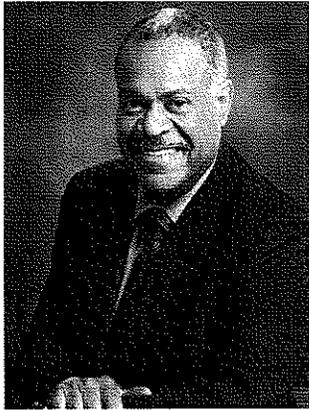


PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



March 29, 2011



The State of California is proposing \$12.5 Billion in spending cuts. This is the worst fiscal crisis that I have seen in my 37 years with California Community Colleges. The Governor's proposal for Community Colleges cuts is \$400 million as a best case scenario, and an increase to as much as \$899 million as the worst case scenario. For Peralta the worst case scenario is cutting \$21 million.

Regardless, we have to develop budgets for these difficult times. In this negative State environment where the access and success of our students are being severely challenged, we need to come together for common solutions. At Merritt College, we are developing budget reduction scenarios for 2011-2012 of 5% (\$90,477), 10% (\$180,954), and 15% (\$271,431) beginning July 1, 2011. This is in addition to the 2010-11 cuts, furloughs, and layoff of several classified staff at Merritt.

The Merritt Budget Committee met once a week during the month of March to talk about the impact of the budget reductions on the college, and the Budget Committee met with the College Council on March 16, 2011, to review the 5%, 10%, and 15% budget reduction scenarios. Also, CEMPC (College Educational Master Planning Committee) met on Wednesday, March 16, 2011, and reviewed the budget reduction scenarios.

In our plans, we are hoping for the best; but, we must prepare for the worst case scenario. To that end, we are cutting class offerings, reducing adjunct faculty and freezing most of our vacant positions. Some budget options are under negotiations; however, no tenured faculty have been given March 15 notices and thus far no classified staff have been given 45 day notices.

In the face of these formidable challenges, it is imperative we all work together for Merritt College. I encourage you to get involved in campus planning committees or with constituent advocacies. Your individual voice counts and is needed.

The urgency of our collective action was powerfully demonstrated by the March 14, 2011, Rally in Sacramento that I attended along with our students. There were approximately 5,000 students from all over the state and over 400 were from Peralta. I was particularly proud to stand with our students and be a part of this very important day.

An Accreditation Team Visit to the college is scheduled for April 11—12, 2011. As you know, all four of the Peralta Colleges have been continued on probation. A college-wide Accreditation Forum has been scheduled on April 6, 2011, 12:30 p.m.—1:30 p.m., Newton/Seale Student Lounge, R110, to provide you with the details of the visit.

Congratulations to Helenka Livingston, Nutrition and Dietetics Instructor. Helenka was chosen as the “Outstanding Educator of the Year” during the Dietetic Educator Practice Group’s Annual Meeting in Asilomar. Helenka, you make us proud!

I would like to congratulate and recognize the following faculty who received tenure this year:

Diana Barrios, Associate Degree Nursing
Melinda Downing, Biology
Tanya Ilarde, Transfer Counselor
Jennifer Shanoski, Chemistry
Mary Louise Zernicke, Nutrition and Dietetics

I am pleased to announce that *State Chancellor Jack Scott* will be our Graduation Speaker. Graduation will be held on the Merritt Campus on Friday, May 27, 2011, 5:00 p.m.

The college is undergoing many facility improvements. Listed below are just a few of them:

- *Exterior Lighting Improvements* – A lighting survey of the entire campus was conducted showing the nighttime lighting levels. Using this as a guide, existing exterior lights are being upgraded and new lighting is being added. The anticipated completion date is April 4, 2011.
- *Security Upgrade (Cameras)* – This project will provide new security cameras around the campus to provide additional security at the college. The anticipated completion date is September 1, 2011.
- *Allied Health Science Building* – The new science building is still being designed and construction will begin sometime in mid 2012.
- *Horticulture Department Improvements* – This project consists of replacing existing doors and mechanical system improvements. Electrical improvements include lighting, power outlets, and greenhouse control panels. The anticipated completion date is April 15, 2011.

The following highlights recent activities that have occurred at the college:

- The Merritt Real Estate Forum Event was held on campus February 24, 2011. There were approximately 150 in attendance to hear the Guest Speaker, Ed Krafchow, CEO of Better Homes and Gardens.

- A Town Hall Meeting was held with Chancellor Allen on March 2, 2011, regarding the impact of State budget reductions on Peralta. The meeting was well attended by students, faculty and staff.
- On Saturday, March 5, 2011, our Maximum Achievement Project (MAP) Program held an African American Male Conference. This event was well attended by our students and the community. Guest speakers included: Oakland Attorney John Burris, Paul Cobb, Post Newspaper Editor, Kevin Brown, KBLX Radio Personality, and Al Attles, Golden State Warriors Legend.
- The Associated Students of Merritt College (ASMC) and the Puente Project and Club held its Fifth Annual Tribute to Cesar Chavez on March 21, 2011 – Presenter Richard Santana, “Homeboy Goes to Harvard”.
- A Town Hall Meeting was held regarding the Merritt New Science Building on March 22, 2011. A presentation was made by Flad Architects.
- The Title III Grant’s Year Three Interim External Evaluator Visit was held on March 22-23, 2011. The Year Two Title III Annual Performance Report to the Department of Education was submitted on Friday, March 18, 2011.
- Beta Theta Lambda Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society, Merritt’s Health Services, and Administration of Justice Department Presented a “Domestic Violence Awareness” Workshop on March 23, 2011.
- Merritt’s Medical Assistant Program’s Graduation was held on March 25, 2011.
- The “Show of Merritt” Art Reception was held at the District Office Atrium on the evening of March 25, 2011.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Merritt College’s 3rd Annual Latino Conference will be held on April 1, 2011, 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., Newton/Seale Student Lounge, R110.
- A college-wide Accreditation Forum will be held on April 6, 2011, 12:30 p.m. – 1:30 p.m., Newton/Seale Student Lounge, R110.
- Merritt’s Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society’s Spring Induction Ceremony will be held on April 29, 2011, 1:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Newton/Seale Student Lounge, R110.
- Merritt’s Annual Achievement Awards Ceremony will be held on May 6, 2011, 5:30 p.m., Scotts Restaurant, Jack London Square.

- The Landscape/Horticulture Department will be having its annual Plant Sale on May 7 and 8, 2011.
- The Fruitvale Center Graduation will be held on May 24, 2011, 4:30 p.m., at the Fruitvale Center.
- Merritt's Graduation will be held on May 27, 2011, 5:00 p.m., at Merritt.

Robert A. Adams