

Southwestern Community College President Resigns

kpbs.org

By Ana Tintocalis

November 30, 2010

SAN DIEGO — The embattled president of Southwestern Community College in Chula Vista unexpectedly resigned on Tuesday. Dr. Raj K. Chopra is stepping down almost two years before his contract officially ends.

Chopra was disliked by the college's faculty union and some student groups. The makeup of the college board of trustees also changed this month after the November elections. It is now a different board than the one that originally hired Chopra in 2007.

Chris Bender, the spokesman for Southwestern College, says Chopra is leaving but services for students will remain the same.

"Any time there is a change in leadership at any major community institution, (people) get caught off-guard," he said. "I think what is important is that institution keeps going forward."

In a written statement, Chopra says it's the "right time" for this departure, citing new construction projects are underway and the college accreditation process is on track.

The new governing board bought-out Chopra's contract. Chopra will get the equivalent of six month's salary.

Southwestern is the only higher education institution in the South Bay. Roughly 20,000 students attend the two-year college.

Riverside Community College District trustees sworn in

10:00 PM PST on Tuesday, November 30, 2010

By IMRAN GHORI
The Press-Enterprise

Samuel Davis, a little-known candidate who won a surprise victory to the Riverside Community College District Board of Trustees in the Nov. 2 election, was sworn into office Tuesday.

Incumbents Virginia Blumenthal and Janet Green, who each were elected to a second four-year term, also took the oath of office at a ceremony at Riverside City College.

Chancellor Gregory Gray called Davis' election to the board a historic one, noting that he is the first African-American trustee in the district's 95-year history.

Davis, 65, dressed in a dark suit and purple tie, spoke briefly, thanking voters for electing him but making no mention of the questions surrounding his background.

"I pray to God he will give me the wisdom of Solomon and the courage of Daniel to do the best job I can," he said.

Davis also noted the multicultural makeup of the board, which includes Mark Takano, who is Asian-American; Mary Figueroa, who is Hispanic; Green, who is white; and Blumenthal, who is Jewish.

"There's room for all of us at the table," he said.

Davis, who lives at a U.S. Vets transitional housing shelter for homeless veterans at the former March Air Force Base, beat other better-known and better-financed candidates in his third try for a seat on the board.

Other candidates were surprised by his win, saying he had minimal presence on the campaign trail. His campaign documents showed no expenditures on mailers or campaign signs.

Questions have also been raised about his professional background. He described himself as a university professor, dentist and teacher in a campaign flier.

The Dental Board of California shows no license for him.

Green has taught at Cal State San Bernardino, California Baptist University and at the Riverside and Los Angeles school districts, although he is not currently employed by those institutions, according to representatives for those organizations.

In his initial election filing with the Riverside County registrar of voters, Davis asked that his ballot designation be "university professor." However, the registrar told him in an Aug. 23 letter that he couldn't use that designation because he had not been recently employed in that capacity, as required by state election code.

He ended up being listed as a teacher/educator, although the document he submitted to the registrar did not list current employment, only past teaching jobs.

Mark Ford, who said he has known Davis for 12 years from church, said he wasn't surprised by his friend's victory. He said Davis didn't get support from the "status quo" but did reach out to the community. He described Davis as having "a passion for teaching."

Davis' first meeting as a trustee is Dec. 7.

Solano College trustees to talk about graduation goal

Times-Herald staff report

Posted: 12/01/2010 01:01:15 AM PST

Solano Community College trustees will meet tonight for a study session on a lofty goal to dramatically increase the school's graduation rate over the next 10 years.

The study session starts 6:30 p.m. in the Administration building, Room 626 of the Fairfield campus, 4000 Suisun Valley Road.

College President Jowel Laguerre will make a presentation on the school's goal of increasing the number of graduates by 670 per year for

10 years, said Peter Bostic, College Office of Institutional Advancement executive director.

"What we're going to have to do is identify the obstacles that are stopping students from completing their education" and transferring to four-year institutions, Bostic said.

No action will be taken at tonight's meeting.

Community colleges across the state are launching similar efforts to bolster graduation rates. The overall goal is to increase the number of students earning degrees or certificates by one million by the year 2020.

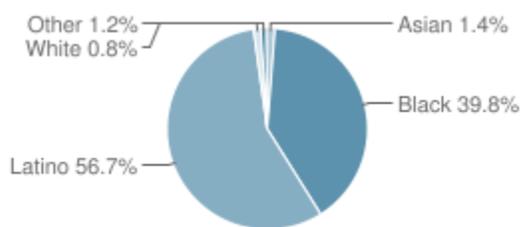
Three Compton residents sue city, allege voting rights violations

LA Times

December 3, 2010 |

Three Compton residents are suing the city for alleged violations of the California Voting Rights Act, contending that the city's elections are stacked against Latino candidates.

The complaint filed Thursday in Los Angeles County Superior Court alleges that the at-large elections for City Council seats have the effect of diluting the Latino vote. Three Compton voters -- Felicitas Gonzalez, Karmen Grimaldi and Flora Ruiz -- filed the suit against the city and City Clerk Alita Godwin.



City offices are closed on Friday, and the city attorney could not be immediately reached.

The mayor and the four members of Compton's City Council are African American. Compton was long seen as a primarily black community, but Latino residents now make up about two-thirds of the city's population. The suit alleges that although Latino candidates have run for council seats in a number of elections, no Latino candidate has been elected since at least 1999, and possibly ever.

