

PRESIDENT'S *Letter*



SPRING 2012

GROUNDBREAKINGS GALORE

The fall semester saw two groundbreaking ceremonies at CRC: the Winn Center for Construction and Architecture and the parking structure. Both took place November 7 just hours apart from each other, drawing large crowds and generating high excitement on the campus.

"It was one of those days that was exhilarating knowing we were inaugurating the next phase of CRC's development," said CRC President Deborah Travis. "I am looking forward to the day when we'll be able to open both of these facilities."

The Winn Center is scheduled to begin construction in February. "It will depend on the weather for the most part," said Don Wallace, Vice President, Administrative and Student Support. "Crews will be ready to get in there very soon and begin the initial preparation for this important new building."

The Winn Center is designed to be an iconic, Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum -certified facility with a completion date in mid-year 2013. The Architecture, Construction, Pharmacy Technology and Photography programs will be moving in shortly after planning to hold Fall 2013 classes in the new building.

The parking structure will take a bit less time to complete. Work began just a day after the groundbreaking ceremony and work is moving along quickly with the current drier weather the region has seen. The five-level parking structure will be completed by the Spring of 2013.



"Part of our strategic plan is grounded on providing access to public transit routes and this parking garage is the first step," said Travis. "This will provide a new gateway for students, staff and the community—a tangible and accessible portal for Sacramento residents and students to civic activities and educational opportunities."

Construction has already begun on the Elk Grove Center, which will be located at the corner of Whitelock Parkway and Big Horn Boulevard in Elk Grove. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on February 9.

The new Center will be a 2-story, 24,000 square foot building and will house classrooms, administrative areas, a library, and computer labs.

"The Elk Grove Center will support the core general education mission of CRC and will also provide student services, including counseling and business/administrative services," said Whitney Yamamura, Vice President, Instruction and Student Learning.

The Elk Grove Center is also slated to open in 2013, along with the Winn Center and the new parking structure.



President's Message

Spring 2012



CRC Colleagues,

Welcome to 2012! What a pleasure and a privilege it is to celebrate the new year and the start of our Spring 2012 educational journey. It is a journey we share with our students, colleagues and community—a journey offering us new perspectives and possibilities of discovery and delight.

This joint expedition gives us the opportunity to recollect and reaffirm the value of higher education. In CRC's current One Book novel entitled *I Do Not Come To You By Chance* by Adaobi Tricia Nwaubani, there is a profound reflection on education offered to the main character, Kingsley, by his father. He says "...without education, man is as though in a closed room; with education, he finds himself in a room with all its windows open toward the outside world." Through our dedicated faculty and staff, Cosumnes River College provides students with knowledge and learning experiences to explore our world and its peoples, as a dynamic planet and a rich, diverse humanity. This year's Crystal Apple award winner Mathilde Mukantabana is a great example of this with her model of socially engaged scholarship and commitment to practical ethics in education.

Our students are also perfect examples. Take for instance, Calvin Monroe, a CRC alumnus who is currently finishing up his undergraduate degree at Morehouse College. Calvin spent last summer teaching first-graders at a charter school academy and will be heading to Dallas where he has been accepted to Teach For America, an educational leadership movement to ensure children growing up in poverty get an excellent education.

And Irene Kucherova is another CRC alumnus who transferred from CRC and graduated from UC Berkeley with an emphasis on sustainable design. Irene is now applying to MIT for graduate studies after working with children



Calvin Monroe at his CRC graduation

in Ukraine orphanages, providing tutoring, and mentoring, and supporting their education and easing their sense of isolation.

Irene hopes to design and build transitional housing for orphans in the future. These, and many other inspirational CRC students, are changing our world and creating a legacy of global opportunity and equity.

Higher education is equally important to the vitality of our region. In the greater Sacramento region, our public colleges and universities educate more than 180,000 students each year and award 25,000 degrees and certificates annually. Cosumnes River College is an integral part of higher education's positive impact on the regional economy and we take seriously our role in preparing qualified individuals for workforce opportunities and civic leadership. One need only to look at the faculty and staff spotlights in this publication to see individuals who are passionate about higher education and who involve themselves every day in meeting the needs of our more than 15,000 students.

