In anticipation of Cosumnes River College’s Elk Grove Center opening in 2013, the college is offering classes in Elk Grove at Cosumnes Oaks High School.

The spring offering allows CRC to establish its presence in Elk Grove in advance of a permanent education center to be funded by Measure A, which was approved by voters in 2002. In addition, it allows both the Elk Grove Unified School District and Cosumnes River College to enhance a collaborative, academic pathway for EGUSD students and reinforces a college-going culture among high school students.

The plan will initially use three classrooms and a portion of the Library Community Room as well as a computer lab. Those facilities will accommodate approximately 150 students, with classes being offered from 4:00 to 8:40 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

“It’s a win-win for both Cosumnes River College and Elk Grove Unified School District,” said CRC President Deborah Travis. “Coming in after high school classes are done allows us to take advantage of classroom space to offer general education classes to the community and also allows high school students to access college-level courses.”

“Over the years, many CRC students and staff have taken a thoughtful look at how the Winn Center might shape future generations of students as they seek their place in the world,” said CRC Architecture Professor John Ellis. “The DPR/Lionakis design is a special opportunity to create an iconic model of outstanding architectural design and sustainable construction practices. Their design also has especially strong concepts for strengthening the collaboration among academia, the local communities and the professions. The Winn Center can truly be a ‘living laboratory’ educationally, socially and environmentally.”

The new facility will be a model in green technology. The design-build team guarantees the facility will be LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) gold certified with the possibility of achieving LEED platinum certification as the design progresses.

Final Details for Winn Center, continued on page 4
CRC Colleagues,

Happy New Year! It is energizing and uplifting to see everyone return from the winter break and enthusiastically greet the opening of the Spring 2011 semester. I hope the brief intercession bestowed carefree moments to enjoy and opportunities to connect with family and friends.

There is no doubt the intensity of the learning process and the passion I see each of you bring to our CRC motto “Seek Knowledge” must be balanced with strategic, yet restorative interludes!

On the threshold of the new term, it is clear our higher education environment is undergoing a transformation through a multitude of change forces. National attentiveness, statewide fiscal uncertainties, emerging workplace trends, and unprecedented student demand are shaping the landscape and influencing our future as a community college.

President Obama’s recent White House Summit on Community Colleges focused on our colleges as the “unsung heroes of America’s education system.” This statement is a reminder of the privilege we have to engage in the learning process with our students and the weighty responsibility such engagement holds in the attainment of their dreams.

Cosumnes River College possesses a 40-year history of academic excellence and a receptive, faithful responsiveness to our educational privilege and responsibilities. It is upon this CRC legacy we must rely as we move forward and provide quality programs and services to students and to the community. The Spring 2011 term will be pivotal in CRC’s development as a higher education organization, encompassing a reaffirmation of our primary mission and the initiation of new program articulations, enhanced partnerships, and long-awaited campus facilities.

Student success and achievement will continue to be at the forefront of our activities and efforts. CRC’s stated mission is to prepare all students to realize their educational and career aspirations through exemplary transfer, general, and career education in an academically-rigorous, inclusive environment. This mission and our community college principles of access and success are reaffirmed in the Commission on the Future’s recent report, 2020 Vision for Student Success. I want to acknowledge and extend my appreciation to the numerous CRC faculty and staff who were, and continue to be, active participants in these statewide visioning dialogues and SB 1440 articulation committees. Direct involvement in these processes will be informative and valuable in our campus efforts to redefine and re-imagine our future within the changing higher education environment.

This semester, we begin Cosumnes River College’s introductory phase for the Elk Grove Center. While the Center’s groundbreaking is scheduled for late 2011, CRC will expand student access by offering college courses in partnership with the Elk Grove Unified School District at Cosumnes Oaks High School. This is an exciting and significant milestone in our outreach and service capabilities. We are grateful for the long-standing, productive alliance between CRC and EGUSD that opened the conversation and provided this opportunity for enhanced access.