Compton council members represent specific geographic districts within the city, but voting for each seat is not restricted to residents of the district. The suit alleges that the at-large elections violate the California Voting Rights Act of 2001.

A previous Times analysis of voting patterns in the cities of southeast Los Angeles County found that Compton was one of a number of cities with large immigrant populations and a pattern of extremely low voter participation. In at least three municipal elections since 2005, less than 10% of the voting-age population cast ballots, the analysis found.

Abby Sewell

STATE CHAMPIONSHIP NOTEBOOK: Ban bonds Pierce women's volleyball together on title run

By Erik Boal, Staff Writer

Posted: 12/06/2010

Veronika Ban deflected the credit Sunday, because Pierce College women's volleyball coach Nabil Mardini has taught her that's what makes a good teammate.

But Mardini was effusive with his praise of the Newbury Park graduate, especially after she rescued the Brahmas from suffering perhaps their first sweep of the season in the state championship against Santa Rosa at Chaffey College. Pierce suffered a 25-21, 26-24, 23-25, 19-25, 16-14 loss in the best-of-5 final before recovering for a 25-23 victory in the winner-take-all final, but it was Ban who ignited the Brahmas when they desperately needed some inspiration.

With Pierce facing a two-game deficit and trailing 21-13 in the third, Mardini benched outside hitters Sarah Martin and Samantha Potter, inserting Oak Park graduate Rachael Band and Hart alumnae Carolin Luppens into the lineup. The change resulted in sophomore middle blocker Reanna Hill and Ban becoming primary targets of setter Julianna Hicks and the 5-foot-10 freshman didn't disappoint, recording two kills, two blocks and an ace to help the Brahmas rally to score 12 of the game's final 14 points.

"Veronika has made our offense more balanced. She can run the middle and we can have a three-middle attack or we can put her on the left or the right side, it doesn't matter she just steps up and makes plays," Mardini said. "She's so versatile and so unselfish."

After Pierce cut the deficit to 22-18, Santa Rosa coach Kelly Wood called a timeout, which enabled Mardini to return Martin and Potter in the lineup. They combined for five kills, helping Pierce steal the momentum on its way to building an 11-point lead in the fourth en route to evening the match."

"We don't care who gets the credit, we just needed the win," said Ban, who had 11 kills in the best-of-5 final and added another in Pierce's 25-23 victory in the deciding title game. "We needed to pull together and work as a team."

Ban finished with 25 kills in the state tournament to secure all-tournament honors, joining MVP Sarah Martin, Samantha Potter, Julianna Hicks and Kathleen Wright.

"I've never had a team that bought into our system like this one. No one cared who got the credit as long as we practiced hard to win," Mardini said. "I think one big factor for us was when we got Veronika Ban back from an injury in mid-October. She just picked up the team with her right side play. With players like her and Martin, Potter, Hill, Wright and Hicks, the team bonded well. That's how you win a title."

Taking it to the limit

For the fourth consecutive year and eighth time in tournament history, the state title came down to the deciding game, with El Camino College winning in 2007 and '08 -- defeating Santa Rosa in the latter -- followed by Orange Coast College last year.

Pierce built a 21-13 lead in the deciding game, before Santa Rosa made one final push to tie the score at 23 on Taylor Nelson's ace. But a Bear Cubs' net violation, followed by Martin's left-handed tip on match point helped the Brahmas protect Southern California's 34-year streak of producing state champions.

"That's volleyball -- you make runs, you give up runs, you have momentum switches and you have to ride the downs and the ups," Mardini said. "Santa Rosa just didn't want to lose. They're a great team. They're balanced and they're well-coached."

Back in the winner's circle

Potter is the only player on Pierce's roster to win a volleyball title in high school, leading Taft to the City Section crown in 2006.

But after taking second on Cycle 11 of "America's Next Top Model" in 2008, Potter enjoyed another championship celebration Sunday, recording 22 kills in the six games against Santa Rosa, following a 12-kill effort in the semifinal sweep of Cypress.

"Nobody remembers who finishes second," Potter said. "It's like winning City times one thousand. I'm exhausted, I'm relieved, I'm excited, I'm just so grateful to have this opportunity. It's just all of the above. I don't know how else to describe it."

Studying LAUSD's calendar LA Times - Editorial

December 6, 2010

It's unclear that students would learn more by moving the school year up three weeks.

There's nothing sacred about the traditional school calendar that starts after Labor Day and ends in June. If changing it would improve education, by all means, tinker away. But studies are mixed on whether most calendar changes benefit students.

What *does* work is adding instructional days. But extra time for learning isn't what the Los Angeles Unified School District has in mind with its proposal to move the start of school to mid-August. On the contrary, budget cuts have forced it to trim nearly two weeks of instructional time. So it's not that students will learn more; it's that they would learn more before certain hallmark tests. They could take their midterms before the winter break, when the information is fresher in their minds. They would have more time before the state's high school exit exam and the College Board's Advanced Placement tests.

The testing that wouldn't be affected is the biggie: the California Standards Tests that now are commonly given in May and are used to measure schools' progress. Many principals want more class time before the tests; they also complain that the month after the tests is an educational dead zone during which little is accomplished. But the state requires students to take the tests no later than 85% into the school year. An August start would simply shift everything earlier, not give students more time to absorb their lessons before the tests and eliminate the unproductive time afterward.