Student needs, and our enduring vision for student access and success, have encouraged and supported the transformation of Cosumnes River College through the renovation of existing buildings and the construction of new learning spaces and environments. Several of our construction projects are chronicled in this Spring 2012 newsletter. However, the real extent of remodeling, constructing, and landscape redesign can only be experienced in a personal walkabout. I invite you all to enjoy an invigorating, healthy walk around the campus this spring, experiencing the energy of our educational pursuits and hearing the sounds of our progress as we continue to make CRC the "best community college in California."

All the best in 2012,

Deborah J. Travis

Deborah J. Travis



Irene Kucherova (far left) at a Ukraine orphanage

FRESHMAN SEMINAR PROGRAM WINS STATEWIDE AWARD

The California Community Colleges Board of Governors bestowed the Cosumnes River College Freshman Seminar program with the 2011-12 Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Exemplary Program Award for best embodying this year's theme, Student Success: Programs Engaging First-Year Students.

CRC's Freshman Seminar program was recognized as a model of what can be done for students when community colleges engage them and help them stay on course to reach their academic goals.

"Cosumnes River's Freshman Seminar program has grown each year and studies have shown that those freshmen who take the three-unit transferable class stay in school through completion at a much higher rate than those who do not," said California Community College Chancellor Jack Scott.

The Freshman Seminar program is designed to address the high drop-out rates of new and at-risk students. What started out as a one-unit experimental class is now a successful three-unit transferable course.

The program is a collaboration between student services and instruction and has served more than 600

students since its inception in Fall 2006. The highly interactive course focuses on helping new students, primarily those just coming out of high school.

Data shows that students who complete the seminar enrolled in more units, achieved high GPAs, and stay enrolled at higher rates than new students who did not take the course. This program is at the forefront of the college's effort to improve retention and completion rates of students.

Each California community college could nominate one program. At the state level, a committee that included representatives of the state administrator groups, students, and faculty evaluated the nominated programs. The awards recognize programs that show evidence of the overall success of the programs, contribute to faculty engagement, demonstrate and respond to the needs of the students and the college, as well provide evidence of how the program supports the community college mission.

The Freshman Seminar program received a beautiful plaque and cash award of \$4,000 from the Foundation for California Community Colleges.

From Left to Right: Los Rios Community College Chancellor Brice Harris, Academic Senate for California Community Colleges Michelle Pilati, CRC Academic Senate Vice President BJ Snowden, CRC Vice President of Student Services and Enrollment Management Celia Esposito-Noy, CRC Tutoring Coordinator Sharon Padilla-Alvarado, California Community College Chancellor Jack Scott, President of the Foundation for California Community Colleges Keetha Mills, CRC Academic Senate President Kale Braden, Board of Governors President Scott Himmelstein, CRC President Deborah Travis.



STUDENT SUCCESS **TASK FORCE** UPDATE

In January 2011, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors embarked on a 12-month strategic planning process to improve student success. A 20-member task force was created and was composed of a diverse group of community college leaders, faculty, students, researchers, staff, and external stakeholders. The Student Success Task Force (SSTF) delved deeply into complex college and system-level policies and practices.

On January 9, 2012, the Task Force's report was presented and adopted by the Board of Governors. California Community College Chancellor Jack Scott said at the time that the "recommendations will go a long way in improving student graduation, certificate and transfer rates at the system's 112 colleges."


The SSTF's 22 recommendations will make community college more responsive to the needs of students and the economy, which is increasingly demanding college-educated workers. They are aimed at rebalancing priorities to focus on the core missions of remedial education, workforce preparation, certificate and degree attainment and transfer.

The SSTF plan relies on the following key components to move students more effectively through our community college system:

- Development and implementation of a common diagnostic assessment tool to more accurately determine the skill levels of entering students;
- New technology and additional counselors to create more robust student services, including broader and more widespread use of student educational plans;
- Structured pathways to help students identify a program of study and obtain an educational roadmap to indicate appropriate courses and available support services;
- Enhanced professional development for both faculty and staff, especially related to the instructional and support needs of basic skills students;
- Revised financing, accountability, and oversight systems to ensure that resources (both financial and organizational) are better aligned with student success;
- Stronger statewide coordination and oversight to allow for the sharing and facilitation of new and creative ideas to help students succeed, including the ability for California to "take to scale" the many good practices already in place; and
- Better alignment of local district and college goals with the education and workforce needs of the state.

