



THE MERRITT CONNECTION

President's Message



Welcome to the ACCJC Visiting Team who are here this week to validate our self-evaluation report. You will most likely see the 10-member team as they walk around campus, visit classrooms, and talk to members of the college community. For your reference, the team's photos and bios are listed on the Accreditation site on Merritt's homepage. Please plan to attend a reception for the team on March 9, at 4:30 p.m. in the Newton Student Lounge to welcome them to our beautiful college.

We are proud to show the quality of instruction and services we offer our students. Merritt has a proud history of social justice and academic achievement. We are persistent in making a difference and continuously learning from

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The Merritt Connection

Merritt College

Peralta Community College District

Office of the President

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PTK Offers Bright Future to Its Members



Brenda Perez, Barbara A. Dimopoulos, Roseland Bailey, and Tatiana Ochoa.

Tatiana Ochoa hoped to get a scholarship to help fund her future as a teacher. Brenda Perez wanted to gain self-confidence and learn to speak in front of audiences. Roseland Bailey was eager to transfer to a prestigious nursing school. All three women joined Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society to find their dreams — and ended up discovering more.

Since the Beta Theta Lambda Chapter was chartered in 1999, more than 450 of Merritt's students have accepted membership into this prestigious organization which provides opportunities for scholarship, leadership, service, and fellowship. Recent statistics showed that the national student success rate of PTK is 91 percent based on degree and transfer rate.

"I never thought I'd be an honor student, but PTK gave me the extra push to achieve more than I ever thought I could," says Tatiana, who changed her career goal from teacher's assistant to working in public policy for children's issues.

Brenda thought she was too shy to get involved until she attended a PTK conference. "I was inspired by all the members who talked about how they had become better leaders," she said. "Now I'm a vice president in student government."

Roseland, who gets ongoing college admissions offers because of her membership, enjoys the volunteer opportunities PTK offers. "We recently took out women and children from a battered women's shelter for a day of shopping and pampering," she says. "It was an amazing experience."

Barbara A. Dimopoulos, PTK chapter advisor, offers members all the opportunities they want. Then she sits back and watches them shine. "The membership ceremony takes just an hour," she says, "but the experience can change their whole lives."

For membership info, go to www.merritt.edu/wp/phi-theta-kappa

President's Message

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the feedback and data we receive, and we work toward increasing our outcomes.

Excellence toward student success was displayed once again by our **Radiologic Science** faculty and students. Two weeks ago the visiting accreditation team for the radiological profession recognized our faculty, students, and clinical partners for their outstanding program. We are proud of our faculty leadership—Jennifer Yates, Jerry Hollister, Jacqueline Custard, and Rad Tech adjunct—for leading the way of distinction for our students with our partners.

Our **Nursing Program** was affirmed by the Board of Registered Nursing at its February 5 meeting in Ontario, California, when they voted to “continue approval of the Merritt College Associate Degree Nursing Program.” Again, our faculty and students displayed adherence to academic standards and the principles of the nursing profession. Special thanks for the leadership and commitment to excellence go to Dawn Williams, Diana Barrios, Lynn Bratchett, Evangeline Augustin, Lona Henderson, and Mia Kelly.

Our support for student learning is further illustrated by our outstanding classified staff in Student Services, the Library, and the Learning Center. Our next issue will provide some highlights.

And last of all, I join the entire college community in wishing best of luck to the Men's Basketball team as they head to the State Championships in LA. Go T-Birds!

Dr. Norma Ambriz-Galaviz
President

Faculty Spotlight

Bill Love Honored for His Contributions



Oakland City Councilman Abel Guillen honors Dr. William Love.

Bill Love pauses when asked how many students he's taught over his 42 years teaching in the Peralta Community College District, as if it's the first time he's ever considered it. “Well...I guess it would be about 15,000 to 18,000,” he finally says with a smile.

Dr. Love may not recall all of his past students, but most of them are certain to remember him and the influence he's had on their lives. A truly dedicated instructor, at age 75, he's still teaching after his retirement 12 years ago.

What's kept him in the classroom? “I'm good at what I do. I can teach, I'm fair, I'm supportive, and, as one student told me, ‘you're not boring,’” says Love. “I've even had students come back when the class is over to finish a last chapter.”

After graduating from Merritt himself, Dr. Love went on to major in psychology which he then taught at the College of Alameda before heading to Merritt. Since the late '70s, he has taught in the Community Social Services Program which has become the college's “5th largest FTE generator.” The huge classes not only reflect a great instructor but an in-demand program designed to prepare students to work in entry-level positions providing counseling and other services to substance abuse clients. In fact, many of the students in Love's classes come from troubled backgrounds themselves.

“We have 75 percent ex-offenders and substance abusers in the program who are trying to improve their lives,” says Love. “After they graduate, many get fulfilling jobs and some go on to get their bachelor's and master's degrees. We've had several Chancellor's Trophy winners,” he adds.

Beyond the classroom, he is well known by his fellow faculty members for his presence in college meetings where he often questions decisions, always striving to assure equality for all students (he spent eight non-teaching years during the '80s as the District's affirmative action officer). But what many may not know is that his assertiveness is inherited.