For four decades, CRC has grown its reputation for academically-distinctive programs and chronicled an enduring history of meeting emerging student needs. Spring 2011 is yet another occasion for Cosumnes River College to demonstrate its student-centered approach, its fidelity to access and achievement for all students, and its receptivity and resiliency amidst forces of change. Because of you, our faculty and staff, who daily tap into your own passion as scholars and educational practitioners, I am confident we will successfully navigate this unsettled environment and emerge a stronger, more vibrant educational institution.

May the Spring 2011 semester be a successful one!
We are pleased to announce the establishment of the Dr. Queen F. Randall Award of Excellence Scholarship Endowment at Cosumnes River College. Since 2002, former Los Rios Community College District Chancellor Dr. Queen Randall, with the support of her family and CRC staff and faculty, has invested in student success through the Queen F. Randall Award of Excellence. Over the years, this scholarship has provided more than $4,000 to 20 deserving Cosumnes River College students. Initially, the Endowment will provide for one $250 Scholarship to a Cosumnes River College student.

Scholarship endowments at Cosumnes River College will continue to play an important role in providing much needed scholarship support for our students. They provide a significant way to invest in providing resources and opportunity both now and in the years to come.

**CRC’s 40th Anniversary Sees Increased Opportunities**

**Thanks to Educational Leaders**

Dr. Merilee Lewis Engel, President Emeritus of Cosumnes River College, knows how critical increased resources are to student success. In 1997, Dr. Lewis Engel established a scholarship endowment supporting students re-entering higher education and those studying the visual and performing arts. Recognizing the ever-increasing need for support, Dr. Lewis Engel recently increased the size of the Sharp Lewis Re-Entry & Visual and Performing Arts Scholarship Endowment, with plans to eventually double the current scholarship award from $250 to $500 each.

**CRC and Sacramento State Offer Ethics of Education Symposium**

Ethics in education has recently become a hot topic enjoying extensive media coverage and considerable legislative debate. In light of this, it served as an apt theme for the 5th Annual CRC-Sacramento State Center for Practical and Professional Ethics (CPPE) Fall Ethics Symposium, Ethics in Education. The highly successful November 16-17, 2010 event, which took place at CRC as part of the college’s 40th anniversary celebration, drew over 500 participants representing eight colleges and universities as well as the California Department of Education. Speakers included Dr. Elizabeth Minnich, Senior Scholar of the Association of American Colleges & Universities, a nationally recognized expert in privatization in education, and Dr. George Bekey, Research Scholar in Residence at California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, and a leader in the field of robotics whose work on the ethical use of technology has influenced not only academia and private industry but also the U.S. military. Symposium participants, most of whom were CRC students, clearly found the symposium presentations thought-provoking and inspiring. According to Dr. Rick Schubert, CRC Professor of Philosophy and Executive Director of the CRC-CPPE Fall Ethics Symposium Series, the college is very fortunate to be part of the unprecedented and ongoing partnership with the CPPE that makes events like Ethics in Education possible. Apparently, no other California community college enjoys a similar relationship with a university center. “With the help of the CPPE and the support of the CRC Office of the President, CRC has become a leader in making the same high-profile, high-prestige academic events available to its students that the best four-year institutions recognize as a crucial part of an excellent college education for theirs,” Schubert contends. Given the extent of regional participation in the Ethics in Education symposium, however, CRC students clearly aren’t the only beneficiaries of that leadership.
In the spring, CRC will implement the BRIC (Bridging Research, Information, and Cultures) TAP (Technical Assistance Program) Initiative to better serve our students. As one of only a handful of colleges chosen to participate in this project, a researcher, faculty member and a student services professional visited CRC last October to consult on how they could best assist the College as it seeks to more effectively utilize data to inform our practice.

The project was funded by the Hewlett Foundation and its purpose is to assist college practitioners in achieving five outcomes: developing actionable information, interpreting data through discussion, facilitating dialogue, integrating evidence into institutional processes and building an inquiry-based practice.