Because students come to California Community Colleges with a wide variety of goals, measuring their success requires multiple measures. The SSTF recommended the adoption of a set of student success outcome metrics including:

- Percentage of community college students completing their educational goals

PRESIDENT'S *Letter* 

Editor
KRISTIE WEST

Design & Layout
AMBER FOREMAN

Contributors
ROSALIE AMER
KALE BRADEN
JANIS CASTON
KEN COOPER
NYENBEKU GEORGE

JAMES LOVETT
LAURIE POWNALL
DEBBIE TRAVIS
SARA VASQUEZ
CORY WATHEN

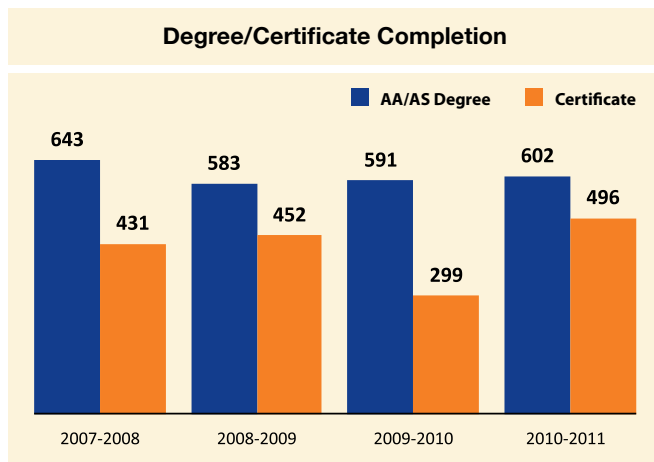
COSUMNES RIVER COLLEGE
8401 CENTER PARKWAY
SACRAMENTO, CA 95823

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL:
(916) 691-7199

LOS RIOS COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

- Percentage of community college students earning a certificate or degree, transferring, or achieving transfer-readiness
- Number of students transferring to a four-year institution
- Number of degrees and certificates earned

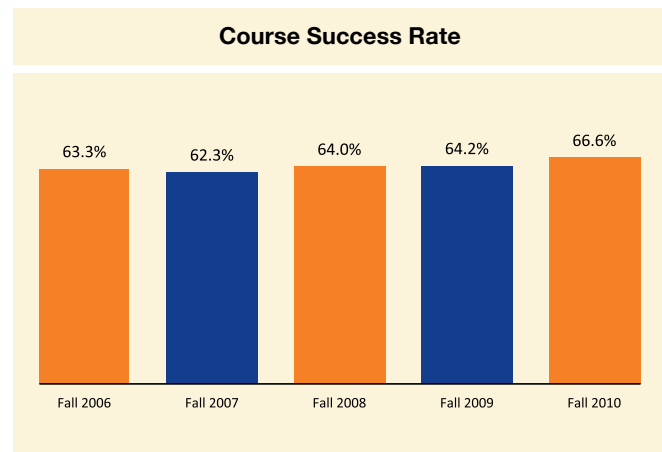
Shown below is CRC's most recent completion rates.



The SSTF report also noted there are a number of key “momentum” points associated with an improved probability of success. The recognition of these momentum points guided the work of the task force and helped identify recommendations for enhanced completion rates. Examples of progression metrics leading to completion include:

- Successful course completion
- Successful completion of basic skills competencies
- Successful completion of first collegiate level mathematics course
- Successful completion of first 15 semester units
- Successful completion of first 30 semester units

Shown below is CRC's most recent course success rate.



Once the Student Success Task Force report was approved by the Board of Governors, the members considered a legislative agenda which includes seven statutory changes, 12 regulatory changes, nine budgetary changes, and seven State Administrative policy changes.

At this time, the adoption of the SSTF report does not change a single law or mandate any practice on community colleges. Each element of implementation will require further action by the Legislature, Board of Governors, Chancellor or local districts.

The Board of Governors now has until March 1, 2012 to submit the full report to the State Legislature for review.

NOTE: The information in this article was excerpted from the Student Success Task Force report, a news release from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, and a memo from the Community College League of California. The graphs are CRC data only and was extracted from the 2010-11 annual report.

