding the environment and how those decisions contributed to the preservation or collapse of those societies. He found that he had to bring in economics and politics, but even those factors had environmental sub-texts. He starts with the premise that many people today believe that ecocide is a greater threat to our civilization than even nuclear war or disease. It has long been suspected that many of the mysterious abandonments by past civilizations like the Mayans were at least triggered by ecological problems. The term ecocide was coined to mean unintended ecological suicide—the processes through which past societies have undermined themselves by damaging their environments beyond repair.

Diamond wrote: “For past societies which had unsustainable ecological practices, those led to environmental damage which in turn had dire consequences including food shortages, starvation, wars among too many people fighting for too few resources, and overthrows of governing elites by disillusioned masses. Eventually, population decreased through starvation, war or disease, and society lost political, economic and cultural diversity that it had developed at its peak.”

The risk of such collapses today is now a matter of increasing concern; indeed, collapses have already materialized in our time for Somalia and Rwanda and on observable course to collapse are several other countries including Afghanistan, Iraq, Haiti, Burundi, Madagascar, Pakistan, Nepal, Indonesia, Mongolia, Philippines and Solomon Islands. These severe environmental distress spots are also the main political trouble spots in the modern world—a connection that is of vital importance to keep in mind. The thesis of the book is, as the title suggests, that humans make choices that have consequences. The question in the book is why did some past societies collapse while others didn't? The alarm the book sounds is that for the first time in the history of the world, we face the specter of global collapse.

Decisions by our neighbors near and far now have consequences for us and our decisions impact them as well. Decision-making is no longer just localized. The hope lies in the fact that we are the first generation to pursue the opportunity of learning from the past societies and instantly and at the same time communicating with one another what it is we are doing and plan to do to keep our civilization viable. The danger lies in our unbridled pursuit as Americans of accumulating things we really don't need to be happy—habits of consumption the whole world cannot sustain—our selfishness of not wanting personally to be deprived of our creature comforts and our national unwillingness to curtail waste or to help other countries solve their problems, even knowing that the unresolved problems of others inevitably will lead to our own downfall in future generations.

There certainly is some merit to the notion that the more self-satisfied or comfortable we become, perhaps the more vulnerable we are to ignoring what is really going on around us and the possible collapse that could catch us all by surprise. From the book Collapse I would draw the following implications for us here at Ohlone College:

1. The decisions we have made to create this new sustainable campus will not only help us make better choices going forward, we will serve as a model to others of what can be done when you take environmental stewardship to heart and take ownership of it.
2. The decision we have made to make this campus both smoke free and liter free will directly lead to people making more healthy decisions about their personal, corporate and family quality of life.

3. The decision to establish a joint center with Suzhou will directly impact decisions in China, the world's largest population center, pollution creator, and influential model for developing nations of what to do and not do ecologically.
4. The decision we have made to establish a Sustainability Coordinator position, the environmental committee and environmental education program will lead to a more conscious and intentional process of choices in the goods and services we buy, and the conservation measures we take on a day to day basis. Adopting a methodology of assessment of sustainable practices will guide us in making even better informed and responsible decisions going forward.
5. The decision to embrace sustainability in the curriculum will cause us to move out into the community with student service projects to help others make informed and responsible decisions as well as to model for our students the values we espouse. As we walk the talk, as we practice what we preach, our lessons take on credibility and the chance that our students will learn themselves to choose well goes up exponentially.

As I said in 2003, "Anyone can put up another building and keep doing business the same way. The choice we have is to use the new building to chart a new direction." Well, the building is now here—and we chose wisely. Now the journey of a thousand, thousand more decisions is before us. I like the definition of sustainability that came from a position paper of the African National Parks System: "Sustainability is a feeling of the kinship of all peoples on the earth and a relationship to all other living organisms." Let us be guided by that wisdom today and in years to come.