“We have worked with our visiting team to develop a Spring Action Plan that will help us better achieve these outcomes,” said Kathy McLain, Dean of College Planning and Research. “The implementation of this Action Plan will expand the college’s ability to assess and improve our practices and processes.”

The project will provide resources to support assessment in the classroom and in Student Services, training to enhance assessment expertise, and consultation in the development and implementation of assessment projects in Student Services. In addition, the project will help the College develop a sustainable and meaningful model that integrates activity/course, program and college-wide assessment. After the process is completed, which is expected to be June, 2011, CRC should have a better model for assessing and responding to our students’ needs.

“The Winn Center is designed to be a living laboratory demonstrating multiple construction techniques and sustainable design” said Jonathan McMurtry, Project Manager at Lionakis. “Some of the design features include chilled beams, an energy recovery system, solar panels, energy efficient windows and glazing, maximum use of natural day lighting by using skylights and lighting controls, renewable materials and recycled materials.”

The Winn Center for Construction and Architecture is named after Mike, Tom and Pete Winn, who have given the largest private gift in the history of both the Los Rios Community College District and Cosumnes River College.

Mike Winn co-chairs the capital campaign which continues to raise private funds to match the public dollars designated for this project. “Placing a landmark structure on the Bruceville side of the college that not only attracts the eye, but the feet of people who might not otherwise be drawn into the building, and will see that the older forms of heating, cooling and lighting have been transformed into 21st century styles,” he said. “So I am very excited about the chosen design team’s dynamic vision of this project.”

The Winn Center was funded in part by a local bond measure passed in 2008 by residents of Sacramento, Placer, El Dorado, Yolo and Solano countries, and of course, the generous private donations of the Winn family and others who believed in this endeavor.
Kevin Pressey is a Sacramento architect and has been with HMR Architects since 2000, after running his own architecture firm for 10 years. New to the CRC Foundation, Kevin is helping organize CRC’s premiere fundraising event, the Foundation Gala 2011, which takes place in May.

**Q. What years did you attend CRC?**

**Q. What was your overall experience?**
A. I had a tremendous experience at CRC. I had such great instructors who took the time to really help me achieve what I wanted to accomplish.

**Q. What did you study? What were the classes like?**
A. I studied architecture while completing my general education classes. The classes that I took were fun and educational.

**Q. In your opinion how did the architecture classes you took at CRC, compare to classes you took elsewhere?**
A. I believe that I learned more in the architectural courses at CRC than I did in any other course I’ve ever taken elsewhere. When you combine excellent content with instructors who are enthusiastic about the material and make the learning environment enjoyable, one can’t help but learn.

**Q. What did the campus look like back then? How does it look today compared to then?**
A. Expansive. When I was on campus there were fewer buildings and the trees were much smaller. It seems like you could see forever in all directions. Today, as buildings have popped up and the trees have matured and the outdoor areas have developed, it feels more like a campus community.

**Q. What are some memories you have of the campus when you attended?**
A. My memories all involve the teachers and the other students. I remember having a great time and enjoying the subjects we were studying, working together and helping each other out. The teachers were all very dedicated and concerned about teaching the students the information in a way that we would all remember it.

**Q. Why did you come back to CRC and join the CRC Foundation Board?**
A. I had such a great learning experience at CRC. The teachers I had, especially in the architecture department, Mr. Ellis and Mr. House made such a lasting impression with me, I felt I wanted to give back in some way to CRC. I don’t have that special quality to be a teacher, at least not up to their standards. I felt the Foundation was a great way to be involved with giving back to the students.

**Q. Why do you believe it’s important for you to be a part of the college?**
A. The costs of a college education continue to rise and I don’t see that changing. CRC and other community colleges are fantastic ways to save on college costs and get a wonderful education. However inexpensive it is compared to state college, university or out-of-state tuition, it still costs money. I want to be a part of the college and the Foundation to be able to find ways to fund some of the students who may not otherwise be able to afford a higher education. Also to help some of the teachers and departments to fund programs and equipment that will help them to better educate the students.