STUDENT KUDOS

RTVF Students

The students in the Radio, TV and Film Production program were invited by LEED (Linking Education & Economic Development) to submit a video of the recent CareerGPS event at CalExpo. Nine two-person video teams documented the event geared for high school students to explore a variety of careers and college choices. As a class project, the students then edited five versions of a promotional video for LEED's review, with the final selected project intended to be placed on the LEED website. Congratulations to CRC students Robert Yanez, Moises Rosas, Patrick Thomas and Autumn Petteway for their work in creating the final video.

Andri Tambunan



Congratulations to former CRC Photo student Andri Tambunan for winning the Reminders Project Asian Photographer Grant. Andri's project, "Against All Odds" will be supported with \$3000 cash. The grant is awarded to Asian photographers working in Asia. The next

leg of Andri's project, which he will be embarking on this year, will also be shown at next year's Angkor Photo Festival. Created in 2005, the Angkor Photo Festival is the first of its kind in Southeast Asia. Held each year in Siem Reap, the weeklong festival features a series of exhibitions, slideshows and outdoor activities. It serves as a platform to discover and re-discover talent from all over the world.

Evan Sutterfield

CRC music student was selected to participate in master classes with San Francisco composers Belinda Reynolds and Dan Becker. The master classes were part of the Music Association of California Community Colleges Conference in San Francisco.

Art and Photography Students



CRC photography, art and new media students displayed their work at the Crocker Art Museum during the month's of September and October.

Photography students across the district were asked to contribute approximately 75 images for the State Capitol in the governor's offices. The images are displayed in the Capitol buildings hallways and offices.



Scott Wilder



Pre-med student Scott Wilder was awarded the NSF STEM Scholarship late last year. The grant, supported by the National Science Foundation and designed for science, technology, engineering or mathematics students, gives Scott \$2,000 a semester and professional development through mentorship. "It's nice to know your hard work pays off," Wilder said.

"This tells me I'm doing it right." Wilder is saving his grant money to use towards his admission costs to UC Davis in the fall. It's the largest scholarship Wilder has received and he said the money has motivated him to continue pursuing his dream to be a doctor.

STUDENT KUDOS

Architectural Design Technology (ADT) Students



ADT students have been drawing site and floor plans for merchants in Old Elk Grove in conjunction with the Elk Grove Building Department. Representatives from the Building Department presented students who participated with certificates of appreciation.

Sylvia Gowrie



Photography student Sylvia Gowrie's beautiful images were featured in a New York publication for photographic education. She received \$500 along with the college. She was in competition with every photography school in the nation including four-year graduate schools. Sylvia was also asked by

Bay Photo, a professional photo printer for permission to use photographic images as an example of highest quality work.

Softball Team



The Cosumnes River College softball team was recognized by the California Community College Athletic Association for community service at the 13th annual Chips for Kids toy drive at Cal Expo over the holiday season. The team brought toys and helped out along with the California Highway Patrol at this community-oriented event.



WELCOME FROM THE **ACADEMIC SENATE**



"Because things are the way they are, things will not stay the way they are"

—*Bertolt Brecht*

W elcome back to the Spring, 2012 semester! I hope that you were able to “turn off” a bit over the break and get some rest. California’s Community Colleges

continue, in the best traditions of the Chinese curse, to draw the attention of important people and find themselves in interesting times. Over the next semester Cosumnes River College’s Academic Senate will be continuing its efforts to keep faculty informed about our interesting times.

The Student Success Task Force has finalized its recommendations and the report was presented to the Board of Governors on January 9th. In March the recommendations will be presented to the legislative committee which spawned the task force. CRC’s Academic Senate and the State Academic

Senate’s tasks last semester were able to help influence the final draft of the report. In our next semester our task will be to help influence and guide how these recommendations will be implemented.

The California budget game continues to be one of brinksmanship and bluster with the ultimate result of continued uncertainty for our operations. The current iteration of the State Budget appears to allow us to maintain a status quo within our operating 2011-12 budget, but this is a landscape that is constantly shifting and changing. The Cosumnes River College Senate will continue to advocate for open and transparent dialogue with our administration as decisions are needed to be made in regards to the shifting budget situation.

It continues to be my honor to serve as your Academic Senate President. I hope that you have a wonderful Spring Semester!