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Many parents and teachers object to the proposed switch because it would disrupt vacation plans, conflict with camps and other summer programs, and require attendance during some of the year's hottest, smoggiest weeks, which might increase the district's utility expenses and mean more days when students could not exercise outdoors. In other states, earlier starts to the school year have resulted in losses to the tourism industry; in addition, the August start would cut into students' summer earning capacity, because most summer jobs run from late June to Labor Day.

Better education would outweigh all those concerns — if that's what an August start would really provide.

There's reason, however, to believe the effect on learning would be minimal, if there's any effect at all. It's true that if midterms were given before the winter break instead of after, teachers could dispense with some of the review they currently do, and that would give them a couple of days of instructional time. But it's hardly worth moving the calendar three weeks to gain two or three

days. And although students would have fresher memories of the information they'd learned if they were tested before the holidays, they would still forget a lot of it during the break. In fact, some studies suggest that post-holiday review improves long-term retention. In other words, this move seems designed more to produce good test results than better-educated students.

We don't blame schools for fretting about tests. That's what state and federal policies require of them. If changing the school start date would actually allow schools to schedule more instructional time before the California Standards Tests, which in turn could raise their standing under the federal No Child Left Behind Act, Los Angeles Unified would be justified in forging ahead with the policy. But it won't. And there's even less reason to plan the school year around the other two standardized tests that the district gives as reasons for an early start — the high school exit exam and AP tests. The exit exam is designed to test skills mastered a year or two earlier, and students have multiple chances to take it, beginning in their sophomore year. The time to worry about what they're learning is throughout their middle school and early high school years, not the August before the test. And AP tests are taken by too few students to justify changing everyone's school year.

At minimum, a major change is premature. Eighteen schools in L.A. Unified voluntarily started in August this year, constituting an informal pilot project. The district should spend a year or two assessing whether the benefits are real and significant before changing the calendar for more than 600,000 children and their families.

Community-College Association Turns to Old Pro at Crucial Juncture

The Chronicle of Higher Education

December 5, 2010

By Jennifer Gonzalez

Washington

During Walter G. Bumphus's nearly four decades in higher education, he has helped open a college, steered a higher-education system through the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and trained new generations of community-college leaders.

Now renewal is again a central theme for Mr. Bumphus, who in January will become president of the American Association of Community Colleges.

Two-year colleges have gained new prominence under President Obama, who held the first White House summit on the sector in October. But the sector's momentum has stalled, as the president's \$12-billion plan to improve community colleges collapsed during the legislative process.

Mr. Bumphus will need to find a way to move the sector's ambitious college-completion agenda forward despite that setback. He will work to refocus attention on two-year institutions as key to the country's prosperity.

The Washington-based association's first black leader, he has led groups through crucial moments before.

As a young administrator, Mr. Bumphus helped lead the creation of East Arkansas Community College in 1974, involving himself in every aspect, whether developing curriculum or hiring faculty. Many years later, as president of the Louisiana Community and Technical College system, he turned a program battered by Hurricane Katrina into an engine of growth. He secured a \$5-million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to develop construction-trade centers that helped in a rebirth of hard-hit coastal areas.

Now Mr. Bumphus, 62, is poised to take over at the community-college association at a pivotal time for its member institutions.

While community colleges received a lot of positive attention after President Obama made them a centerpiece of his higher-education agenda, the challenges they face are numerous. Cuts in state budgets have forced community colleges to offer fewer courses, increase class sizes, and lay off employees, even as demand for their job-training programs grows. The sector is often criticized for its low graduation rates, resulting in part from the fact that many of its students toil in remedial courses that they never complete.

Those who know Mr. Bumphus say he has the right mix of skills and personality to lead the large advocacy association, which represents almost 1,200 institutions, with a total enrollment of more than 11 million. Known for his collaborative and entrepreneurial style, as well as his buoyant enthusiasm, he brings to the position wide-ranging experience.

He is a professor in the Community College Leadership Program at the University of Texas at Austin and chair of the department of educational administration. He earned a doctoral degree in educational administration from the university there.

Mr. Bumphus, a Kentucky native who earned a bachelor's and master's degree from Murray State University, has worked in community-college positions ranging from system president to dean of students. He also had a stint in the private sector as president of the higher-education division of Voyager Expanded Learning, a Dallas-based provider of intervention programs in reading and math for schools.

That experience influenced his approach to leadership, he says. "Working in the corporate world shaped the way I look at running the business of a college. It helped me pay closer attention to not only the finances but meeting the needs of the customer."

Prominent National Exposure

As president of the community-college association, Mr. Bumphus's role will comprise equal parts administrator, politician, and advocate.

His day-to-day duties will focus on meeting the needs of the group's members, but the job is also to influence policy makers and serve as head cheerleader for community colleges, making sure their story is understood. It's a robust position, one with potential power in Washington's higher-education debates.

George R. Boggs, the departing president, has overseen the community-college sector during a period of rapid enrollment growth and high visibility. Gaining that exposure is one of the major achievements of Mr. Boggs's 10-year tenure. And it has contributed to a cultural shift in the public's view of community colleges, which have become the first choice for ever more college-bound students.

Mr. Boggs has made the case for community colleges to lawmakers and to the public as an affordable collegegoing option that offers strong academic quality.

Like his predecessor, Mr. Bumphus will find himself working behind the scenes to make sure that policy is crafted in a way that is favorable to his college sector. And he will have to keep tabs on emerging trends, so that community colleges can work to best fulfill their academic and work-force-training roles.

