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May 2012



# PUBLIC CIVILITY: WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO IT?

From the halls of Congress to college campuses across the country, mean-spirited epithets are being hurled about as if they were common features of our democracy. Maybe they are, but they don't have to be according to panelists and

participants at the First Annual Community Conference on Restoring Civility to Civic Dialogue held at the University of San Diego on April 6, 2012.

*Story on page 3.*



# Chancellor's Message



Constance M. Carroll, Ph.D.  
Chancellor, SDCCD

## THE DUMBING-DOWN OF CALIFORNIA

Just as no one consciously set out to destroy the economy of California, no one intentionally sought to decimate opportunities for attending an institution of higher education in the state. Debilitating deficits have continued to damage the California economy, with the result that Standard & Poor's bond rating has kept the state in last place, 50th, below all other states in the nation.

The impact of decreasing resources on higher education, fueled by an all-cuts budget strategy in the last few years, has been dramatic. Both the University of California and the California State University have sharply increased tuition for students, and the legislature has incrementally increased the California Community Colleges student enrollment fee by 76% within just one year. At the same time, all three systems have been compelled to reduce the number of classes for students, the range of services, and the number of employees needed to operate, administer, and teach.

Community colleges have turned away students by the tens of thousands, including almost 18,000 who could not be accommodated this year at the campuses of the San Diego Community College District. The Public Policy Institute of California further found that while applications to UC and CSU campuses have significantly increased, high school student enrollment rates at the universities have dropped by one-fifth in just three years. At a time when over 70% of jobs require at least one year of postsecondary preparation, California has clearly put its future at serious risk, especially in this era of high unemployment.

Recently, I had the opportunity of discussing this situation at a public forum, joined by my colleagues, Dr. Marye Anne Fox, chancellor of the University of California, San Diego, and Dr. Elliot Hirshman, president of San Diego State University. While emphasizing efforts to serve

students as best we could, we candidly demonstrated the enormous impact state budget cuts have had upon both potential students and the San Diego region, a region that needs and deserves expanded educational opportunities but instead is receiving less support. The irony that the prison system now receives a larger state budget investment than higher education was not lost on our audience.

In November, voters will have a choice. They can decide to continue the current path, which will result in hundreds of millions of dollars in additional cuts to the universities and community colleges, thereby further reducing the state's investment in higher education, or they can decide to support the Governor's tax proposal, "The Schools and Local Public Safety Protection Act of 2012," which will stabilize funding for the first time in years. The outcome will make all the difference in the future of California and of "America's Finest City." ♦



From left: Dr. Constance Carroll, San Diego Community College District Chancellor; Dr. Marye Anne Fox, University of California, San Diego Chancellor; and Dr. Elliot Hirshman, San Diego State University President speaking at a recent Catfish Club meeting urging the public to press legislators to authorize greater financial support for higher education.

# PUBLIC CIVILITY (CONTINUED)

The conference, stimulated by the Rev. George Walker Smith and organized by Mesa College Political Science Professor, Dr. Carl Luna, tackled this issue head-on by featuring panelists whose positions place them in the swirl and cross-currents of civil versus uncivil speech.

Luna kicked off the morning's discussion by observing that "Incivility has become a major political issue in American society and is driving people not to participate in the political system."

Long time San Diego civic leader and managing partner of LJMJ Murray L.

Galinson noted that civility is something for which we should all be striving: "We can share the blame if we don't demand it from those we elect and hold them accountable. What is needed," he said, are "debates, not personal attacks." The worst impact Galinson sees is that "caring people don't want to get involved."

Los Angeles Times reporter Tony Perry was more pointed. "San Diego," he declared, "is ground zero in the rise of incivility in public discourse." And, he traces it to the lack of civil discourse surrounding the City's pension funds and budget in which those involved sought to "personalize the civic discussion."

Perry went on to observe that "Incivility makes for quick and easy journalism." He cited a local San Diego daily newspaper that fostered this atmosphere by its "doctrinaire reporting...name-calling" and references to "those craven Democrats." In a professorial counterpoint to his own argument, he suggested that "incivility" can be okay if it is "fair, tough, and demanding." It was clear that he was referring to impassioned, not mean-spirited, rhetoric. He worried that the San Diego Mayor's race could degenerate into incivility.

Extending a point made earlier by panelist Galinson, Perry observed sadly that "Civility can be purchased by counting people out in the dialogue." He suggested, somewhat reluctantly, that in some cases, "Incivility can be cleansing in getting to the issue."