Kale Braden

Academic Senate President

GREETINGS FROM THE **CLASSIFIED SENATE!**



T he Classified Senate continues to transform itself with the updating of the bylaws to include the new MOU standard procedures and the mentorship program for new classified staff.

As we move forward into the New Year, may you continue to conquer the uncertainty caused by the budget crisis in

California. Remember that “uncertainty offers us an opening into the future we can help design today, even as it further influences who we shall be tomorrow. The wisdom lies in our approaching uncertain times.” – The Unfolding, *Price Pritchett*.

This quote helps me to maintain my spirit of optimism. “How does she do this” you might ask? Price Pritchett also

tells us that “spirit is an emotional muscle, and it responds to exercise. When it’s tested is when it gets a chance to grow. You can build your spirit by facing reality straight on – accepting what it is—and resolving to be big enough to take it, however much it hurts.”

Remember that what we do makes a difference. Don’t let uncertainty take your spirit away. It’s why you keep coming back to work at CRC day after day. What we do goes beyond our jobs. As we go about living, we are making history and touching peoples’ lives. We are making a difference!

Laurie Pownall

Classified Senate President



Dust & Noise **Facilities Update *SPRING 2012***

The past fall semester kicked off a very active construction period at CRC. Construction began on four new projects that are dramatically changing the north and east sides of campus. On the north side of campus, the Athletic Field, Parking and Perimeter Improvement project and Northeast Modernization project are bringing much needed parking, access and programmatic improvements for our Athletics, Horticulture, Welding, Construction and other programs. In addition, the stadium



is being upgraded with an all-weather field and access improvements, and aesthetic improvements are being made to the northern perimeter of the campus. These projects are scheduled for completion

during summer and fall 2012.

On the east side of campus, the parking structure, which will house approximately 2,000 parking spaces and be the first project to contain photovoltaic panels as a sustainable source of electricity, began construction in late fall. Occupying the north end of Parking Lot E, parking for the spring semester has been severely impacted. However, in summer 2012, additional spaces will be added on the north side of campus. A second project impacting the east side of campus is the Winn Center for Construction and Architecture, which begins construction in spring 2012. This project will also contain photovoltaic panels along with several other sustainable features, with the design goal of a Leadership Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum building.

A fifth project, which began construction in fall 2011 is the Elk Grove Center. The Center is located on the southeast corner of the intersection of Big Horn Blvd and Whitelock Parkway, directly south of the Cosumnes Oaks High School and Elizabeth Pinkerton Middle School site. The project is the first

phase of a three phase project to construct a 60,000 square foot educational center. In addition to general classrooms and lab space, the first phase will house offices and support facilities such as a computer lab, learning resource center and enrollment and counseling services in approximately 15,500 square feet.



With five major projects in active construction, and the design process started on a new art gallery, the future is very exciting for CRC. However, the future improvements come with current challenges. Please be patient with all of the dust, noise, limited parking and access over the next few semesters as we build for the future of CRC.



Welcome to the CRC Family

NEW FACULTY & CLASSIFIED STAFF

(SINCE AUGUST 2011)



JAMES LOVETT
AUDIO/VISUAL PRODUCTION
& MAINTENANCE TECH
*Library Resources &
College Technology*



JULIA VILLALOBOS
EVENING CLERK
Kinesiology & Athletics

RETIREMENTS

Thank You!



LON DAVENPORT
BUSINESS PROFESSOR
37+ years of service



CATHY LEE
LIBRARY/MEDIA
TECHNICAL ASSISTANT
36+ years of service



INDUJA SINGH
CHILD DEVELOPMENT
CENTER TEACHER
11+ years of service

CRC FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS CHARTS A COURSE FOR 2012 AND BEYOND



At its annual winter retreat, the Cosumnes River College Foundation Board of Directors met to chart a course for fund raising and development efforts for 2012 and beyond. The Board, comprised of many community leaders and volunteers, will be chaired through 2013 by Oscar O'con.

O'con first joined the CRC Foundation Board of Directors in 2005 and has remained an active member through the growth and maturation of fundraising efforts on the campus. Each winter, Board Members conduct a half-day meeting to develop fundraising goals and strategies for the coming year.