On Thursday, January 31 from 12:30-2:00, this campus will be officially dedicated. Lt. Governor John Garamendi will be the key note speaker. All faculty and staff are invited and encouraged to participate in this once in a lifetime event. The chairperson of the upcoming accreditation in March, Dr. John Dixon, was visiting this campus with me earlier this month. His observation was very much on the mark: "He said this is really not just an outreach center. This is an entire section of expansion of your existing campus. It just happens to be a few miles away." I hope that everyone in this room knows and appreciates this and that you will embrace the students, staff and faculty working here in

Newark just as you did when they were in your more immediate vicinity on the Fremont campus. And I know they will reciprocate.

In preparation for this talk today, I was reviewing my first state of the college address in August of 2003. I observed that Ohlone College needed to establish more clearly in the minds of those of us working here, as well as the public, a specific college identity. We came up with motto: "A World of Cultures United in Learning." We also made more definite our intention to be one college with three campuses: those being the physical sites of Fremont and Newark and the virtual site of distance learning programs.

We also have expanding partnerships that extend our "one college" approach into other learning venues. Important examples are the Newark Memorial High School and Silliman Recreation Center literally next door to us, the new Regional Occupational Program Campus less than a mile away, along with the nearby Kennedy High School campus. Other exciting new opportunities include the expressed desire of CSU East Bay to come to the Newark site to offer upper division courses as soon as Fall of this year and a growing number of industry sites where clinical training and internship activities will be expanding for career-technical training and pre-professional career exploration. Through the partnership with the Suzhou, China Science and Industry Park we will have an office for their representative here in Newark and they in turn have made available an office for our China-based staff in Suzhou. Through this collaboration a new program of internships for Ohlone students in international business and industry will be springing forth as well as expanded education and cultural exchanges. I will speak in more detail later in my comments about expansion of recruitment of Chinese students to attend Ohlone.

Monday morning at 7:30 a.m. the Ribbon Cutting ceremony takes place here to welcome the students. Tham Hoang will be here as she is the first student to register for the new campus. Specifically she registered for English 162 and Math 153 at 10:05 a.m. on November 16. During the ribbon-cutting Jimmy Dempsey will release his doves in symbolism of new dreams and aspirations taking flight from this campus. The ribbon we will cut is actually a strand of twined tulle reeds native to this area. The strand will be cut using an Obsidian point. Both ceremonial items are donated by

the local Ohlone Indian people. Pictures of the ceremony and the implements will be placed in a commemorative display box on the first floor. On Thursday at the conclusion of the dedication, there will be a ceremonial Ohlone Indian blessing of the campus. On the back portion of this property near the rail road tracks there is a lone cypress standing in clear view. That marks the location of ancient Ohlone Indian burial grounds.

Out in front of the building we have the Pathway to Progress. I want to thank each one of the faculty and staff who contributed so generously to placing your brick on that pathway. If you have not already seen them, please take a moment to do so today. And for those still considering making a contribution to the furnishings and equipment needs of the facility, staff will be signing people up for the next brick installment. Please consider converting one of the currently blank pavers into your statement of support and perhaps also honoring someone of your choosing.

Last Thursday the Governor declared the State of California to be in a fiscal crisis. No doubt also on your minds today is receiving news about the ramifications for Ohlone College of the Governor's budget cutting proposals and just how we intend to cope with the difficulties it will present to us. So I will spend more time than usual on the topic of the budget and the always related matter of enrollment.

BUDGET CRISIS

Over my career as a college and university CEO, I have experienced several cycles of economic up turn and down turn. When I came to Ohlone in the fall of 2003 the college had just been through a major budget cutting episode, with more than 40 full-time staff and faculty receiving lay-off notices. As we together picked up the pieces in the aftermath of those cuts, we were also feeling the pressure of enrollment drops and it took 3 years for us to stabilize --both from the staffing perspective and student enrollment. Now that we are stable and continue to grow, once again the roller coaster of state finances is heading downward. Not only state finances, but the national economy is in trouble as well. The difference is that this time the District has set aside reserves and otherwise is prepared to respond to the fiscal challenge without lay-offs and program removals.