*"Civility is the virtue we need to have to disagree well. It is linked to genuine patriotism- because we have to care about each other."*

**LAWRENCE M. HINMAN, PH.D.**

CO-DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER FOR ETHICS IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

San Diego Community College District Chancellor Constance Carroll traced the devolution of civility in public discourse to the Watergate scandal and the emergence of the "politics of personal destruction." To emphasize the point, she noted recent history in which a member of the congress shouted, "You lie!" at President Barack Obama when he was addressing a joint session of Congress and when political leaders distributed an email depicting the President as a chimpanzee.

Political campaign consultant and manager Tom Shepard attributed the breakdown in civility due to the absence of traditional "gatekeepers" of information. In the past, San Diego had three television stations and two newspapers that mostly reflected a politically conservative point of view. The emergence of cable TV and talk radio has been accompanied by a lack of self-restraint in what is said. And that, he noted, "influences how we speak." This has also been accompanied by a proliferation of narrow interest groups and communities of believers. He observed that "In the past, if you said ridiculous things, the community put pressure on you to change." He denounced the impact of term limits in "discouraging collegiality" in state government. This, he said, "has driven moderates of both parties out of the political discourse, leaving space for those on the extreme."

Today, Shepard suggested, online "personal isolation and anonymity enable people to speak without limits about what and when you can say things."

Conference attendee Martha Barnette, co-host of the popular public radio show, A Way with Words, summed up the conference by noting, "Words are tools that can be used for good or evil." ♦



From left: Tom Shepard, Dr. Lawrence Hinman, Dr. Constance Carroll, Murray Galinson, Dr. Carl Luna (at the lectern), and Tony Perry.



Terrence J. Burgess, Ph.D.  
President  
San Diego City College

# SAN DIEGO CITY COLLEGE

# SIFE Tackles Bullying



2011 SIFE Conference Hunger Drive

The photos in City College's "Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE)—Don't Be A Bully" conference brochure are haunting. They show the faces and names of youths ages 10-18 whose lives were cut tragically short by bullying.

According to the National Education Association, 60% of American teens see bullying in school every day. Bullying can make students afraid to attend class, use the bathroom, or ride a bus. It can take place online, in the playground, while walking home, and in the most serious cases, it can result in death.

Under the guidance of Business Professor Leroy Brady, SIFE students are addressing the bullying problem in local schools. SIFE, a not-for-profit branch of City's Business department, oversees a student-run food/beverage stand called "a la Cart" and the "Business Resource Center" a veritable Kinko's on campus. SIFE is also active in community projects, and in 2010, with input from Brady, faculty, and community members from their advisory board, SIFE students decided to tackle bullying in schools.

The team developed a six-step program in which SIFE students facilitate workshops in ethics and bullying

prevention. On December 3, 2011, they held their first annual "SIFE – Don't Be A Bully" conference with featured keynote addresses by San Diego Unified School Board Member Kevin Beiser and San Diego Councilmembers Marti Emerald (District 7) and Tony Young (District 4).

"Workshops are offered to students in the highest grade at one of two elementary schools in San Diego, and then we work with those individuals to empower them so they can teach younger children in the school," Brady related.

Elizabeth Cruz, a 22-year-old business student who plans to transfer to UC Berkeley, coordinates the "Don't Be A Bully" program at King Chavez Academy, a kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade school in Barrio Logan. She has reached out to over 200 students at this school. "The kids really connect with you and value what you have to say. You know that you're making a difference in their lives."

Antoine Bennett is a 34-year-old SIFE student who heads the "Don't Be A Bully" after-school program at Hamilton Elementary in City Heights. What motivates him? "To give back to my community through SIFE," Bennett said.

SIFE is now expanding the anti-bullying program by working with a third school – Walter Porter Elementary in Lincoln Park.

At the conference, Professor Brady spoke about SIFE's resolve to take on the bullying problem.

"Reading about youngsters who commit suicide because of being bullied is just mindboggling. We want to continue this important program for as long as there is a need." ♦



From left: City College Business Professor Leroy Brady, San Diego Councilmember Tony Young, and San Diego Unified School Board Member Kevin Beiser at the 1st Annual Don't Be A Bully SIFE Conference. Photo Credit: Dave Wilwayco



Pamela Luster, Ed.D.  
President  
San Diego Mesa College

## Changing Meals-on-Wheels Menus

With fellow future chefs busily prepping for lunch at the student-run restaurant at San Diego Mesa College, Edmar Banting and Vickie Estudillo step away from the gourmet cooking class to prepare a tasty, diet-conscience meal that is also low in salt and good for those on restricted diets. Think of the type of meals that volunteers deliver daily to 2,300 San Diego area Meals-on-Wheels senior clients.