Higher-education lobbyists expect Mr. Bumphus to be even more in the forefront of policy debates than Mr. Boggs, given the new leader's assertive personality.

The two-year sector is coming off its greatest national exposure in the wake of the White House summit. Despite the good vibrations of the event, community colleges have also encountered

profound disappointment this year. President Obama's \$12-billion plan to improve them was retooled into the \$2-billion, four-year Community College and Career Training Grant Program.

The scaling back of the president's plan was a lost opportunity to make significant changes in two-year degree programs and campus facilities, although community-college leaders, including Mr. Bumphus, say they are grateful for the money they did receive. Their goal now will be to build on those dollars and the positive press the community colleges have received.

John E. Roueche, a professor of educational administration at Austin, says the two-year sector has historically not done a good job explaining to Congress or state legislatures the extent of community colleges' impact on the economy and the work force. But Mr. Bumphus is good at that, Mr. Roueche says of his Texas colleague. "He can tell that story better than anybody I know."

When he arrived at the Louisiana system, in 2001, Mr. Bumphus wanted it to play a stronger role in the region, and especially in the workplace. He persuaded governing-board members and key state legislators to take a trip with him to visit cutting-edge community colleges in other states that were creating partnerships with nearby businesses to meet work-force needs. As a result, the Louisiana system was able to set up job-training programs around the state to serve the health-care and construction industries.

"All of a sudden," Mr. Roueche says, "board members and legislators understood that community colleges were not just a cost item in the state budget, but an investment in economic-development renewal."

Emphasis on Completion

In Washington, Mr. Bumphus will have to do more than tell a good story, especially as politicians increase pressure on colleges to improve their performance. Republicans, who took control of the House of Representatives and gained seats in the Senate in November, have said they want to expand Democrats' inquiries into the performance of for-profit colleges to all of higher education. Graduation rates at two-year colleges are consistently low, with fewer than 25 percent of students who seek associate degrees earning them within three years.

Mr. Bumphus says one of his main priorities will be to steer a sector with a longtime focus on student access to instead turn its attention to student success.

President Obama has set a goal that by 2020, the United States will lead the world in producing college graduates. He has called on community colleges to help reach that goal by producing five million more graduates with degrees or certificates in the next 10 years.

The association has set its own goal, along with five other groups that represent two-year colleges, to increase student-completion rates by 50 percent over the next decade.

To that help reach that mark, Mr. Bumphus plans to embark on a national listening tour to learn what college and state leaders are doing to help students get through remedial education, a main stumbling block to degree completion. The association must do a better job of promoting promising practices that can be shared among community colleges, he says. He is especially fond

of course formats that allow students to focus only on concepts they haven't mastered rather than require them to repeat an entire course.

Community colleges should also figure out how to do more to demonstrate their performance, he says. "We need to embrace accountability. It's important that we have a hand in determining the appropriate metrics. Should we be measured against the same metrics as a Harvard or the University of Maryland? Perhaps not. I know not. But are there appropriate metrics for us? Absolutely."

The community-college association is leading an effort, called the Voluntary Framework of Accountability, which Mr. Bumphus will continue to press. The project seeks to develop ways to measure students' progress and success, along with two-year colleges' ability to meet work-force, economic, and community-development needs. It will include a tool for data collection and display that will allow institutions to compare their degree-completion data against those of peer colleges.

Community colleges face a lot of challenges, not least increasing the graduation rates of its students, says Mary Spilde, immediate past chair of the association's Board of Directors and president of Lane Community College, in Oregon.

The association wanted a leader who would capitalize on the sector's increased visibility to move its agenda forward. It was Mr. Bumphus's gumption, Ms. Spilde says, that led the board to choose him as the person for the job.

Genethia Hudley-Hayes Appointed As Special Trustee for the Compton Community College District

Hubcitylivin.com

Posted by HCL on December 1, 2010 at 1:06pm in ECC Compton Center

California Community Colleges Chancellor Appoints Genethia Hudley-Hayes

As Special Trustee for the Compton Community College District

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott today announced he appointed Dr. Genethia Hudley-Hayes as the special trustee for the Compton Community College District. Dr. Hudley-Hayes will replace Dr. Peter Landsberger, who served the district for 4.5 years.

“I am very pleased Dr. Genethia Hudley-Hayes has agreed to serve as special trustee for the Compton Community College District. Her vast experience as an educator and community leader makes her uniquely qualified to serve the district,” said state Chancellor Jack Scott. “Under her guidance, the Compton Center will be in a strong position to regain accreditation as an independent college.”

Dr. Landsberger’s resignation will be effective Jan. 1, 2011 and Dr. Hudley-Hayes' appointment will commence that same day. Dr. Hudley-Hayes formerly served as president of the Los Angeles Unified School District Board of Education and as an executive director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Martin Luther King Legacy Association. She currently sits on the Los Angeles Board of Fire Commissioners and manages her own strategic planning and education consulting firm. Hudley-Hayes began her career in education as a teacher in the Los Angeles Unified School District.

“I am enthusiastic about serving in this capacity and will work to help the Compton Center to again become an accredited college within the California Community Colleges,” said Hudley-Hayes. “In the meantime, I will endeavor to maintain the public’s confidence that the center delivers a quality education to all of its students.”