Make no mistake about it, the down cycle we are now in is real and could last for many months or even years. We have had it good for 3 or 4 years and now we are going to have it bad. The Legislature will take a good deal of time resolving the short-fall of revenues and very well may conclude that more taxes or targeted fees will be part of the solution. Wednesday night State Assembly Member Alberto Torrico spoke to our board and predicted an even worse scenario than the Governor and a difficult battle in the legislature throughout the summer to resolve the budget crisis. We just do not know at this time what exactly is going to happen and if the overall situation is going to be as predicted, or maybe even worse. So how do we approach this challenge? It is like the question of how do porcupines make love to one another? The answer is very carefully.

The first thing I have to say about the impending budget cuts is we need to avoid knee jerk reactions of a major variety. Of course we will immediately curtail non-essential expenditures. That goes without saying. Major decisions, however, involving service levels, priorities and personnel of the district need careful strategic analysis and deliberation. What we will be doing in face of this uncertainty is contingency planning—developing our triage plan according to different levels of impact. Some of the steps will be taken now, some in the next budget, some in the next year or even following year—as we learn more and more about the actual situation.

Some good cautionary advice came from my wife who worked for many years in California as a social and health services administrator. Carole said I could share her thoughts with you: “If you start to loose sleep at this point in the process without really knowing what the state will do in August or September or who knows when they will finally have a plan, then you will be a wreck. And not only that, plans you try to lay now may not even remotely match the actual decisions that come down, so much of your effort is wasted.” I would add to her wisdom from my experience, you very likely will also have to reverse some of the premature decisions you made which will add yet additional burdens your organization will have to bear, some of those needless as a result of too hasty action and lack of long-range perspective. As was stated in a recent news letter from the Chancellor’s office, in 2003 this indeed happened at several districts, including Ohlone, but not at most districts. There are lessons to be learned there.

SCOPE of the PROBLEM

The immediate issue we face is that there will be a reduction in the amount of funds the state will pay us for this year. We get our funds in monthly installments, but we budget for the entire year. With less income for the second half of the year, we will have to scale back some current expenditures we had planned on making. There will also likely be a delay of two months in the end of year payments to us. Fortunately, we have strong cash reserves in the County treasury that we will use to meet payroll and other expenses in the summer until we do receive state funds.

On Wednesday the College Council held an all day workshop on the subject of developing our budget plans, including a list of options for making reductions as well as avenues for generating more revenues. I can share some of the main points that came from that session.

While it may sound like a broken record coming from me, savings on the use of electricity can be a major action everyone of us can help with. It is also an environmental issue. Many of us still leave our computers on at night and other devices remain plugged in and drawing power when they should be disconnected. The magnitude of this waste is in the range of \$5,000 to \$10,000 per month! Please do not be surprised if you come in to your office some morning and find a sticker on your door with a smiling face and observation that you left the computer on over night or lights on if manually controlled. Somehow we all need to get with it and any other suggestions you have are welcomed to actually be sure we are all doing even the simple things that can add up. By the way, when you see a co-worker or student wasting resources it really is o.k. to say something to them about it.

Every category of District expense requires close scrutiny at this time. But the magnitude of the cut for the remainder of this year does not require us to go to the \$1 million Rainy day reserve fund. Reserve funds will be in play for next year to balance our budget and to buy more time for longer range reductions as they become necessary. We also have in current reserves, the funds for one-time purchases of equipment. Those purchases will be curtailed until we get a better handle on the magnitude of next year's problem. One-time equipment reserve amounts to \$1.5 million. These funds, or a portion of them, can also be considered Rainy Day reserve if needed.

I will work with budget managers to find the \$350,000 in reductions this year without going into any of the reserve accounts. It will take less than 30 days for us to make decisions that will resolve the current year short-fall. We have also been informed that the Chancellor's Office and governor may find a way to meet this year's short fall without a campus deficit. In that event, the money we save now will be used to have a stronger beginning balance for 2008-09.