In fact, that's exactly what Edmar and Vickie were doing: preparing a new meal – with a Latino flair – for Meals-on-Wheels Greater San Diego (MOWGSD). The marinated chicken with cilantro rice was the first of 60 new recipes being analyzed, prepared and taste-tested as part of a project between Mesa College's Nutrition, Dietetic Services Supervisor (DSS) and Culinary Arts programs, MOWGSD, and local professional chefs.

The project, funded by a grant obtained from Meals on Wheels Association of America and Wal-Mart, is dubbed "Healthy Latin Cuisine," and designed to appeal to the changing palate of San Diego's growing senior population. The methodology, which can be used to create customized menus to meet client needs, will later be distributed to MOW organizations across the country.

With notable local chefs Norma Martinez and Isabel Cruz on board to create the recipes, "we looked for a reputable partner that was both knowledgeable in nutritional analysis and culinary arts and had an in-depth understanding of the need," said MOWGSD representative Luanne Hinkle. "Mesa College was the perfect choice."

"I thought it was a terrific volunteer opportunity for our dietetic and culinary students, and one that would expose them to new job options while gaining a greater awareness of our changing senior populations," said Elizabeth Chu, M.S., R.D., Mesa College Professor of Nutrition, and DSS program director.

Professor Chu approached the culinary faculty about involving their students in food preparation. Professors Tonya Whitfield and Peter Barabas Robson didn't hesitate. "The development of recipes indigenous to California provides an opportunity for our students to learn research and development aspects of culinary arts," said Professor Robson.

With everyone on board and in an assembly-like fashion, the process begins. The chefs' recipes undergo a nutritional analysis by students in the dietician program. More reviews

and meal preparation follow. After final approval by Katie Clark, MPHRD CD, a nutrition consultant for MOWGSD who also happens to teach at Mesa, a taste-test by senior clients will occur. A phased rollout of the new menus is planned for release in fall 2012. ♦



Culinary students Edmar Banting and Vickie Estudillo straining green beans in their gourmet cooking class.





Patricia Hsieh, Ed.D.  
President  
San Diego Miramar College

## Honors Program and Club Boast a Decade of Success



Miramar College Honors student and PTK club member Raul Hernandez

On December 3, 75 Miramar College students were inducted into Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) Beta Iota Lambda, the campus chapter of the international honor society. It is the largest class of inductees in the chapter's history. Growth in PTK parallels growth in the college's Honors program, which was launched 12 years ago.

Miramar Honors program coordinator and English professor Dr. Carmen Jay is also the PTK advisor—a role she's held since 1999. She's seen the college's Honors program enrollment grow from 30 students to 170 per semester over the last ten years.

"One motivation for students to enroll in Honors classes is the transfer advantage." Jay cites 90% of transfer students with a 3.25 GPA and 15 Honors credits are accepted at prestigious colleges and universities versus 39% applying for transfer without Honors credits. Honors classes and Honors customized contracts also lead to strong relationships with faculty and counselors, who often become mentors and friends, which further strengthen student success.

"With or without Honors credits, we encourage all students with a 3.5 GPA and 12 units to consider joining the college chapter of PTK," said Jay. PTK students enjoy unique scholarship opportunities and form a community with fellow students through club activities.

Rancho Bernardo resident and RB High graduate Raul Hernandez, 19, is a Miramar College Honors student, PTK club member and current membership chair. Originally, Raul planned to attend UCSD, but decided Miramar

College might provide the best path through its transfer guarantee programs. He signed an agreement at Freshman Orientation and explored "major" options while completing general education requirements. Along the way, Raul decided a business major and transfer to San Diego State University would better suit his career plans.

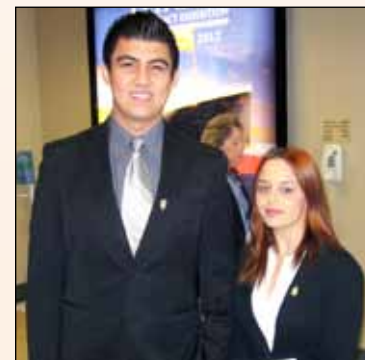
"SDSU has a stronger reputation for business programs, offers more 'real world' instruction," Raul said, "and is a more realistic transfer goal for me."