Dr. Hudley-Hayes earned a bachelor’s degree in English from Texas College; a master’s degree in education from Pepperdine University; a master’s degree in business administration with an emphasis on non-profit management from the California State University, San Jose and The Center for Non-Profit Management; and a doctorate in education with a specialization in public policy from American University.

“Dr. Landsberger has made significant contributions toward the district's recovery. I am extremely grateful for his years of service,” Chancellor Scott concluded.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving nearly 3 million students per year. Community colleges provide workforce training, teach basic skills math and English courses, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The [Chancellor’s Office](#) provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

\$50-million school gift paying off LA Times

By Steve Lopez

December 8, 2010

Melanie Lundquist is \$15 million into her pledge to assist low-performing L.A. Unified campuses. So far, the results are pretty good.

In late November, roughly 60 Los Angeles teachers and administrators jetted off to New York to study reforms in that city's public schools. How could they afford a three-day excursion with midtown Manhattan lodging prices, even as 1,000 L.A. Unified employees got the ax?

The answer has a lot to do with the \$50-million woman, Melanie Lundquist.

"Teachers are underappreciated and undervalued, with very little professional development available," said Lundquist, whose generosity has helped pay for trips to New York two years in a row.

Lundquist and her husband, real estate developer Richard, pledged in 2007 to give \$5 million a year to the Partnership for Los Angeles Schools for 10 years. The group, spearheaded by L.A. Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, aims to turn around a cluster of the district's lowest-performing schools. The Lundquists are now \$15 million into their commitment, and Melanie and I met last week to talk about how it's going.

The last time I saw Lundquist, in August 2009, her outlook was rosy despite a rough start for the partnership. The mayor's insistence that he could do better than L.A. Unified at running the schools was starting to seem doubtful in the face of continuing low test scores, and teachers had passed no-confidence votes at eight of the 10 partnership schools.

More than a year later, it's still a mixed bag, but looking better. Academic Performance Index scores are up an average of 36 points over the last two years at the partnership schools, seven points more of a gain than the district average.

Lundquist says fixing schools is more about attitude and expectations than money, and since school funding may shrink, we need to find practical reforms. For sure, but it's easier to get started on those reforms with a \$50-million gift, and the other 700 L.A. schools don't have that.

Still, I was eager to see what the schools have accomplished, so last week I went with the mayor's chief of staff, Jeff Carr, to meet up with Lundquist at 99th Street Elementary, one of the jewels of the partnership.

Here's what I found there:

A bulletin board celebrating the school's soaring API test scores, another board showing that 96% of all students had a parent attend at least one academic event last year, a weed patch that's been turned into a community garden, and a principal who couldn't believe the line of people

trying to transfer their kids into a school that had been given up for lost a few years ago.

"With the partnership, there's much more support," said Principal Sherri Williams, who told me there's less administrative hassle than she had at her previous assignment as assistant principal at a non-partnership school.

We dropped in on a fourth-grade class, taught by Courtney Moore, in which a student was instructed to get up, walk over and quietly welcome us to class. He whispered that they were learning division by approximation, which the kids appeared to understand. Carr and I, on the other hand, were lost.

Monica Rangel, a mom I met in the school's parent lounge, was pasting class photos onto a poster. She said she and other parents had picketed to get rid of the previous principal, and Williams is a vast improvement.

Parents weren't welcome on campus at one time, Rangel said. Now they're welcomed and put to work as volunteers, and student enrollment has gone from 480 to 600.

"I could not be more pleased with the progress," said Lundquist, who added that Williams has a talent for motivating teachers, students and parents, and for getting financial support from local businesses.

It's been rockier at Markham Middle School, our next stop. Markham is surrounded by housing projects and gangs, and a large percentage of students are from foster homes. Only 15% of second-year students rank as proficient, and 30% of the teachers are substitutes. That last number could change with a recent lawsuit settlement aimed at preventing low-performing schools from having to endure huge teacher turnover during cutbacks.

Brand-new Principal Paul Hernandez spoke as if he was lucky to have so daunting a challenge. He said he's big on data, and despite some early wariness, the school's union reps have been on board as teachers review test scores every two weeks to chart student progress.

Hernandez has a "Do-Now" requirement in which students have to start working on the assignment written on the board as soon as they sit down. In one class, eighth-grade history teacher Raymond Velasco's board assignment asked students what would happen if Congress and the president signed off on a bill outlawing religious speech outside of churches.

"They go to the Supreme Court because the law is against the Constitution," the student nearest me wrote in her notebook.

English teacher Mena Webster, who went on the New York trip and has been at Markham more than 20 years, said the campus is calmer than it used to be, and she no longer has to go looking for administrators if she needs support.

"They're right here with us," she said.

Two kids walked up to me between classes and shook my hand, welcoming me to Markham. I asked where they planned to go to college.

UCLA, said Denzel Gordon.

Harvard, said Jerome Jones.

Melanie Lundquist was smiling.

Peralta college district restarts search for new chancellor

By Matt Krupnick
Contra Costa Times
Posted: 12/07/2010

OAKLAND -- The Peralta Community College District will scrap months of work and conduct a second search for a chancellor, trustees decided Tuesday night.

The board made the unanimous decision after employees complained they had not been adequately included in the nationwide search, much of which took place during the summer, when school was not in session. The announcement at Tuesday's board meeting was met with a smattering of applause.

The decision means the district may not have a permanent replacement for Elihu Harris, who left last summer after trustees declined to extend his contract, until the 2011-12 school year is under way. Trustees had planned on the new chancellor starting by next July.