In my meetings with the College Council and the Board this week, I explained that our budget decisions will be guided by certain fundamental principles. First and foremost what we are not going to do is propose to the board any lay-offs of full-time personnel. Under the current scenario of a 10.9 percent recommended reduction in categorical programs, we do have some full-time staff in jeopardy. If the Legislature should agree to this drastic reduction, and that is a big if, then we would recommend to the board the transfer of some categorically funded personnel to vacancies in general funded positions and/or supplement the state withdrawal of categorical funds with some of our own discretionary revenues and grants.

As a general strategy, when a position becomes vacant, no matter what the source of funding for that position, we will try not to fill the position with another hire during this time of fiscal crisis. Each position has to be evaluated on its own merits as we implement a selective hiring freeze. There are some positions that we simply will leave vacant and others we must fill. There are other cases where we would use a transfer process to cover the position and leave some other area understaffed. We can reorganize, we can retrain, we can and will need to reduce some services if the situation gets severe. Through a strategy of employee attrition rather than lay-offs, we can together make the adjustments necessary. As part of the attrition contingency strategy, I also would not rule out some form of golden hand shake to promote early retirements. We will discuss prospects for PERS and STRS programs with our three bargaining units. The retirement incentive program which adds two years credit must generate a significant savings to the district and not filling the vacancy created by some retirements is key to using that program as a cost savings tool.

Under the Governor's proposed 2008-09 budget there is no COLA provided. Estimates were that the COLA should be 4.94% for next year. This news alone could prompt some people who have been

considering retirement to take the step. If we are not going to have lay-offs we will need to hold the line in negotiations for salaries. The no lay-offs position of the District requires the full collaboration of our collective bargaining units in keeping expectations restrained in line with available resources.

An important resource we have at Ohlone is an ability to generate some local revenue. This year we are experiencing a doubling of our enrollments of international students. International students pay the full cost of instruction, \$183 per unit and not the \$20 per unit in-state students pay. Also, the college is allowed to retain all of the international student fees rather than send them into the state coffers as we do with the other student fees. We have the capacity to continue to systematically increase our international student enrollment and to generate a good deal of extra income in the process. We will have to spend a few thousands dollars this spring in overseas student recruitment. However, the fees paid by just one new international student will offset this expense. To put this in context, the income generated by 100 international students is nearly a half-million dollars, much of which after taking care of direct expenses of serving the increased number, we can use to off set the state budget reductions.

Currently \$2.5 million of our budget comes in the form of grants income and we have the ability to increase that revenue as well. People on state categorical programs could be reassigned to new grant programs with similar objectives. Ohlone has many reforms in place and under development as well as many needs that position us well to be very competitive in grants. We need to work even harder this year and next to generate more income in the general fund from state and federal grants.

As we anticipate the prospects that the financial condition of the District could be placed in even greater difficulty than the current announcements portend, we will need to look at our part-time personnel costs and make targeted reductions in programs and services accordingly. The threshold we use to decide whether or not a class taught by adjunct faculty, for example, may have to be increased. Lower enrollment class closures are specifically envisioned in the Governor's budget message as one way to respond to the budget crisis. The budget for part-time faculty is \$5 million at Ohlone. A significant additional expenditure is made in funding the summer sessions—nearly \$1 million. Reductions in the summer session are a possibility. Some districts have actually closed

down and eliminated their summer sessions when faced with major financial threats. I do not see that as an Ohlone strategy for 2008 but summer sessions are optional and just how we use the facilities we have during the summer to generate revenue, not only for credit enrollment, is an important strategic issue.

As you all know, I will leave office at the end of June this year and a new president will take over. In May the Governor will issue his revised budget for 2008-09. The political process in Sacramento will not resolve the budget until end of summer or even later. But in the coming months I will do my very best to continue to enact fiscal conservation measures within my own authority as president.

We should be prepared that the road may be bumpy and you will no doubt hear many different views and arguments, at the state capitol, in the local board room, across the college district. But we will work through this together and I am confident that the majority of our board members will support our shared governance budget development process. The College Council working with me and in turn my working with the board sub committee on Finance and Facilities will move us along a pathway of open information and strategic decision making.