Raul's focus on a business degree stems from an altruistic goal—to help others along the way. His hard-working and self-employed parents, as well as his 14-year-old brother who is determined in everything he endeavors, are his role models.

Raul originally enrolled in a regular English class taught by Dr. Jay, who suggested Honors English 101. Jay was influential and supportive throughout his first year, writing letters for scholarship applications, which won Raul several financial awards. After successfully completing his first Honors class, Raul completed English 102 and calculus Honors courses and expects to enroll in more. He enjoys the special assignments and benefits provided by Honors classes, especially the transcript bonus with Honors course completion.

Raul is likely on the same path as other successful Miramar Honors students. Just this month, Miramar PTK President Abdullah

Nejati and PTK Vice President Michelle Dranovsky were recognized in Sacramento for their academic achievements and community service. Abdullah received the Coca-Cola Scholarship Gold Medal, one of only a few students statewide to receive the gold distinction, and was named to the 2012 All California Academic First Team. Michelle was selected for the All State Third Team. Only 68 students statewide received Academic Team honors. ♦



From left: Miramar PTK President Abdullah Nejati and PTK Vice President Michelle Dranovsky



Anthony E. Beebe, Ed.D.  
President  
San Diego Continuing Education

# SAN DIEGO CONTINUING EDUCATION

# NONCREDIT INSTRUCTION FOR ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY



Last year, thousands of students found their way to a basic skills class at Continuing Education. For the 184 active duty military students who completed a class at Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Miramar Education Center, they ended up exactly where they expected—ahead.

The classes at MCAS support the Military Academic Skills Program. Currently, in addition to MCAS at Miramar, SDCCD offers classes at the 32nd Street Naval Base and at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot.

“There are not many situations when active duty men and women from all branches of the US military are in a room together, and call each other by first names,” said Dr. Lisa Curtin, Director of Government and Military Programs for SDCCD. The basic skills class at MCAS Miramar has created an exception to the rule. “The goal is to provide a safe, comfortable environment so students can excel,” said Curtin.

“Most students are interested in retaking the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) exam,” says Instructor Lee Darby.

ASVAB is the required military entry exam that determines eligibility for training programs, and more training generally means more opportunity. For example, someone could move from entry-level infantry or armor assignments into medical or electronic programs, which are often considered more desirable sections within the service.

Students also take the class to qualify for Officer Candidacy programs. SN Maria Kristine “MK” Villanueva, US Navy, is a seaman on the USS Comstock. “I increased my ASVAB score by 10 points, and was offered more than 20 more rates (jobs) after I retook the exam,” said MK.



Active duty military personnel at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Education Center.

“We have cumulative data that supports our success,” said Dr. Brian Ellison, Vice President of Instruction and Student Services for Continuing Education. “Students are tested before and after class, and we see improved scores in all areas—the most significant in math.”

Students attend eight hours daily, five days each week for two straight weeks. “The sinking-into-your-head part comes mostly after class,” said Darby. “The top suggestion on the evaluations is for class to be longer.”

At the end of the two weeks, Annette Ragsdale, SDCCD Military Education Program Coordinator, visits the class to explain next steps. “I tell students they have been provided an introduction to SDCCD and there are six Continuing Education campuses, plus three colleges where they can continue,” she says. Annette’s primary message is about transition and transfer opportunities—tips that keep students on a career or college path. ♦

### TOP TITLES AGAIN AND AGAIN



City College Basketball Team: 2011-12 Pacific Coast Athletic Conference Champions

If repetition is the best measurement of success, the City College Knights have winning down to a science.

Both the men's basketball and soccer teams won their respective 2011-12 Pacific Coast Athletic Conference (PCAC) Championships. Both of the coaches were named PCAC Coach of Year, **Mitch Charlens** for basketball and **Milton Hildago** for soccer. This is the second Coach of the Year honor for Charlens and the sixth for Hildago.

It is the third time that Charlens has led the Knights to the basketball conference title, and the ninth for Hildago for the soccer title.

A San Diego native, Charlens left the area after high school to play and coach in Northern California, but returned home once the head coaching position at City became available. He said, "It was a dream come true to get the job here at City and eight years later, I still love it."

Coaching at City College since 1983, Hildago has won consecutive PCAC championships and finished #1 five times in the last eight years. About winning the Coach of the Year honor, Hildago said, "To me, it's a reflection of the caliber of student talent we have at City."