Longtime Peralta administrator Wise Allen has led the district since Harris left and likely will remain at the helm until the permanent replacement is hired.

In reopening the search, trustees rejected all three finalists -- Lawrence Cox, Edna Chun and Ed Gould -- who had been chosen from 10 applicants. Board members did not comment on the decision after Tuesday's announcement.

The new chancellor will have his or her hands full with a district being watched closely by the state because of sloppy finances. A state-mandated financial report presented to Peralta trustees Tuesday night noted that the four-college district is likely to face serious budget problems next year, and an independent audit of Peralta bonds found messy recordkeeping had led to confusion about how money was spent.

Board members ousted Harris, a former Oakland mayor and state assemblyman, after the Bay Area News Group published details about Harris's role in steering a no-bid, \$940,000 contract to a friend and business partner, Mark Lindquist.

The newspaper group, which includes the Oakland Tribune and the Contra Costa Times, also reported that Harris had improperly given raises to dozens of top managers.

<http://www.lynwood.k12.ca.us/boardofed>

BOARD MEMBERS

Mrs. Maria Lopez, Clerk

Maria G. Lopez was born in Mexicali, B.C. Mexico. After obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in Public Accounting (CPA) from the University of Mexicali, Maria left her home town with the goal of furthering her educational dreams. She, her husband, and their four children have lived in the City of Lynwood since the late 70's. Maria currently serves as Lynwood Unified School Board Member and is President of the City of Lynwood's Sister City Committee. Maria attended Compton Community College in 1994 where she earned her AA degree, graduating with honors. She also holds a Child Development Certificate that allows her to teach at pre-school level. Maria transferred to Cal State Dominguez Hills where she received her BA Degree in Liberal Arts with a minor in Spanish. She is currently in the Master's Program in Public Administration. Maria was voted Commissioner of Financial Aid in 1994 and Associated Student Body President/Trustee to the Board for the 1995-1996 school years. She became the first Latino ASB President in the history of **Compton Community College**. In June 1997 Maria was selected to travel to Korea as a Good Will Delegation Member on behalf of Compton College. In 1998 Maria became a certified counselor for at risk youth. In May 2001 she was named "Woman of the Year" by the Lynwood Unified School District. On February 16, 2005 she was elected as Board Member of the California Head Start and Family Services Association. Maria came to America with a dream to progress in life. She continues her plight of educational and financial assistance and awareness to unprivileged families.

Commission Recommends Steps To Improve UC System

by [Bay City News](#)

December 7, 2010 12:03 PM

A commission that's developing a new vision for the 10-campus University of California system issued a final report on Monday that calls for increasing the number of out-of-state students and having students graduate more quickly.

The UC Commission on the Future also called for strengthening the university's research infrastructure and graduate student involvement, getting more money from federal grants and contracts, and revamping fundraising efforts to bring in more money from private foundations.

Bringing in those additional federal dollars and private funds could mean several hundred million dollars more annually for the UC system, the report stated.

UC Provost Lawrence Pitts told reporters in a conference call that some of the initiatives that are endorsed by the commission are already under way, such as developing an online education pilot project and streamlining the process for California community college students to transfer to UC.

The university has also started an efficiency program aimed at streamlining, consolidating and standardizing operations across UC's 10 campuses to avoid duplication of student services and other administrative functions.

UC President Mark Yudof said the university has already achieved \$100 million in savings from its cost-cutting efforts in the past year and the report has a goal of achieving \$500 million a year in cost savings five years from now.

The money that is saved will be used to support core academic and research activities, according to the report.

The commission issued 20 recommendations in five broad categories: teaching and curriculum, undergraduate enrollment and access, research and graduate education, fiscal discipline and administrative reform, and public education and advocacy.

Its report will be presented to UC Regents at a special meeting on Dec. 13.

The 27-member commission was created in July 2009 by Board of Regents Chairman Russell Gould, with Yudof serving as its co-chair.

Pitts said UC "wants to achieve some efficiencies" by increasing the number of undergraduate students who graduate in three years by taking summer classes or taking some college classes while they are still in high school.

Having more **community college students** transfer to the UC system won't necessarily bring in more revenue but it will create efficiencies by having students graduate more quickly, Pitts said.

He said that increasing the percentage of out-of-state students, who pay a higher tuition than California students, will bring in more money but also provide an academic benefit by providing "cultural and sectional diversity."

However, Pitts said UC doesn't want to push out qualified California high school students who may not be able to afford the university without financial assistance.

"We won't start displacing unfunded students," he said.

Gould said the commission also studied contingency actions that might be needed if the university system's financial situation worsens.

Among those possibilities are reducing the number of students and faculty members, cutting back financial aid and charging varying tuition fees at different campuses. But the commission isn't yet endorsing any of those ideas, Gould said.

Jeff Shuttleworth, Bay City News

Community college head gets Obama nomination

www.signonsandiego.com

BY PAT FLYNN

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED DECEMBER 8, 2010 AT 7:02 P.M

Constance Carroll, chancellor of the San Diego Community College District, has been nominated by President Barack Obama to serve on the National Council on the Humanities.

The council serves as an advisory panel to the National Endowment for the Humanities, a grant-making arm of government with a \$160 million budget.

“I am very honored to be have been nominated by President Obama,” said Carroll, whose appointment must be confirmed by the Senate. “He is someone I admire greatly. I am honored by his confidence in me.”