**Q. In your dealings with the community, what do you hear about CRC?**
A. When I talk with people about CRC, they all talk about it being a wonderful educational facility. They talk about how important it is for the region and what a great institution it is within the community.

**Q. Anything you’d like to add?**
A. Remember to enjoy yourself while you’re here. Yes, study hard, work hard, get as much out of the college and your classes as you can. It’s when you start to have fun and enjoy it that you will see how much more you will learn.
Denis Reggie, widely regarded as the top wedding photographer in the world, spoke to a large group of students, staff and community members at Cosumnes River College on September 8.

Reggie has single-handedly transformed the look of staid bridal imagery into the truly natural, editorial style he termed “wedding photojournalism.” A series of his wedding photographs requested by the Smithsonian Institute are part of the permanent collection at the National Museum of American History.

“The largest segment of photography students at CRC are those interested in the wedding and portrait industry,” said Jim West, Professor of Photography at Cosumnes River College. “To have someone of his caliber speak to our students was wonderful and I hope our students were able to see how his images capture a story and learn what can be achieved.”

The American Photo magazine cover story “The Top Ten Wedding Photographers in the World,” listed Denis Reggie first among them. His iconic photograph of John Kennedy, Jr. kissing the hand of his bride Carolyn Bessette (at left) is credited by The Wall Street Journal as the single watershed image that transformed the look of wedding photography forever.

TOP WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER VISITS CRC

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Accreditation Kudos!

Vet Tech

The Veterinary Technology Program was recently reaffirmed for accreditation. The evaluation is based on the 11 standards of accreditation established by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Committee on Veterinary Technician Education and Activities (CVTEA) that must be met for accreditation of the program.

Strengths identified in the program included:

- Veterinary technology faculty and general education faculty are very collegial and work together to ensure student success
- A supportive administration that recognizes the value of the Veterinary Technology program
- Clean, modern facility that emulates a contemporary veterinary hospital
- Excellent program of hands-on animal behavior instruction
- Excellent animal resources including an effective arrangement with UC Davis for large animal instruction

The Veterinary Technology Program was first accredited in 1975 by the AVMA.

Human Services

CRC’s Human Services Program is now an accredited program with the California Certification Board of Alcohol and Drug Counselors (CAADAC) and The California Foundation for Advancement of Addiction Professionals. The academic program in Human Services has met all the requirements set forth by CAADAC and the Education board (CFAAP).

This program began as a type A Sabbatical taken by counselor Hoyt Fong in spring of 2002. At that time, the goal was to develop a general Human Services Program with the intention of bringing on Chemical Studies to CRC. That goal has been accomplished. This is an exciting time for students and the CRC community.

The national certification approval period is from November 30, 2010 to November 30, 2013. The program will allow Human Services, Chemical Studies graduates to work in agencies requiring CAADAC certification.
Although the 2,000-stall, four-story parking garage and future light rail station on the east side of campus along Bruceville Rd. are still awaiting federal transportation funds to begin construction, the newly updated Facilities Master Plan, which now includes Measure “M” projects, shows that exciting and challenging times will continue through the next several years while improvements are made to campus facilities.

The science building remodel and expansion project was completed this past summer and dedicated on September 1, 2010. This project improved and expanded classrooms and labs for the science program, nearly doubling the size of the original facility, and added sidewalks to enhance access around the campus.

The cafeteria and bookstore expansion continues, with the cafeteria temporarily located on the second floor of the Community and Athletic Center (CAC-200) through the end of the spring term. While most of the bookstore project is the construction of a larger warehouse, the cafeteria project will offer an expanded and newly refurbished dining center, Garden Room, Orchard Room, kitchen, and restrooms. The newly expanded and updated facility is expected to be complete by late spring and open for business by fall 2011.

