



The Merritt Connection

April 14, 2021

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



U.S. Department of Education

I am pleased to report that Merritt College has been notified by the U.S. Department of Education, Minority Serving and Under-Resourced Schools Division that we have done everything at the college-level to implement their recommendations outlined in the Virtual Title IV Technical Assistance Report submitted on October 22nd, 2020. They also commended the leadership of VPSS Lilia Chavez and Financial Aid Director Ernesto Nery for bringing the college into compliance in less than six months. In fact, the DOE specifically congratulated Merritt for our “excellent work, great leadership, and commitment to ensuring the implementation and administration of Federal regulations and Title IV funds to maintain compliance.” There is still work to be done in collaboration with the District Office, and we understand that meeting all financial aid eligibility requirements is imperative. But we are extremely proud of the progress we have made in such a short amount of time.

Over the past several weeks Merritt College has partnered with Aerotek, a staffing and recruiting company, to put on a series of successful career fairs in various fields. Led by our Career Education Counselor Sara Alturk, the Health Fairs gave forty students the opportunity to have individual 15–20-minute sessions to discuss job openings, receive feedback on their résumés, and connect with employers such as Kaiser, Sutter Health, and Highland Hospital. The next fair will focus on careers in the field of Child Development and will take place on Friday, April 16. If you know of any students who would like to participate please have them email Sara right away (salturk@peralta.edu).



PHI THETA KAPPA HONOR SOCIETY

I want to give a special shout out to Beta Theta Lambda—Merritt College’s chapter of Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. The mission of Phi Theta Kappa is to *recognize academic achievement of college students and to provide opportunities for them to grow as scholars and leaders*. At the California/Nevada Regional Convention, Beta Theta Lambda was recognized as a “Four Star Chapter” (and our sights are set on becoming a Five Star Chapter next year after we complete a college-wide *Honors in Action Project*- which combines academic research, problem solving, and action-oriented service to address real-world challenges). I want to give kudos to Chapter President Ms. Stephanie Mutialu for becoming the first member of Beta Theta Lambda to be appointed as an officer in the Regional Alumni Association. Finally, I want to express my appreciation to chapter adviser Barbara Dimopoulos, and co-advisers Mary Ciddio, Doris Hankins, and Jamila Saleh for their tireless efforts.

I want to close by extending a warm welcome to Ms. Ree’sheemah Thornton, who just started her tenure here at Merritt as the Dean of Enrollment Services. We all understand the importance of increasing the number of students we bring to the College (as well as keeping them enrolled once they arrive) so we look forward to supporting and working alongside of her.



The mission of Merritt College is to enhance the quality of life in the communities we serve by helping students to attain knowledge, master skills, and develop the appreciation, attitudes and values needed to succeed and participate responsibly in a democratic society and a global economy.