Carroll’s is one of three nominations to the 26-member council announced by the White House late Tuesday.

The others are Albert Beveridge, general counsel to the American Historical Association and a distinguished historian in residence at American University in Washington, D.C., and Cathy Davidson, an English and humanities professor at Duke University and a former president of the American Studies Association.

“I am proud to have such distinguished and accomplished individuals join this administration and serve on the National Council on the Humanities,” Obama said in a prepared statement. “I look forward to working with them in the years and months to come.”

The humanities are defined as the study of history, literature, languages, philosophy, religion and related disciplines.

Carroll, who has a doctorate in classics from the University of Pittsburgh, has been chancellor of the three-college district since 2004. She has served on the boards of the American Council on Education, the California Council for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Humanities Panel on Museums and Historical Societies.

Stephen Weber, president of San Diego State University, applauded Carroll’s nomination.

“I want to express my congratulations, both personally and professionally,” Weber said in a statement issued through a spokeswoman. “Constance’s academic career as a classicist is itself extraordinary ... This nomination reinforces what many of Constance’s peers have known for a long time — she is a positive force of change. We are a better community because of her efforts with our young people.”

Carroll noted that her entire career has focused on the humanities.

“The humanities are the central disciplines in education,” she said. “They are about what it means to be human.”

Los Medanos satellite campus gets green light

By Rowena Coetsee

Contra Costa Times

Posted: 12/08/2010 09:09:34 PM PST

BRENTWOOD -- Los Medanos College's choice for a new satellite campus is a go.

Contra Costa Community College District's governing board recently cleared the way for the project to continue by approving the Brentwood site where the college plans to build a permanent campus as well as giving it permission to buy the property.

For the past nine years, the Pittsburg-based community college has been leasing a building that once housed a supermarket in a shopping center at Sand Creek Road and Brentwood Boulevard.

The approximately 20,000-square-foot structure isn't large enough, however, and after two expansions, there's no longer any room left, college President Peter Garcia said.

With 2,418 students enrolled, "we're booking every closet" during the busiest part of the day, he added.

LMC's search for another site led it to open space bounded by the Highway 4 bypass, Marsh Creek Road and Fairview Avenue.

Owned by Brentwood Commercial Partners, the 17 acres are part of Pioneer Square, an almost entirely undeveloped 31-area bordered by Marsh Creek.

The spot is within view of the historic John Marsh House to the west and part of a development project known as Vineyards at Marsh Creek, which includes an active adult community.

The hope is to break ground in mid-2015 on the first phase of the project, which will consist of approximately 42,000 square feet of classrooms and other buildings and will take about two years to complete.

With the completion of the second phase, LMC plans to have an 84,000 square-foot facility.

The community college district's next step is to spend about six months ensuring that there aren't any problems with the property that would prevent its purchase -- a lien on the title, for example, or the discovery of an endangered species of wildlife, said Tim Leong, director of communications and community relations.

During this time the district also will confirm that the information in the Environmental Impact Report it's already produced is still current.

Once that's done, the district will submit documentation justifying the need for a larger campus to both the California Community College Chancellor's Office and California Post Secondary Education Commission for those agencies' approval.

LMC's expectation is that they will designate the new satellite campus as a "center," a designation that will entitle the college to just over \$1 million more each year in state funding, Leong said.

The fact that LMC doesn't own its current site is one reason it doesn't qualify for the additional moneys.

LMC intends to pay the \$4.8 million purchase price with proceeds from a \$286.5 million bond measure voters passed in 2006.

Your Tub or Mine Inside Higher Ed

December 13, 2010

An old debate is rearing its head again.

The two primary camps of higher education budgetary strategy have for years been wrestling over whether it's better to dole out revenues from a central administration or allow individual colleges to control their own financial destinies. With an economic crisis now draining dollars from college coffers across the country, that question is yet again top of mind on several campuses.

The debate over the two models essentially boils down to whether colleges or academic units within a university should bear their own expenses and keep their share of tuition, grants and gifts – “Each Tub On Its Own Bottom,” it's often said – or be given a share of resources from the central administration based on established institutional priorities.

For some scholars of higher education, it's predictable that several institutions have moved toward or considered centralized models amid the economic downturn. Cases in point include Vanderbilt University, which adopted greater budgetary centralization in the 2009-10 academic year, and Cornell University, where a task force's recommendations this year were widely viewed as a move toward more central budgetary control.

“I'm not surprised that institutions would be considering centralizing their models during periods of financial restraint, because that's happened a lot,” said William Lasher, a professor emeritus of higher education at the University of Texas at Austin.

Lasher explains that centralization in tough budget times is a tacit acknowledgment among high-level administrators that – after all the committees have had their say – someone up top is going to have to make a tough call, and that's easier with more control over the purse strings from the outset.

“Ultimately, the really tough decisions are going to have to be made by the administration, because they are the guys that are paid to do that,” Lasher said.

But it just wouldn't be higher education if everyone agreed on a strategy, would it? Indeed, there are plenty of voices on the other side, arguing that the best way to encourage deans to pursue new revenues on college campuses is to force them to fight for their own survival. Nothing concentrates the mind like a balance sheet with red ink.

“It is no surprise that public universities [in particular] that are watching state subsidies drop like a rock are looking for more entrepreneurship,” said John Curry, managing director of Huron Consulting, who has held senior-level finance positions at the California Institute of Technology and several other institutions.