For 2012, The Board examined the College-wide desired outcomes developed by CRC faculty and staff and felt it was important to, where possible, align with Foundation goals and desired outcomes. "The result", says Board Chair Oscar O'con, "will hopefully allow us to continue to attract more resources for CRC students and make sure we help to serve the needs of the entire CRC campus community."

2011 was quite a memorable year for O'con. In addition to his leadership of the Foundation Board, he was also named the "Man of the Year" by the Elk Grove Citizen Newspaper.

O'con recently thanked everyone on his Facebook page saying, "Thank you everyone for all your messages and phone calls, someone once said 'Find something you like to do and you will never work a day in your life.' I truly enjoy what I do and it is an honor to be named Man of the Year."

O'con said on behalf of its Board of Directors he would like to express thanks and appreciation for the leadership of outgoing Board Chair Mona Escudero.

EMERITI *Profile*

PEARLINE WONG



As the Emeriti member with the longest tenure, we chose to first profile recent retiree Pearlina Wong.

Pearline had more than 41 years of service at Cosumnes River College when she retired last summer as a Library Media Technician Assistant.

"Her years of service benefitted the thousands of students who have sought library materials in their instructional assignments," said Professor Emerita Rosalie Cuneo Amer. "Her interest in library acquisitions and budget control helped all of us deal with the library technical services area. Just think of the thousands of acquisition records for new materials she created, either manually or electronically."

When Pearlina was hired, everything was either typed on a typewriter or manually handwritten. Because she was hired when CRC first became a college, she was

instrumental in cataloging most of the books in the library. More than 54,000 books were processed between 1970 and 1972.

Pearline's first supervisor and Director of the Library/Learning Resource Center, Don Hausrath said of Pearlina "Few people have the patience, fortitude, and integrity to deal with the filing and paper shuffling before the book was in place in the stacks... but Pearlina not only survived in that milieu, she flourished; a tower of competency, keeping the library operating."

The transition to the electronic age was just one of the changes Pearlina saw in her time here. Pearlina's first workspace was the District railroad yard where thousands of books and media were being purchased and processed as an "opening day" collection before moving to the main campus. After many staff changes and seeing the campus grow to what it is today, Pearlina is one of the few people that has seen CRC grow from the very beginning to become what it is today.

Pearline says she plans to travel in her retirement and we wish her the very best!

For more information on the Emeriti Association, Contact Robin Montanez at 691-7320

GETTING TO KNOW...

JAMES LOVETT *AV Technician*

Q&A



Q: How long have you been at CRC?

A: Since March 2011

Q: What do you like most about your job?

A: The people are really nice and I like the campus. It's a

beautiful campus. And the Distant Learning Services are incredible—even better than some universities.

Q: What do you like to do for fun? Hobbies?

A: I've been a keyboardist for the band "Groove Thang" for four years. It's a dance band that plays 80s disco and music such as Rick James, Aretha Franklin and Casey and the Sunshine Band. I lucked out. It's a good band and very professional. We played at the Hilton for New Year's, have played at the Silver Legacy and have done fundraisers in Napa. I also study commercial law and have a big interest in bio-architecture.

Q: Have you always wanted to be doing what you're doing?

A: Well yes, but I never thought I'd be a full-fledged engineer. I really enjoy the production part of the job. It's a lot of work...a full week process for one day, but everyone works together and we're able to capture real magic.

Q: What were you doing before coming to CRC?

A: I was a video editor for Conscience Media Network.

Q: What are your plans for the future?

A: I want to continue learning music. I also want to keep studying commercial law and contracts. I think it's a necessity because of the state of the economy. I would also like to someday build a place using the concepts of architect Michael Rice.

Q: What have you learned about yourself since you arrived here?

A: I've learned to keep an open mind. I've found many of the students to be compassionate and polite when I wasn't expecting it.

Q: Any words of wisdom or anything you'd like to add?

A: Learn to navigate the world. Don't be your own worst enemy. Question everything, stay humble. I'm really happy to be here.

THE PRODUCT OF FINE MENTORSHIP *By Nyenbeku George, Professor of Sociology*



Nyenbeku George

It's what we do... It's what we believe in. It's a huge part of what we have to offer our students here at CRC. These understandings are always with me when I see our students walking along the campus. When I congratulate them on a well-written essay, a high test score, or when I sense that they need encouragement, I am reminded and I often reflect on

when I received the same encouragement from my mentors (now colleagues) here at CRC. Academically speaking, I am the product of my own hard work and the great mentorship that I have been fortunate to receive at CRC.