Keeping stride with Charlens and Hildago, Coach **Paul Greer** was named PCAC's Men's Cross Country Coach of the Year. Greer's 20 years of coaching experience helped lead the Knights to their best season since 2003 and qualify for the Southern California championships.

Additionally, several Knights players earned individual honors:

**Stephon Lamar** was named PCAC Player of the Year; **Menas Stephens** and **Marvin Sykes** were named as All-PCAC First Team members; **Hector Munoz, Jose Reyes Torres, Stephon Lamar, Menas Stephens, Darin Martin, Devyn Iglehart** and **Marvin Sykes** were selected as PCAC Men's Athletes of the Week; and **Savannah Allen, Priscilla Contreras,** and **Lisa Pena** were selected as PCAC Women's Athletes of the Week.

**Kathy McGinnis**, Dean of Health, Exercise Science, and Athletics, said she is not surprised by the many accolades awarded to City College athletes and coaches. "We expect great things from our students, coaches and staff, and they rise to the challenge consistently." ♦



City College Men's PCAC Championship Soccer Team, with PCAC Coach of the Year Milton Hildago (far right, back row).

### Girls & Women in Sports Day

Always looking to encourage new student athletes, the City College Athletic Department hosted their 18th Annual Girls & Women in Sports Day on March 3. Over 250 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade girls from schools around San Diego participated in the event. San Diego City College coaches and student-athletes hosted clinics in various sports including basketball, kickboxing, dance, soccer, softball, tennis, track & field, volleyball, and badminton. ♦



Photo Credit: JT Tomaschke



# Accomplishments & Achievements

# KUDOS

## MIRAMAR COLLEGE FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES 2012 DISTINGUISHED ALUM



Dr. **Adolfo Gonzales**, Chief of the National City Police Department (NCPD), has been named the Miramar College 2012 Distinguished Alumnus. Chief Gonzales is a graduate of San Diego Police Academy at Miramar College, the Police Executive Research Forum's Senior Executive Management Institute-Boston University, and has over 33 years of law enforcement experience.

Chief Gonzales joined the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) in 1978 as a reserve officer, attended Miramar College Police Academy in 1979 and was hired full-time one year later. While employed with SDPD, he served as a training officer in the academy at Miramar College. As National City Police Department Chief, he continues to work with the college, coordinating NCPD training through the Public Safety Regional Academy. In 1996, Gonzales was recruited by the FBI to serve as an executive fellow. In 2001, SDPD named him Assistant Chief of

Police. In 2004, he was named Chief of Police for the National City Police Department.

Chief Gonzales earned his doctorate degree in Leadership Science from the University of San Diego (USD) in 1996. In 1989, Dr. Gonzales earned his Masters in Education from San Diego State University, and in 1986, Gonzales earned his bachelor's degree from National University in Public Administration. Chief Gonzales is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy. He is an adjunct faculty member of three local colleges and universities in San Diego and holds the Arthur B. Hughes Career Achievement Award from USD. Other honors include the 2006 National Latino Peace Officers Association Leadership Award and the 2006 National University Distinguished Alumnus Award. Chief Gonzales will accept the Miramar College 2012 Distinguished Alumnus Award at Commencement on May 17, 2012 at the Hilton Torrey Pines. ♦

## OUTSTANDING HONORS

Instructional Assistant **Patricia Page Pugnier** and Professor **Theresa Savarese** from the City College Computer Business Technology Program were honored at the February 2012 California Business Education Association (CBEA) and Western Business Education Association (WBEA) conference in Newport Beach, CA.

Pugnier was named as the Outstanding New Member, and Savarese earned the Outstanding Service to CBEA award. "It is a good feeling to know that the things you do are appreciated and that I can help the people and causes I care about," said Pugnier. For Savarese, the award means she has been able to help promote the advancement of business education in CA and to bring ideas back to City College that can help meet the training needs for today's changing workplace. ♦



*City College Computer Business Technology Instructional Assistant Page Pugnier (left) earned the Outstanding New Member Award and Professor Theresa Savarese (right) the Outstanding Service to CBEA Award at the 2012 California Business Education Association Conference.*

## Continuing Education + Mesa College = *Improved Student Success*



Mesa College Ambassador Mia Bell Pinkney (center) explains *Endless Possibilities* and transition options for Continuing Education students Mimi Mekonen (left) and Whitley Robeson (right).

