Democracy in Action as College Accommodates Demonstration

Members of the Vietnamese Community of Southern California were on campus on Wednesday to protest a photo exhibit.

Cypress College recognizes and understands the concerns expressed by leaders in the Vietnamese community about a photograph currently on display at the college. And, while there is no intent to resurrect terrible memories, college administrators feel strongly about the preservation of open discourse and artistic expression. In fact, the purpose of higher education is to promote thought, understanding and dialog.

It is against this backdrop that the college’s administration worked to accommodate a demonstration by members of the Vietnamese Community of Southern California. The event was held in a peaceful and respectful manner that also preserved our students’ access to their classrooms and an environment free of academic disruption.

After about 2 1/2 hours on campus, those who came to express their views departed with thanks and handshakes for college employees and members of the Cypress Police Department.

“I want to share with you my deep gratitude and appreciation for the manner in which you and the members represented yourself yesterday during your demonstration,” Dr. Kasler wrote on Thursday in a letter to Nguyen Tan Lac, President of the Vietnamese Community of Southern California. “It was an honor to be asked to speak and I was proud to participate in the dialog and learning that has accompanied the issues related to Mr. Brian Doan’s photograph.”

The letter continued: “Hundreds of thousands, if not millions, have fought and died for what we witnessed in action yesterday: a democracy that ensures a freedom of speech without fear of reprisal. The way that you and the rest of your group conducted yourselves honors the great Constitution and Bill of Rights of our amazing country.”

In three recent meetings with leaders representing the Vietnamese Community of Southern California, the college offered the opportunity for the group to host a forum, open to the campus and the public, about the history of the Communist Vietnamese flag and the issues surrounding it.

The college is optimistic about rough plans to host the Vietnamese Community of Southern California for such an event in April — a welcome opportunity, since it is what learning is all about.

In fact, the current photography exhibit has had the effect of promoting awareness of the experiences of those who fled the Communist regime in Vietnam for a better life here in America.

Dr. Kasler also offered praise to members of the Cypress Police Department, who worked to preserve students’ access to the campus and their classroom, and — quite importantly — to ensure that any potential counter protesters didn’t cause a dangerous or threatening situation.

“At the conclusion of yesterday’s demonstration, I noticed so many people shaking hands with each other,” Dr. Kasler said in a letter to Captain Jackie Gomez-Whiteley and Sergeant Matthew Timney, the two Cypress Police Department members responsible for the tactical pre-planning and response for the demonstration. “It strikes me that there is perhaps no better outcome than that level of mutual respect which has grown from these events. I feel strongly that there could have been a much different outcome had you and other members of the Cypress Police Department not been involved from the planning through implementation.”

THEY SAID IT

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”  
— Helen Keller

@Cypress is published each week. If you would like to have items included, please contact Marc Posner in the Public Information Office at ext. 47006 or mposner@CypressCollege.edu.

Dr. Michael J. Kasler, President
(714) 484-7308
mkasler@CypressCollege.edu

Core Values:
Excellence
Integrity
Collegiality
Inclusiveness
Meeting through the night, the Legislature this morning approved major revisions to the current year (2008-09) state budget, and approved a spending plan four months early for the 2009-10 fiscal year. And, because of your strong advocacy and the case you make by the work you do at our colleges each day, community colleges emerged fairly well from the largest state budget problem in modern history.

After a five-day struggle to find the elusive 27th vote, the State Senate obtained the vote of Abel Maldonado (R-Santa Maria) by agreeing to put three measures on the May 19 ballot:

• a constitutional amendment to allow an “open primary” system, replacing the open primary system previously thrown out by the courts
• a constitutional amendment to provide that legislators will not receive pay if a budget is not approved on time
• a constitutional amendment to prohibit salary increases for legislators when the state encounters a deficit

Maldonado also won concessions on taxes, eliminating the gas tax increase and changing the personal income tax surcharge provisions in the package. And perhaps most importantly to Maldonado, who is widely expected to run for controller next year, the plan strikes $1 million in funding for furniture for the state controller’s office, which is moving to consolidate locations.