“I come from a family of community activists,” says Love. “All of them were involved in integration and making sure the city

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NEWS BRIEFS

Cybersecurity Classes Take Off

The new, cutting-edge cybersecurity offerings are off to



a great start with full classes of eager students. "We're excited to have such a great response," says Anita M. Black, program coordinator of Applications & Security Infrastructure. "We have an impressive list of industry advisors and instructors, and our students are enthusiastic to be learning about this in-demand field."

KQED Interviews AJ Students in Class



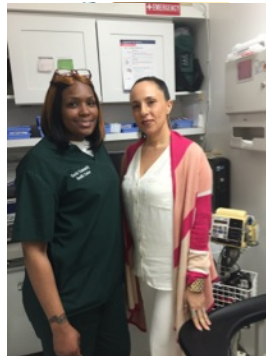
KQED News Radio recently came to campus to talk to Administration of Justice instructor Margaret Dixon and her class about the lack of Oakland police officers who reside in Oakland and how to find solutions to the problem. The show aired locally, statewide, and nationally.

council paid attention. In the early '60s my mother fought to save West Oakland from being razed, my uncle was Oakland's first black football coach, and everyone knew of my grandparents' reputation. As I got older, I began to realize that the tables are definitely not level, and I was going to do something about it." Among his many accomplishments, Love was the driving force behind the controversial move of the Cypress Expressway after the '89 earthquake.

His many contributions were recently recognized by the City of Oakland during Black History Month, when he was among several African-Americans honored for making the city a better place to live. His award was presented to him by City Council member (and former Peralta trustee) Abel Guillen.

"Dr. Love has been a steadfast community leader in Oakland for more than an 40 years, and we have all benefited from his service," said Guillen in a recent phone call. "He is one of those unsung heroes that work day in and day out, and he deserves the utmost respect and recognition."

Medical Assisting Externships Get an A+



Lakenda Crosby and Dr. Noha Aboelata at the center.

As Lakenda Crosby was taking pre-reqs for a nursing degree at Merritt, she discovered a program that would lead to a career sooner, still teach her medical skills, and allow her to make a good living to support her two children. She applied for the Medical Assisting Program, graduated last year, and found a job she loves at Roots Community Health Center in Oakland, where she was recently promoted to a manager.

"It was a tough program, but my instructors were really supportive," says Lakenda. "And because of the outside experience I got during the program, I had the skills that led to my job."

That externship component, a highlight of the Medical Assisting Program, allows students to get real-life, hands-on experience while still in school. Last year nearly all of the 50 students were placed in clinics that Merritt partners with, according to program coordinator Grace Idowu.

Dr. Noha Aboelata, founder of the Roots clinic, agrees with the concept. "When we have a relationship with students from an excellent program like Merritt's, they are the first in line for jobs," she says. "Lakenda came to us with a good skill set, leadership qualities, and a passion for our mission. We are thrilled to have her working with us."

Our T-Birds Soar!



What an amazing season for Men's Basketball! After winning the State Final 8 game, they will head to Cerritos College in LA 3/13 for the State Championships. Good luck to Coach Keenan McMiller and his team!

Learning to Create a Greener Oakland



Students in Merritt's Environmental Science and Technology Program now have the chance to give back to their community! The "Sustainable Systems" class, which starts March 19, still has room for students who want to help plan projects that would "green" underserved areas in Oakland. The class offers students a great opportunity to develop skills that are useful, practical, and marketable for a future career in the Green Industry such as environmentally sustainable urban planning and GIS mapping. They will be helping to shape Oakland's development in an alternative way. For more information, contact Robin Freeman at rffreeman@peralta.edu.

Classified Senate Meets Goals, Increases Participation, and Sweetens February

by Stefanie Harding
Classified Senate President



The Merritt College Classified Senate has been working diligently this semester to accomplish its 2014-2015 goals. Out of four goals, the following three have been and continue to be addressed:

- Improve classified staff participation in college and district governance bodies.
- Increase classified staff attendance at the annual Classified Leadership Institute.
- Boost fundraising efforts to support professional development activities for classified staff.

Currently, classified staff members participate actively in all college governance committees (with the exception of CDCPD and CIC). Senator Ron Perez has been newly appointed to serve alongside Senator Molly Sealund on the District Facilities Committee. Furthermore, many classified staff volunteered their time and effort to complete Merritt's accreditation self-evaluation report and continue to contribute to preparations for the evaluation team visit.

Seven Senators have applied and been approved for professional development funding to attend the Classified Leadership Institute (CLI), June 4-6, in Tahoe City. Sponsored by the California Community Colleges Classified Senate, the annual CLI promotes and develops classified leadership for shared governance at the college, district, and state levels.

The Classified Senate sweetened up the early weeks of February for many on campus with a successful Valentine's Day fundraiser. Senators assembled and sold about 100 treat bags containing assorted candies and fruit to help fund future professional development activities for classified staff. For those who missed out on the goodies, stay tuned for another fundraiser this spring.



Classified Senate members (left to right): Ngheim Thai (Vice President), Kinga Sidzinska, Waaduda Karim (Recorder), Stefanie Harding (President), Charlotte Victorian (Treasurer), Denise Woodward (Secretary), Ron Perez, (PIO), Molly Sealund Doris Hankins and Tim Brice (not pictured).