I will update the Board of trustees and College Council on budget and enrollment at each and every meeting they have for the rest of the semester. I will report to the media and college community only the facts and only the official decisions of the college council, local board and state officials. Even if the news is not to our liking, I believe having knowledge of what is happening and the correct information is very important. I welcome your individual questions to me at any time.

In summary, there are a number of strategies to be incrementally applied as we move through the fiscal down-turn. Immediate reductions in discretionary spending and a hiring freeze are already in progress. With a no lay-offs approach, looking for ways to work around position vacancies and to reassign people impacted by categorical program cuts is very important. Generating more discretionary income through grants, international students, contract and community education are important strategies to give us flexibility. Prioritizing the most important expenditures of staff and services will guide all decisions. And use of the reserve funds for our District, including re-directing

funds on a short-term basis to keep programs viable until the other measures can take effect, remains a tool in the overall approach to keeping us both financially viable and stable in our enrollment.

I urge you to make your voices known on the budget issues through your elected officials, state and local, as well as our own shared governance and employee unions. And remember, as a direct result of the 2003 lay-offs, the District created a rainy day reserve expressly to prevent lay-offs from happening again. It is going to be raining and you can count on my advocacy for you as dedicated college employees.

ENROLLMENT

Even with fiscal shortfalls, the Governor has proposed for 2008-09 that the community colleges be able to grow on average by 1% instead of the 3% projected need. Ohlone College would be eligible for growth and we are well positioned for it. With our new campus and continuing on-line education growth we can take advantage of state growth incentives, if there are any. To the extent we can accomplish the growth without hiring more personnel, then we would be especially effective in utilizing growth funds to shore up our general financial well being.

So let me turn to the topic of student enrollment. Whether in good financial times or bad, student enrollment remains the coin of the realm. It is our life blood and I am pleased to report the Ohlone student body is very healthy at this time. In comparison with this time frame last year, our enrollment stands at 8,292 headcount, an 8.8% increase and 3,086 FTES, a 7% increase. The Fremont campus enrollment comprises 73%, the Newark campus enrollment 16% and on-line campus enrollment 11%.

Our first objective with enrollment growth is to meet the state formula, based on which we are eligible for additional funds in the current year. All indications are that we will receive these growth funds to enhance our base funding, even though there is some possibility that growth would receive a discount. For example if we would normally receive \$4,500 per student in growth, it could be reduced to say \$4,100. Nevertheless more funds are better than none.

Our analysis of the enrollments shows an improvement in student retention. This is one of the most important findings regarding the work we have been doing to innovate in instruction and to

enhance outreach and services to students. If those who come to us in the first instance remain longer with us, we are much stronger than when we have to go out and find large number of replacement students every semester. Remember we always say: "Taking care of the customers we have is the very best student enrollment strategy."

I have already mentioned international students and their potential to improve our financial condition. I want at this time to recognize two individuals who are very instrumental in the increase of new international students. On the faculty Xisheng Fang has led the recruitment in China which has resulted in over 50 new students. The program administrator Eddie West has also been directly involved in recruitment and in the establishment of a stronger admissions system as well as the English Language Institute. He and Xisheng are tireless workers going the second and third extra miles to build these programs.

Taking a look at the fruits of their labors we see that in Fall 2006 we had 63 international students, spring 07-- 83, fall 07 --133 and this spring 175. With a recruitment program to India this spring, aimed at 15-20 new students from there, especially to fill our engineering classes, and continued efforts in China, we will easily grow by 50 or more international students this coming fall. As I said, the costs of a recruitment trip are fully paid by the fees we receive from just one new international student and such recruitment is according to the College Council and the Board our number one revenue generating strategy for addressing the budget crisis.

I hope that in this overview of enrollment and budget challenges, I have been able to convey to you both an optimistic and a realistic summary of how things stand at this time. Everyone here has a role to play in keeping Ohlone strong. Every student that you reach out to and pay a little more attention to so that they do not give up and stay enrolled is part of the solution. Every satisfied student that tells their friends about the quality of Ohlone and the caring of its staff and faculty is part of the solution. Every light turned off and every equipment item turned off when not in use is part of the solution. Every attitude that remains positive and every challenge that is solved through teamwork and collaboration is part of the solution.