Late spring or early summer, construction is expected to begin on a project to improve the quality and accessibility of the stadium and athletic fields, provide landscaping along the north perimeter of campus, and expand transportation, access and parking on the north side of the campus. The project includes the installation of artificial turf in the stadium, renovation of the existing concessions and restrooms, new baseball, softball, and soccer fields, and accessibility improvements to bring the entire athletic complex up to current ADA standards. During construction, softball and soccer will continue to utilize their existing fields, but baseball will be displaced temporarily to an offsite facility.

In the summer, construction will begin on the Northeast Building Modernization project, which will provide a new facility to serve welding, construction, horticulture and will renovate the existing building for use by custodial, maintenance, and receiving. These two projects will have a major impact on access around the north side of campus.

Design is currently underway for both the Winn Center for Construction and Architecture and the first phase of the Elk Grove Center, with construction expected to begin on the Elk Grove Center in fall 2011 and the Winn Center in early spring 2012. These projects will be followed shortly by the addition of a 2,500 square foot art gallery, which is scheduled to begin design in early spring and to be complete by fall 2013.

The facilities projects scheduled over the next few years will bring exciting changes to the CRC campus. Within approximately three years, major changes will occur on the north and east sides of campus, completely changing the view of campus from Cosumnes River Blvd. and Bruceville Rd. In addition to new athletic fields, two new instructional buildings on the main campus, a parking garage and light rail station will open, drawing new students and the community onto campus. The college will open its first center in Elk Grove. Despite continuing concerns about the state budget, CRC continues to grow as an institution to meet the growing needs of its community.
Welcome to the CRC Family

NEW FACULTY, CLASSIFIED STAFF & MANAGEMENT

SINCE AUGUST 2010

Kimberly Galloway
Administrative Assistant
Office of VP, Instruction

Jessie Gonzalez
Science Lab Technician
Science, Mathematics & Engineering

Thai Mai
Senior IT Technician
Learning Resources & College Technology

Kristy Schroeder
Softball Head Coach
Physical Education & Athletics

Andrey Chepurnoy
I.A., Computer Lab
Business & Family Science

Jon Cornelison
I.T. Systems Supervisor
Learning Resources & College Technology

LaShawna Smedley
I.A., Writing Lab
Business & Family Science

Chris Thomas
Dean
Student Services & Enrollment Management

Melvina Jones
History Professor
Humanities & Social Science

RETIREMENTS
A diverse campus in a diverse city in a diverse country: can it be any better? Yes, that is the major difference from 1987 when I arrived at CRC to establish the ESL program. Oh, there were second-language students, but very few, and Elk Grove was a rather homogenous village. Most exciting is not only the diverse student population, but also the diversity at all levels across campus: students, staff, faculty and management. What many newcomers to the CRC family may not realize is that this change didn’t occur magically. It has taken commitment by all members to bring us to our present state.

So what are some the most significant elements that have contributed to our healthy status?

First, shared governance is something we should cherish. Throughout the years, I’ve attended many state and national conferences, and we are light-years ahead of so many of our less fortunate peers. To have representation and voice at all levels is essential, and though we may have occasional grievances, we can expect and even demand to be heard. The IBA method has been valuable, and when used in earnest, helps facilitate a sense of belonging for all. Second, commitment to professional growth is truly evidenced by the number of staff, faculty and managers who have held more than one position at the college or in the district. Personally, I believe that much of our success is due to institutionalized support and encouragement for individuals to develop themselves and maintain passion for their chosen positions in the district. It’s much easier to have the students’ needs in mind if you have been in the classroom. Third, in spite of economic pressures, CRC adheres to the mission of the community college as an open-door institution that serves community members who might otherwise not fully realize their potential, nor be able to be fully active members of our community. To that end, members of our institution continue to develop special programs to meet the needs of students who may otherwise not be able to get a higher education, such as the Puente and Diop Scholars programs. The final change, consistent with the open-door policy with commitment to student success, is the Academic Integrity Policy. All constituents of our community are to endorse “academic access, academic quality, academic rigor, innovation and collegiality.” These ideals aren’t always easy, but it is assumed that we will all make our best effort toward their realization.