**Mia Bell Pinkney** helps noncredit students solve the college equation. As a Mesa College Ambassador, she meets individually with students at Continuing Education who are transitioning from noncredit classes to credit classes at City, Mesa, and Miramar colleges. Mia assists Continuing Education students with important steps such as priority registration, completing admission and financial aid applications, and scheduling placement tests and orientations. Plus, she informs students about resources and programs available to them at the college campuses. This individual help is directly aligned with the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges' effort to promote and improve student success. ♦

## Lecture Series Honors Educator Activist

Noted educator, reformer, community activist and feminist **Gracia Molina de Pick** (pictured) was on hand on March 6 to launch a new lecture series that honors her legacy at San Diego Mesa College. The Annual Gracia Molina de Pick Feminist Lecture Series is named for the founder of the San Diego Mesa College Chicano Studies Department and recognizes her life-long commitment to education, feminism, and her dedication to the mission of the community college.

Education activist and 2010 Medal of Freedom recipient Sylvia Mendez was the inaugural speaker. She and her family fought to integrate schools in California in 1945, nine years before *Brown v. Board of Education*. To a packed lecture room, Ms. Mendez

shared her personal story and how she continues the legacy left by her parents to campaign for education. She also spoke of her dreams for the future. "The students are here in college wanting to go on to a four-year college. I want them to get their degree. I want them not to stop with a bachelor's. I want them to go on to their master's degrees," she said.

"We are proud to be inaugurating the first annual Gracia Molina de Pick Feminist Lecture Series and look forward to bringing unique feminist voices to enrich the Mesa College experience," said Professor César López, Ph.D., Chair, Chicano Studies Department. ♦



### State Senator Kehoe Speaks on Women's Rights



A relentless fighter for women's rights, State Senator **Christine Kehoe** (center) spoke on "Women's Education, Women's Empowerment" at one of a dozen lectures, exhibits, performances and presentations that celebrated Women's History Month at San Diego Mesa College. "She has a world of experience in working diligently in the public arena to support women's issues as well as men's issues for our District and all state residents," said Professor

**Angela Oberauer**, "We wanted our students to hear what she had to say." In particular, the Senator spoke on how women are being targeted federally and in certain states with bills trying to deny women the rights to privacy that they received in Roe v. Wade (1973). She encouraged all students to receive a solid education, thereby having the best start to enter the career world ahead of them. ♦

### KEVIN PETTI HAS A WAY WITH WORDS

In an unexpected encounter at a special event with Martha Barnette and Grant Barrett from public radio's lively language show, "A Way with Words," Miramar biology professor **Kevin Petti** shared some interesting background about words used in anatomy education. Next thing you know they developed a segment about the origins of anatomical eponyms, including "Adam's Apple," "Eustachian Tube," and "Achilles Tendon," and the move to remove these terms and others from education today. The episode, which credits Petti and recognizes Miramar College, aired in December. ♦

### Education is Key at Sixth Leadership Summit

The message that "education is the key" echoed throughout the day at the sixth African-American/Latino Male Leadership Summit held in March at San Diego Mesa College. About 175 male students from Mesa College feeder high schools attended the event. Following a powerful spoken-word performance by Rudy Francisco, President **Pamela T. Luster** welcomed the attendees. "What Mesa College wants you to do today," she said, "is

for you to take steps to figure out who you are, to experience what college is like, and to know that it can be in your future." The keynote address was given by Dr. Francisco Rodriguez, superintendent/president of MiraCosta College in Oceanside. "Education is the key," he told the group as he shared his personal struggle to achieve success. "It's about perseverance and persistence." ♦

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# El Milagro...The Miracle

On January 18, Instructional Support Supervisor Paul Gomez suffered a cardiac arrest while working in the Mesa College Center for Independent Learning. Fortunately for Gomez, student Chris Simkins immediately notified staff of the emergency. Several campus employees rallied to provide life-saving CPR and other critical services before Gomez was transferred to the hospital.

Recently, the two College Police Officers who performed chest/heart compression and utilized the automated external defibrillator to save Gomez's life were honored at the California Police Chief's Association Conference in Lake Tahoe, CA. Officer **Jerome Saldares** and Officer **Jarad Preston** (pictured) received the Award of Valor for their quick response and heroic actions.

Now back at work, Gomez sent an open letter to colleagues throughout the District, identifying all those who came to his assistance. It read, in part, "There is no doubt that heroic deeds and other variables that protected me were precisely timed and in place...What many don't know is that I'm a single parent of a 15-year old boy who lost his mother a couple of years ago. For this reason, too, my son and I are thankful to all of you." ♦