Conserving funds and seeking creative solutions for the future of the college is not a spectator sport. We need everyone of us to come on down onto the playing field and to be engaged--All members of the college community shouldering you responsibility to be part of the solution. I believe that this is exactly what you are all going to do. I have great faith in the people that are Ohlone College and I believe I can count on you, as you can count on me, to continue to take the kinds of actions individually and collective that will keep our enrollment and budget resources stabilized in these difficult times ahead.

Now let us turn our attention to some other important matters for spring semester.

TITLE III UPDATE

This week copies of the new publication Ohlone College Title III Gazette have been distributed. Most of the innovations in the learning spaces for this new campus came from the Title III project. Several faculty innovation projects are underway with Title III support including the work of Jennifer Harper for Online Orientation, Mike "DeUnamuno, Alison Kuehner, Carmen Madden and Teresa Massimo for University Express Learning Community; Darren Bardell, Susan Cunningham and Cecile Davila for Learning Community development and Weihsun Mae and Pei-min Lin for Computer Aided Chinese Language Interactive Learning. I am particularly interested in the latter project, because I have been enrolled in the conversational Mandarin course at Ohlone and as much as I like the in classroom practice, my time constraints would make a computer aided approach more feasible, at least to supplement if not replace the evening class I attend.

A number of classified staff are engaged in new ways of learning and work initiatives. The model we have been developing for New Ways to Work has been worked on by Toni Smith, Delphyne Rollins, Cheryl Lambert, Linda Evers, Bobbie Jo Curtis, Elva Duval and Sharon Quintana. Title III Digital Scanning Project involves all admissions and records staff. The Newark transition team includes Jolie Chevalier and Minh Dinh. Minh also worked with Debora Griffin on the financial aid aspects of the Digital Sharing Project.

All of the new classrooms and labs in this campus have been installed and made operational by our IT staff and plant services personnel. Security has become stationed here and several classified staff new to the college are now working at Newark. Thank you to everyone who has played a part in getting us ready for start of classes next week.

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If you have not taken advantage of the resources of Title III to assist you in innovations for learning, please contact Leta Stagnaro or Deb Parziale. 12 members of the faculty are serving as Learning Coaches this year under Title III: Darren Bardell, Bob Bradshaw, Alison Kuehner, Heather McCarty, Jeff O'Connell, David Topham, Rick Arellano, Tom McMahon, Vern Piumarta, Bob Mitchell, Nancy Pauliukonis and Elisa Webb. We thank them also for their support and assistance.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Under the leadership of Dave Smith, Executive Director of the Ohlone Foundation, we have raised nearly \$3 million in capital campaign funds toward our \$5 million goal. Out in the front of the campus we have installed the first group of honorary paver stones recognizing the individuals and organizations who have thus far made contributions to the fund to buy the furnishings and equipment for the new campus. The following faculty, staff and administrators have made contributions to the campaign:

Capital Campaign Donors

Ohlone College Faculty and Staff

updated 1/24/08

Brenda	Ahntholz
ASOC	
Shelby	Auer
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Tri-Cities One Stop Career Center

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Chris Warden

Elisa Webb

Harold Whitmore

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Jim Wright

WORLD FORUM

The Spring Semester World Forum promises to be just as engaging as in the past semesters. The first Forum takes place this coming Thursday and will be held on this campus at the noon hour. It is the dedication key note speech by California Lieutenant Governor John Garamendi. He served as a California Senator and Assembly Member and as Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Interior under President Clinton. He has strong credentials regarding sustainability. Also speaking will be Wayne Nastri, Regional Director for the Western States of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

On April 16, Malcolm Margolis, author of the book "The Ohlone Way" will give a presentation at the noon hour in the Jackson Theatre. His forum topic is the current status of the California Indians with historical and modern day references to the Ohlones.