Over the weekend, there was a last-minute push on behalf of community colleges that reversed planned across-the-board cuts to most categorical programs and elimination of funding for maintenance and equipment. After advocates pointed out that community colleges are currently serving more than 20,000 unfunded FTES and are likely to absorb an apportionment shortfall of $76 million (1.2%), legislators backed off from proposed additional cuts of up to $120 million. In particular, Governor Schwarzenegger’s office was instrumental in fighting to keep access to community colleges open during this time of economic uncertainty.

Here are the highlights for community colleges:

• 2008-09: Eliminates the approved 0.68% cost-of-living adjustment (-$39.8 million)
• 2008-09: Reduces state funding for mandates (-$4 million)
• 2008-09: Defers $340 million in state payments to the 2009-10 fiscal year (replacing $245 million deferral approved in existing 2008-09 budget; minimizes state borrowing and reduces Prop. 98 guarantee)
• 2009-10: Funds 3% enrollment growth ($185.4 million), enough funds for 36,000 new full-time equivalent students
• 2009-10: Maintains funding for the Competitive Cal Grants program, which provides 22,500 grants annually to needy non-traditional students
• Generally: Since there were no categorical or general apportionment cuts, language to allow categorical flexibility was not included
• Future: Places a measure on the next statewide ballot (now scheduled to be May 19) to repay K-12 and community colleges $9.3 billion over seven years beginning in 2011-12.

Significant questions remain about the use of significant federal dollars earmarked for education that were included in the federal stimulus package. These funds will likely be considered by budget subcommittees over the months leading to the funds’ availability, which is July 2009. Additionally, a K-12 “deficit factor” was recognized in the budget package for 13%, meaning that as new funds become available over the next few years, the top priority will be restoring the lost purchasing power from the COLA suspension. To avoid a further relative decline in funding per FTES, leading to increased reliance on part-time employees and loss of salary competitiveness, it is essential that community colleges are similarly allowed to restore their purchasing power.

We will be looking at our budget advocacy efforts over the next couple of weeks, and be gearing up for the many approaching fights. For now, it’s important to remember what we’ve successfully defeated this year:

• proposed 5% apportionment cuts
• proposed $30-40/unit student fees, with the benefit going to the state general fund and not students
• proposed differential funding for physical education and arts classes
• proposed elimination of Competitive Cal Grants, which is financial aid for our neediest students
• proposed 20.2% cuts to categorical programs including technology, part-time faculty support, foster care and child care

Now we must rededicate ourselves to the mission for which we have been entrusted, to serve those who others won’t, to stretch inadequate dollars to reach greater possibilities, to appreciate the diversity of our students and communities as an asset that brings both challenges and opportunities, and to never give up on the promise to provide every Californian the opportunity of a brighter future.
Dear Colleagues,
The “ecoLOGIC” exhibition in the Cypress College Art Gallery has been a huge success. To mark its closing, the art gallery will be hosting two events. On Thursday, February 26th at 1:30PM “ecoLOGIC” curator Patricia Watts will be giving a lecture about the exhibit in the Art Gallery. On Saturday, February 28th from 6-8PM the art gallery will be hosting a closing reception for the “ecologic” artists. Both events are free and open to the public. Thank you.
Paul Paiement
Cypress College Art Gallery, Director

“Environmentalists often find it hard not to be sarcastic, or even angry, when working with individuals, organizations, and institutions that are ignorant of opportunities to protect the environment. The use of humor and metaphors is often employed by activists to point out playfully what is obvious to some, a way to open minds to new ideas. Artists have long pointed out the not-so-obvious through visual imagery, offering up symbols that can lead cultures to a new awareness. The following in “ecoLOGIC” share this practice. Their minds to new ideas. Artists have long pointed out the not-so-obvious through visual imagery, offering up symbols that can lead cultures to a new awareness. The following in “ecoLOGIC” share this practice. Their work displays a type of logic that questions its viewers to think deeper and harder, and to make sense of what they present. An ecoLOGIC, if you will.” - Patricia Watts, Curator, “ecoLOGIC”

Event to Mark End of ‘ecoLOGIC’ Exhibit

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Case of the Missing Major
DATE: Wednesday, February 25, 2009
TIME: 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm
LOCATION: CC-Complex, CCC-414
PRESENTER: Sharon Easton

Instructors and Program Managers:
If you have assigned your students extra-credit, Attendance
Verifications will be given to workshop attendees at the end of the workshop.

Please let your students know about these 3 workshops offered next Tuesday & Wednesday!