Early in my life, my mother instilled in my sister and I the importance of reading, learning, and ultimately of education. However, my mentors (Mathilde Mukantabana, Tammy Montgomery, Dr. Melvina F. Jones, Lanny Hertzberg, Teresa Aldridge, Travis Parker, Paul Zisk, and the best Biology professor on the planet, Marybeth Buechner), saw positive

and professional qualities in my family and I at a time when we (my mother, sister, and I) were attending Cosumnes River College. Their guidance helped me take my academic pursuits to higher levels. I can't believe it's been 15 years since I started as a college student in the fall of '96.

It's because of their mentorship that I too (as a professor in Sociology and Social Sciences here at CRC) enjoy living in the same community that I teach in. I run into my students at coffee houses (and we do sit down and have coffee), movie theatres, and at our local gym (and we do work out together from time to time). Our talks range from classes they are thinking about taking to personal things they have on their mind. What I notice is that on both our parts (students as well as myself) there's often an appreciation for the work that we put in as we use the medium of education to improve the quality of our lives in one way or another. I think about the students that I mentor today and I know that they appreciate me as much as I appreciate them because it's how much I appreciated my mentors (then) who are my colleagues today. Mentorship. It's what we do... It's what we believe in. It's quite simply one of the most important assets we have to offer our students at CRC.

CRC: A SPECIAL PLACE! *By Janis Caston, Professor of Accounting*



Janis Caston

I started at CRC as a full-time faculty member August 20, 1984. Later I learned that my first assignment as word processing coordinator was a critical hire in a challenging budget year. Having been a business part-timer the previous two years, I was glad for the opportunity! Soon after I arrived someone gave me an anonymous

quotation on a photocopied sheet of white paper that advised, "You teach what you are before you teach what you know." That same sheet of now darkened, stained paper is thumb tacked above the computer in my office; and I am still moved by the wise words.

In 1984 my classes were scheduled in the morning and evening. Like most, they were small in size, as total student headcount that year was approximately 5,400* people. Today my classes are large and are scheduled from early morning to late afternoon. Moreover, most of my students were white and

middle class in 1984; today they reflect worldwide diversity. Throughout the years students have asked for individual mentorship and direction; these occasions are among the dearest memories of my time here.

We were a faculty and staff of approximately 170 people in 1984, and many were close friends outside of work. In December we celebrated winter break with a dinner event at Frasinetti's Winery, and nearly all of us went. A few years later we bussed to the Cosumnes Preserve for a day of community building. These events built friendships across the campus, and they were fun. Up to a few years ago I knew nearly everyone on campus; today, I am not well acquainted with many of our newer colleagues. Somehow this makes me sad.

I am nearing retirement now. My time at CRC began and will end in the classroom. In between, I served as senate president and spent 17 years as a dean, where I had a part in many of the changes that made CRC a better place for our students and for us. The college will continue to evolve, guided by a new generation of leaders. I feel blessed to have been a part of such a special place for all these years!

ALUMNI *Short Takes*



Melissa Armitage

To cross paths with alumni from Cosumnes River College happens frequently, but it's not too often this happens while you're getting your teeth cleaned. This is how Humanities Professor Maureen Moore reconnected with former CRC student, Melissa Armitage. "I always like to ask people where they went to school," Moore explained. "I could tell she worked really hard to get where she is today." Armitage said CRC is where she really learned to study. "It was a completely different ballpark for me than high school," she said. "It taught me discipline and structure and prepared me for dental hygiene school." Armitage is on her third year as a registered dental hygienist and says she's working five days a week doing what she loves. "She is an awesome hygienist," Moore said. "She's gentle, but thorough with a professional presence." Armitage said she is proud of accomplishing "her dream" and enjoys being able to help her patients by educating them on oral health. She believes that it's not just their oral health she's influencing, but also their overall well being.