To me, the greatest blessing of working at CRC has been the people. It’s exciting to have so many fertile minds with differing viewpoints working with love and even wit toward a common goal. In how many arenas can one head off to work with enthusiasm and expectation?
The 5th Annual Athletic Hall of Fame Dinner & Induction Ceremony on November 6 honored six individuals who made major contributions to the athletics program at Cosumnes River College.

The event inducted five athletes and one former staff member. The evening began with a welcome from college president Debbie Travis who said the honorees embodied the spirit and quality of the college. “These honorees possess the strongest professional and personal attributes, including passion, perseverance, and integrity,” Travis said. “The timing is right to honor them and demonstrate our collective appreciation to those whose achievements, both on and off the field of play, are exemplary.”

Joe Davidson, Sacramento Bee sports reporter, emceed the program and introduced each of the inductees.

In addition to the inductees, the members of the original coaching staff from 1970 were recognized as part of CRC’s 40th Anniversary. Honored were: Del Bandy, Athletic Director and Baseball Coach, Bill Berry, Men’s Basketball Coach, Coit Conant, Football Coach, Dick Cristofani, Men’s Cross Country, Track and Field Coach, Gert (Larsen) Tipton, Women’s Gymnastics Coach, and Sue Scott, Women’s Swimming and Tennis Coach. All were present except Berry and Scott.
CLASS OF 2010 INDUCTEES

SARAH (ADAMS) MARKOE
Softball 1982-1984

EMILY (ADAMS) COLLINS
Softball 1988-1990

JERMAINE DYE
Baseball 1992-1993

CORY ANN (FORKNER) ELLIS
Soccer 1994-1997

STEVE PETUSKEY
Soccer 1979-1981

KATHY (KRANZLER) PETERSON
Athletic Secretary 1974-1996
New Equipment

TEACHES CLEAN ENERGY

CRC has acquired a new piece of equipment that will help teach students about clean energy production. The Clean Electron Trainer is an educational tool that demonstrates how clean energy is generated, converted, stored, and used to power everyday electrical appliances. The trainer generates energy from three different clean sources – solar photovoltaic, wind, and hydrogen. Energy generated from these three sources is converted into alternating current and stored in batteries, which can be used to power just about anything. “I’m still learning how this thing works myself,” remarked Ryan Connally, Chair of CRC’s Construction Department and the faculty member who acquired the trainer. Connally, with the help of several student volunteers, has been assembling and preparing the trainer. “The thing is a beast, a big clean energy beast,” said Jaime Gonzalez, CRC student and GreenForce volunteer, who has been working with classmates to get the trainer ready for use in the classroom and at community events. “We’re confident that it’s going to be a great tool to help educate the community about clean renewable energy sources,” he added. Once assembly is completed, the Clean Electron Trainer will be available for in-classroom demonstrations. Faculty or students who would like to learn more about the trainer or who would like to schedule a time to see the new tool are encouraged to contact Director of GreenForce Projects Torence Powell.
Getting to Know… Q&A

Dustin Burks

What is your position on campus?  
Printing/mail services operator II

How long have you been here?  
I started at CRC on July 28, 2008.

What do you like most about your job?  
Co-workers and the relaxed work atmosphere.

What do you like to do for fun? Hobbies?  
Hiking, snowshoeing, and relaxing by the pool (in summer, of course).

Have you always wanted to be doing what you’re currently doing?  
Not exactly but life takes unexpected turns. I went to CRC right after high school, between 1973-1975, when the campus was very barren. Now I am back after almost 40 years.

What do you like most about the campus in general? Would you change anything?  
I like the trees, greenery, and landscaping. I would like the campus to be smoke free.

What were you doing before coming to CRC?  
After graduating from California State University, Sacramento in 1978 with a bachelor’s degree in social science, with a concentration of history, I went to work for the McClatchy Company (Sacramento Bee) in operations. I worked there for 30 years.