Quick Resume Tips
DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2009
TIME: 11:00 am - 11:30 am
LOCATION: CC-Complex, 2nd Floor Conference Room
PRESENTER: Sharon Easton

Job Search Success
DATE: Wednesday, February 25, 2009
TIME: 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm
LOCATION: CC-Complex, CCC-414
PRESENTER: Sharon Easton

These workshops are open to EVERYONE - FREE OF CHARGE.

For further information, please contact the Career Planning Center at (714) 484-7120

Black History Month Event

The college’s celebration of Black History Month wraps up this week. The Cypress College Dance Department will present “Dancing through Black History” on Wednesday, February 25, at 12:30 p.m., in the Theater. Admission is free.

Associate Students Service Initiative

The Associated Students Council announces the launch of the Legislative Advocacy Project, the first of our initiatives to respond to President Obama’s Call to Service. The Project will provide an advocacy structure for Cypress College students to the state and federal legislative and executive branches on budget and educational policy matters. It will be led by Director Jose Gonzalez, Associated Students External Affairs Committee Chair, and Co-Director Ryan Billings, AS Senator.

In the Fall Semester, the AS Council initiated an External Affairs Committee. The Committee held an informational meeting for students on the state budget situation, and in conjunction with the Student Senate for the California Community Colleges, facilitated a letter writing campaign and Fax Day to California legislators. The Legislative Advocacy Project will be providing additional opportunities for student involvement, enabling broader and stronger advocacy.

The first event for the Project will be bringing Cypress College students to the “We Are the Key!” Community College Rally, being held by CCCPRO on February 27th at Pasadena City College, to generate awareness of Community Colleges as key to California’s economic recovery. We are inviting students and staff alike to participate with the aim of securing the attendance of approximately 100 individuals from Cypress College to the rally.

How Can Students Participate?

• Associated Students External Affairs Ad-Hoc Committee - The Committee will provide the leadership and technical roles for the project. This is a wonderful learning opportunity for political science students and others who would like to learn more about the legislative process and advocacy techniques.

• Lobby Corps - For students who would like to write letters and make phone calls on a regular basis, and participate in rallies and district legislative office visits.

• Attend the “We Are the Key!” Rally.

Students who would like to join the External Affairs Committee or the Lobby Corps should contact Project Director Jose Gonzalez, josegonzalez.as@gmail.com. To attend the “We Are the Key!” Rally, students may sign-up at the Front Desk in the Student Activities Center.

How Can the Campus Community Help?

• Encourage students to participate in the External Affairs Committee or in the Lobby Corps. For faculty members, Legislative Advocacy Project representatives are available to address your classes.

• Extra Credit - We would greatly appreciate faculty members who give extra credit opportunities for his/her students to attend the We Are the Key! Rally, or write letters to California Legislators. As we look forward to future endeavors, we hope that these special incentives continue so that students are encouraged to participate where they may otherwise hesitate.

• Attend the “We Are the Key!” Rally.

As always, all comments, questions, or concerns are welcome. Please feel free to contact us by replying to this message or by visiting us in the Student Activities Center. Thank you.

Cordially,
Cypress College Associated Students
"Coffee with the Chancellor"

Thursday
February 26, 2009
2:30 – 4:00 p.m.
Cypress College Complex
Room 414

Send in your RSVP by Monday, February 23, to Pat Humpres at phumpres@cypresscollege.edu

As a follow-up to last October's Strategic Conversation, a decision was made to schedule informal "coffees" with the Chancellor. This is an opportunity to chat with him about what's on your mind.
Flying Chargers Soar to new heights in 2009 Competition

