



# The Merritt Connection

July 26, 2023

Dr. David M. Johnson, President

More than three decades ago, the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) and Merritt College began a collaboration that resulted in the creation of the Pre-Collegiate Academy (PCA), a program specifically designed for students in Oakland middle and secondary schools. On July 19, we celebrated and commemorated our thirty-third year of partnership. The PCA was established to address and support the growing number of students from low socio-economic backgrounds who were not qualifying for admission to higher educational institutions. The PCA program aims to increase the numbers of middle school students who qualify for and pursue postsecondary studies, primarily by strengthening students' mathematical skills through summer enrichment courses and support services offered during the academic year. Recognizing the important role of teachers in accomplishing its goal, the PCA includes a teacher-training component that is designed to encourage the professional development of teachers from OUSD schools, as well as encourage undergraduates attending local universities to pursue careers in teaching.



## Student Enrollment



As the month comes to a close, we now have a clearer view of the Summer 2023 enrollment picture. The resident FTES figure for the term reached 366.02, which is a 10.5% increase from last summer. Another encouraging sign is that we exceeded our summer FTES target (which was set at 358.40 and represents achieving 102% of the enrollment goal). We are looking forward to the Fall 2023 semester and hope to build upon the momentum of the previous two fall terms. In Fall 2021 Merritt attained 81.8% of the enrollment target, and last fall that figure reached 84.1%. By building upon our dual enrollment success and strategically directing FTES to high-demand sections, we expected to do even better for Fall 2023.

Finally, I would like to close with a note of congratulations. Mr. Damon Covington works as a faculty member in Merritt College's Fire Sciences and Emergency Medical Technician department. I am proud to share that last month he was appointed as Oakland's new Interim Fire Chief! Chief Covington joined the Oakland Fire Department back in 2001 as a firefighter/paramedic. He served as president of the Oakland Black Firefighters Association from 2016 to 2022 and has taught courses at Merritt for the past seven years. You also may recall that last summer Felicia Wanzo-Bryant, another Merritt faculty member, was sworn in as the first woman to serve as Fire Marshal for the City of Oakland. Suffice it to say, there are big things happening in our Fire/EMT Department!



*Merritt College puts students first. Through our rich educational programs, we foster a culture of equity and inclusion that empowers students to achieve their greatest potential and make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and our global society.*