What are your plans for the future?  
Work at CRC as long as the school will have me or I get too old, then fade into the sunset.

Any words of wisdom or anything you’d like to add?  
Life is a marathon not a sprint, enjoy life.

Anne Wong

What is your position on campus?  
Instructional Services Assistant

How long have you been here?  
I transferred to CRC about six months ago from SCC. I’ve been with Los Rios for four and a half years.

What do you like most about your job?  
I deal with numbers a lot in my job…I like that. I get a more definitive answer when I’m trying to solve something. I also have the opportunity to work with a lot of great people and learn new things every day.

What do you like to do for fun? Hobbies?  
When I’m not working, I usually try to spend time with family and friends. I also love reading, cooking, and bike-riding.

Have you always wanted to be doing what you’re currently doing?  
I never imagined I would ever do anything like this, but I’m glad I am.

What do you like most about the campus in general? Would you change anything?  
I love the whole environment of the campus, especially the trees. It just looks really nice, like you could have a picnic out on the grass.

What were you doing before coming to CRC?  
Before CRC, I was working as a part-time clerk at SCC and going to school full time at Sac State.

What are your plans for the future?  
Right now, I’m hoping to take some classes for fun here, so I am pretty excited about the upcoming Spring 2011 semester.

Any words of wisdom or anything you’d like to add?  
“Be the change you wish to see in the world” – Ghandi
Elizabeth Akel
Elizabeth Akel was glad to start at CRC and escape the high school persona she despised. "Students didn’t have cliques; everyone was there for themselves. I didn’t know anyone (at CRC) and it was a fresh start," she said. She said she was especially intrigued by the professors and the dedication they showed towards student success. Akel wasn’t sure what she wanted to major in, but felt encouraged by Sign Language Professor Kim Harrell. “I have a passion for helping others and loved working with the deaf community,” she said. Still searching for her ideal major, Akel decided to introduce herself to new subjects. She found her new home in photography. She credits Professor Jim West’s gift of knowledge and Professor Katherine Mayo’s enthusiasm in helping her decide to pursue photography. She was encouraged by Mayo’s teaching because she allowed freedom to explore, opening a world of creativity for Akel. “I felt like a kid in a candy shop, always wanting to try everything, but never really having a favorite,” she said. Akel graduated with a BA in photography and a minor in sign language recently from California State University, Los Angeles and has started her own photography business. Akel says she is keeping busy with work she loves.

Dana Dunn
Dana Dunn is finding returning to school to be a great decision. He earned an AMP (Aircraft Mechanic License) from Sacramento City College in ’96 and went on to work at Aerospace until the company’s future looked uncertain. He decided to join the Army. Out of the Army he had several skill sets. Besides his AMP, he was a certified Federal Aviation Administration Helicopter Pilot, had a commercial driver’s license and was a commercial scuba diver. Unfortunately by then the economy had turned sour and he had a difficult time finding a job. “It was a good time to re-tool,” Dunn said. He had always wanted to be a medical doctor, but was excited when he found the 3-year dentistry program (Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry) through University of the Pacific (UOP). “It was a happy medium,” he exclaimed. At CRC, Dunn is currently working on his prerequisites in anticipation of applying to UOP. He is involved in the MESA (Math, Engineering, Science Achievement) Program and said through MESA he’s had field trips which have given him the ability to interact with potential universities. “MESA is a great resource,” he said. “The overall knowledge base of the program is phenomenal.” Dunn also is a math tutor in the Math Lab. He said by being active in MESA and by being a tutor, he is keeping his mind current and fresh. He feels this will help him with the dental exam that will come when he applies to Dugoni. His plan is to apply in the fall of 2011.