Straight from Salinas, California just outside of Monterey Bay, the Cypress College Flying Chargers return home from the 2009 PCIFA Regional Flying Competition. This year’s competition was held at Salinas, Ca and was hosted by San Jose State University. The competition included competitors from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University, San Jose State University, Mt. San Antonio College, San Diego Christian College, and Cypress College. Competitors participated in events ranging from Power-Off landings to Aircraft Identification tests. The top three teams from the event will then move on to Nationals to take on schools from around the country. This year’s Cypress College Flying Chargers had three students who competed in the events, Executive Officer Matt Gras, Logistics Officer Andrew Samp, and Team Captain Christopher Hicks. Despite this being the first year of competition for these competitors, they placed well in many of the events. Some of the awards included: 9th place in Navigation (Chris and Andrew), 5th place in Power Off landing (Christopher), 8th place Short Field Landing (Christopher), 9th and 15th place in message drop (Christopher, Matt, Andrew), 6th place in Top Pilot award (Christopher), 9th place Top Scoring Male Contestant (Christopher) and Top Team Member (Matt Gras). “This was the best team I have seen in recent years, the team really came together this year. We have a strong foundation for next year’s team, and looking forward to the upcoming competition” said team advisor, Daniel Wotring. The team will begin preparing soon for next year’s PCIFA Regional Competition that takes them to San Diego. To find out more about the Cypress College Flying Team fly over to their website at www.cypressflyingteam.com.
Cypress College Celebrates Black History Month

Come join the celebration:
February 18, 2009 at 2pm in Humanities 131
Guest Speaker Jihad Saafir, a former member of the Nation of Islam, followed by Malcolm X the Movie

February 25, 2009 at 12:30pm in Fine Arts Theater
Cypress College Dance Department presents Dancing Through Black History
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
February 19, 2009

Contact:
Scott Lay, President/CEO  
(916) 213-2232  
scottlay@ccleague.org

STATE BUDGET PRESERVES ACCESS TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES  
Community college leaders salute Governor Schwarzenegger and Legislature

SACRAMENTO, CA – With the approval of an 18-month budget plan this morning by the State Legislature, community college leaders are returning their focus to the mission of providing Californians the education and training they need.

“Governor Schwarzenegger and the legislative leaders that crafted this plan must be saluted,” said Scott Lay, President and CEO of the Community College League of California. “In making very difficult budgetary decisions, they prioritized community college access to ensure that the rungs of the ladder of economic opportunity would be maintained during these difficult budget times for the state and families alike.”

The budget provides funding for 36,000 more full-time students next year, which will enable the colleges to serve students being turned away by the state’s four-year university systems and returning to school after losing their jobs. Community colleges are currently serving more than 20,000 unfunded full-time students, a trend expected to continue next year with record enrollment demand.

“As we move forward, we must not ignore the sacrifices in quality that are happening at our colleges,” said Theresa Tena, Director of Fiscal Policy of the League. “Over the current and next fiscal years, colleges will lose 11% in purchasing power. This means larger class sizes, longer waits to see counselors and the postponement of important maintenance. As the state’s budget situation improves, we will prioritize the restoration of quality that Californians expect from their community colleges.”

The resolution of the budget also is expected to let community colleges get back to work shortly on $1.5 billion in capital construction projects that have been delayed. As they construct 193 projects on 102 campuses, community colleges are putting voter-approved bond dollars to
work, employing local construction workers and transforming the campuses to meet 21st century workforce needs.

The Community College League of California is a nonprofit public benefit corporation whose voluntary membership consists of the 72 local community college districts in California. The League promotes student access and success by strengthening colleges through leadership development, advocacy, policy development and district services.

# # #
CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE FACTS

Districts: 72 districts
Colleges: 110 colleges

Full-time equivalent students (annual): 1,297,600 (+10.2% Fall 2008)
Headcount enrollment (term): 1,823,600 (+6.2% Fall 2008)

Student demographics:
- African-American 7.2%
- American Indian/Alaskan Native 0.9%
- Asian 11.9%
- Filipino 3.5%
- Hispanic 30.0%
- Other Non-White 1.9%
- Pacific Islander 0.7%
- Unknown 8.8%
- White Non-Hispanic 35.0%

State-determined funding per full-time student: $5,845 (Budget Act)
Per-student credit funding: $4,595*

18-Month Budget Agreement (adopted February 19, 2009)
2008-09 Budget Changes:
- Eliminates $39.8 million for a 0.68% cost-of-living adjustment approved in the 2008-09 Budget Act.
- Eliminates $4 million for reimbursable state mandates.
- Maintains funding for 2% enrollment growth (24,000 full-time students).

2009-10 State Budget
- Funds 3% enrollment growth, or enough funding for 36,000 full-time students.
- Maintains funding for Competitive Cal Grant program, which largely targets returning (older) economically disadvantaged students.

* This is the rate colleges receive for each new student, and with which the enrollment decline is projected on under the general student funding cut.