Casey Behney

While Casey settled quickly at Cosumnes River College, it took him longer to settle with a major because of his many interests. Passionate about math, he responded to a flyer about teaching the subject. This decision would prove to change the course of his future. Most influential to Casey was Mathematics Professor Cindy Erickson or "Ms. E" as he called her. "She sparked my interest in teaching and supported me every step of the way," he said. With the help of Professor Erickson, Casey learned about the Mathematics Blending Program for Teaching at Sacramento State. He also joined the Math Teacher Preparation Program (MTTP). "I was given all of the information I needed to prepare for transfer," he said. Casey transferred in 2006, earned a bachelor's in 2008 and a teaching credential in 2009. He is now a math teacher at Harriet Eddy Middle School in Elk Grove. Besides teaching, he coaches tennis at Laguna Creek High School and has been the advisor for various clubs, including the College and Career club. He eagerly awaits the birth of his first child, a boy, due in March.



Charles Maddux

Charles is a big promoter of Cosumnes River College saying, "CRC rivals anything the universities can offer and the time professors here spend with you is far greater." A knee injury brought Charles to CRC full time to pursue a long time dream of studying mechanical structures. After completing several degree programs, Charles was offered a Structural Engineering position with the Boeing Company in Pennsylvania. This is the job Charles was hoping for and says he worked really hard to get where he is by focusing on his studies all of the time, even during family vacations and dinners. Even now he feels he will forever be indebted to all who helped him. At the Boeing Company he uses cutting-edge computer-aided drafting and analysis tools on multi-billion dollar projects each day. Five years ago he was an automotive technician and is amazed at how far he's come. Ironically he said he dropped out of college when he was 25 because he thought he was "too" old. Ten years later he said he was still "too" old, but he didn't care anymore!



Parisa Nejad

Cosumnes River College alumni Parisa Nejad is currently working in architecture at Lionakis. She remembers as a student at CRC taking a tour of a gallery at Cal Poly and there was a huge, amazing model of a movie theatre. “It was so large,” Parisa explained, “you could stand inside it and see all the detail from side to side.” Parisa said she expressed doubt in her ability to do something as magnificent and was immediately encouraged by CRC’s Architecture Professor John Ellis when he told her to believe in herself. That was a defining moment for her. “If it wasn’t for him a lot of us wouldn’t have made it,” she said. Parisa transferred from CRC and earned a Bachelor of Arts from the New School of Architecture and Design in 2010. Most recently Parisa joined the CRC family at the Winn Center groundbreaking in early November to speak as an architecture alumni. When reflecting on her time at CRC, she said her experience provided her with a strong foundation not just architecture, but also in life.



Jennifer Nguyen

Far from home, Jennifer has settled in at the Inter-American University of Puerto Rico, School of Optometry. She says she has loved her first year and is gaining the knowledge and skills required to become a doctor. When Jennifer was younger she wasn’t sure what she wanted to do, other than knowing she wanted to help people. At Cosumnes River College she enjoyed the freedom to explore her options. Through exploration she discovered optometry and after starting an internship found the career suited her. “There’s nothing more rewarding to me than giving people the gift of sight or better vision,” she said. Jennifer gives thanks to her counselor, Hoyt Fong, for guiding her way. “He provided me with the necessary information to finish my general education and helped me achieve my associate degree,” she said continuing, “He took me through the process to transfer to a state university, to further my education, and ultimately receiving my Bachelor of Science in Biology.” Jennifer said she plans to have a private practice where her patients’ health is her first priority. She is excited to build that patient-doctor relationship.



Brian Parkhurst

Brian Parkhurst has moved onto the next chapter in his life at California Institute of the Arts studying music composition with the goal of creating music for movies and television. Cosumnes River College Music Professor Kurt Erickson says Cal Arts has a unique reputation as an innovative school for the arts and is a “breeding ground for countless successful filmmakers, dancers, and those involved in collaborative new media projects.” Parkhurst said he had several high points while at CRC. He helped organize and present the first Student Composers’ concert and his first orchestral piece was premiered by the school orchestra. “I never thought such an opportunity would be presented to me so early in my career,” he said. Parkhurst credits CRC’s faculty. He said it was evident that not only did they care what they were teaching, but who they were teaching it to. “Their passion and expertise fueled my pursuit of a career in music,” he said. Erickson says he predicts a successful career for Parkhurst. “Brian is extremely talented,” he said.

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