Rick Jones
Rick Jones has come full circle in many ways. He started his higher education career at Sacramento City College, eventually transferring and graduating from Cosumnes River College, in one of its first graduating classes. In one class, Jones remembers a guest speaker from the Sacramento Police Department who talked about a career in law enforcement. “With that presentation and encouragement by Professor Dr. Jackson, I ended up joining the force and eventually became the second African American to attain the rank of Captain,” Jones recalled. After a long career in city law enforcement, Jones came back to education and the colleges where it all started for him, as Police Chief for the Los Rios Community College District. Looking back, Jones says his story is like so many others and it’s important for young adults today to know they can succeed. “I lived in rough and poor communities (growing up),” Jones said. “Decisions were not always the right ones, but some of us had luck on our side. At CRC I met professors who made me take college work seriously and counselors who encouraged me to continue my education. One of the best choices I made in life was attending and graduating from CRC and becoming a family member of the Los Rios Community College District.”
Sergio Venegas Marin

Sergio Venegas Marin arrived from Spain in 2005 and enrolled at Cosumnes River College to learn the basics of English. He said, “Overcoming the language barrier was the biggest struggle I faced academically.” After a year of studying English, Marin ventured to mathematics, economics and sociology. “I have always been politically active with a special interest on social issues such as global poverty,” he said. Marin chose economics as his major. He graduated from CRC in the spring of 2010. That summer he spent a week at a refugee camp in the Sahara Desert understanding the conditions in which the people lived. He then transferred to the University of California, Berkeley. Marin is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in economics and a minor in global poverty and practice. He continues to put his studies into practice and plans to spend this summer in South Africa doing volunteer work. Marin would like to earn a Ph.D. in economics and has aspirations of working in the private sector and in politics in the European Union. Marin believes attending CRC for the first two years of his undergraduate degree was better than starting at a four year university. He said, “Being at a community college that is set up as if it were a small community, students have more access to teachers and services than at a four year.” Marin said CRC students need to take advantage of everything around them.

Laura Vidal

Laura Vidal initially struggled at CRC, but turned things around when she joined the EOPS (Extended Opportunities Programs and Services) program and was mentored. “EOPS saved my educational life,” she said. As a first generation college student, Vidal said she depended on the extra support she received at CRC. She said at home there was a collaborative family effort to get her through school, but as Mexican immigrants, her parents had no knowledge of the education system. In 2005, Vidal earned an associate’s degree in general education at CRC and transferred to the University of California, Santa Barbara. Two years later she earned her bachelor’s degree and went to work at the Davis Outreach Center, a part of Sacramento City College. “I got to work with community college students and it was very rewarding,” she said. However, after working for some time, Vidal decided to follow the urge in her heart to further her education in social services. “I applied to a few programs and the University of Southern California accepted me,” she said. Vidal said with the encouragement of the Davis Center, she resigned and is in the first year of her social work program. Vidal said without CRC, higher education would not have been an option for her. “I would not have developed the skills, motivation, and most importantly, the confidence to pursue my goals without trepidation,” she said. Vidal said when she completes the program, she’s going to pursue a clinical social worker license. She said maybe someday she’ll have her own private practice.

Jenny Yniguez

Jenny Yniguez arrived at CRC after a friend talked her into taking a geology class together. That simple decision set Yniguez on a career path. While at CRC, an architecture flier caught her attention. “I’ve always been creative and interested in design,” Yniguez said. She signed up for the class and soon found inspiration from Architecture Professor John Ellis. “I have never known a teacher who’s as dedicated as he,” she said. “He makes sure his students stay on track.” Being new to architecture was hard for Yniguez. She said it was scary to not know what to do. Before long, though, architecture expanded her view. “I’ve learned that architecture is very psychological. You have to know your client and consider all of the little details, such as, materials, environment, community and then making sure everything fits well,” she said. In order to get additional support in a physics class, Yniguez signed up for the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) program. She said the tutors really helped and it was a good way to connect with fellow classmates. “Additionally, I felt even more of a responsibility to learn the material,” she said. Yniguez graduated from CRC in the spring of 2010 and is one of about ten former CRC students at NewSchool of Architecture and Design in San Diego. “I’m interested in green building and staying up to date,” she said. “I’m considering environmental design or working for Disneyland as an ‘imagineer’.”
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