ACCREDITATION SELF STUDY AND VISIT

March 3-6 we will host the visiting evaluation team from the Accrediting Commission for Community Colleges. I want to thank and congratulate Jim Wright and the co-chairs for our Self Study as well as Patrice Birkedahl and Kimberly Robbie who served as editors and publishers of the study. The final self study is on the college web site. Through this process of self evaluation, using accreditation

standards as criteria, we learned more about the college and our effectiveness. Out of 130 accreditation standards, only 11 were judged by us to not be fully meeting the standards and we have set forth planning agendas accordingly. An additional 30 planning agendas were developed during the self study that would take us beyond compliance. Our self study planning agendas included:

Student learning outcomes continued development

Extension of services to new campus in Newark

Including learning resources and student services

Long-term development of LRC

Evaluations of classified staff including

Manager training and consistent reviews

Increasing waste diversion at Fremont to 75%

Continued development of the new Technology Plan and its implementation

Broader Budget process engagement across campus

Greater involvement of adjunct faculty in all aspects of college

Further ADA compliance on campus and in distance learning

Interface of Web Advisor with the Course management System

Ongoing research on college effectiveness

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

Dr. Pamela Fisher is the consultant working with the District to conduct the nation-wide Ohlone College presidential search. A committee has formed to conduct the screening process, advertisements have been placed, and between now and March 1 applications will be received. It is the intention of the Board of Trustees to select a new president in April or May at the latest.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Since this is my last address to the college community, I would like to close with some brief personal observations.

In my first state of the college address I talked about the quality of Ohlone College and especially our diversity and our genuine concern for one another and our students. I was right about those matters, even more than I first knew. I talked about the Ohlone Indian namesake and the lessons we can learn from the Ohlones regarding responsibility for the environment. I was right about your willingness to learn more and to embrace sustainability. I talked about quality being more important than quantity, but on that point I was only partly right. It is true, we can't be all things to all people and we should only offer those programs and services where we can do a good job of serving the students with adequate staff, facilities and resources. We must concern ourselves with quality.

But when we really think about an **operational definition** of quality for a community college, isn't it actually about how well we serve large numbers of under-prepared students? In other words isn't there a quantity dimension as well at work here? We take under our wings anyone who can benefit. Doesn't that distinguish at least some dimensions of our measure of quality from the universities definition of quality, given that they are selective about who they accept?

I have come to believe our measure of quality comes best to be realized one student success at a time and our willingness to serve as many of those individuals as resources allows.

I come to this belief out of personal experience. When I graduated from high school I was not eligible for university admission. I have shared with Ohlone students my own story of growing up on what was referred to in Riverside, California as the other side of the tracks. No one in my large extended family had ever gone to college. Other than our family doctor and minister, growing up I did not know anyone who had a college education. All around me as a youth were people on drugs. Both of my brothers succumbed to those pressures. My father could be abusive and my neighborhood was often dangerous. Some of my friends died or were imprisoned. My high school counselor told me I should not even think about college and my parents had no expectation that I would do so either. The only financial help I got from family and relatives to go through 10 years of higher education was a check for \$50 from a beloved uncle who was a mail carrier. My grades in high school were not very good. I had to work almost full-time.

What got me started on the pathway to where I am today was a concurrent enrollment course at Riverside Junior College. When I talk with Ohlone students I see myself in many of their eyes. I do not think of them as a mass of people. I relate to each of them as individuals... individuals with great promise, and students who are very fortunate to be under the care and guidance and inspiration of the faculty and staff of Ohlone College.

Thomas Payne wrote in 1776 “we have the opportunity to create an entirely new world.” His version of the American Dream is replayed at the beginning of each and every semester in the minds of many of our students, who just like me, enter the world of higher education as a very new world—a different environment, different people, different values, different opportunities—than they have known here to fore.

As we gather on this new campus today it feels even more likely that the excitement of new opportunity will resonate throughout these facilities in the days to come. So I want to thank you one and all for your dedication to our students’ well-being. Thank you for including me in your world these past years-- the Ohlone Community College family. Thank you for listening to all of these speeches I have made, for your support and understanding, and your friendship.