While not naming clients, Curry said he's actually working now with three public universities that are all considering a decentralized model, often dubbed "Responsibility Centered Management" or "Revenue Centered Management" (RCM). Individual academic units, such as the University of California at Los Angeles's business school, have similarly seen the economic crisis as a motivator to become more financially independent.

A number of elite institutions operate on an RCM system, and Harvard University is noted as an early adopter that is still employing an extremely decentralized budget system. But critics of an RCM model often suggest it doesn't give the central administration enough tools to underwrite strategic initiatives across multiple colleges – an increasingly common practice at major research institutions where interdisciplinary work reaps some of the greatest funding rewards. A centralized model, the theory goes, allows an institution to set or change priorities, moving money around to suit the needs of an evolving institution. But that's not necessarily how it works in practice, Curry said. Once deans get used to a certain budget allocation, they're none too pleased to hear it's going to be reduced to fund another initiative deemed more worthy, and that can mean money doesn't move around as much as one might think.

"I have seen centralized management far more ossified than the distributed responsibility system," Curry said.

But the disciples of centralization beg to differ. Take Robert A. Brown, president of Boston University and a major proponent of the centralized model. Brown is convinced that very real downsides can come with an RCM system, saying that deans who fear losing tuition revenue when students take courses elsewhere will fight to keep them no matter what.

"It can lead to all kind of perverse incentives, like engineering schools that want to teach English," he said.

Apart from the possible pedagogical issues of teaching English in an engineering school, Brown suggests that RCM systems can encourage a duplication of efforts across colleges, which are determined to hang on to tuition dollars by teaching courses already offered elsewhere.

Brown views the panoply of courses and disciplines at Boston as one of the university's key attributes, and his allegiance to centralization is in part driven by a desire to ensure students can move freely throughout the institution. The university's One BU initiative is intimately linked to the broader goal of student mobility, and administrators are working to increase course availability and better align entry requirements across majors to ensure that can happen, Brown said.

"We're trying to break down the barriers," he said. "It's easier to do that precisely because we're not an RCM institution, so a school that loses four credits because a student goes to another college doesn't get penalized."

While Boston has been centralized for decades, Vanderbilt has only recently joined the club. The university is hoping to break down some of the same barriers Brown cites, figuring a move away from RCM – at least for four undergraduate schools – will help.

Richard C. McCarty, Vanderbilt's provost, says he remembers from his own experience as a dean how the RCM system discouraged student mobility.

"I can tell you for a fact that we as a school attempted to restrict the movement of Arts and Science students into education or music or engineering because it cost us money," says McCarty, who was dean of arts and science at Vanderbilt before moving into his current role.

McCarty suggests the disincentives for students were more reflected in a governing philosophy of the colleges than actual policy barriers, but at the same time he concedes that credit hour requirements and other measures often have the favorable financial effect of keeping students grounded in a single school.

While McCarty is a critic of RCM as a provost, he actually had it pretty good in arts and science. The college teaches a host of general education courses for students majoring in other colleges, meaning a steady flow of tuition dollars coming in from colleges such as education and engineering.

"Honestly, it sets up a lot of tension," McCarty says. "I think [centralization] encourages people to think more as university citizens than a school that's renting space on campus."

The jury is still out, however, on whether Vanderbilt's budget model will be viewed as equitable and whether it will accomplish broader strategic goals. Kenneth F. Galloway, dean of the school of engineering, calls the new model "a work in progress." He notes that the school has benefited from institutional funding of large-scale construction projects that it might not have been able to fund on its own.

The centralized model effectively forces academic units to make a case for their goals and plans, which can be positive, Galloway adds. At the same time, there's less control at the local level.

"There is sometimes uncertainty about how to proceed if the school wishes to support a faculty initiative but doesn't control the funding for it," Galloway wrote in an e-mail.

Cornell Grapples With New Model

Even higher education's biggest proponents concede that it is an enterprise often resistant to change, and it's little wonder that fundamental changes to budgetary strategy are among the most difficult to sell. That difficulty became apparent early this year at Cornell, where recommendations from a budget task force that seemed to argue for greater centralization received mixed reviews.

When faculty and administrators gathered to discuss the task force's recommendations in February, there was plenty of talk about winners and losers. As reported by the *Cornell Chronicle*, the university's in-house publication, some viewed a lurch toward greater administrative control as potentially deleterious.

“You’re essentially undoing the decentralization that has made Cornell the great institution that it is,” said John Bishop, associate professor of human resource studies in the ILR School. “The provost gets the power to kill off a campus if he wants to and to do whatever he wants.”

In a Friday interview, Bishop told *Inside Higher Ed* that he worried a centralized model might involve high-level administrators in decisions on hiring, which are best left to experts in their fields. Moreover, there are healthy incentives for colleges and schools to pull their own weight in a decentralized system, he said.

“If [schools] are successful, they should continue,” Bishop said. “If they’re not, then the provost should decide, ‘I can’t subsidize these guys so they are going to go down.’”

The fears Bishop and others expressed have not come to fruition at Cornell, because the university hasn’t adopted the task force’s recommendations, said Elmira Mangum, Cornell’s vice president for budget and planning. At the same time, the university is reviewing its budget policies and aiming to develop a system that is more transparent and standardized across colleges, she said.

“We’re still wrestling with this on campus in terms of what we can do,” she said. “It’s by no means settled yet. I wish it was.”

Because several of Cornell’s colleges are state-supported, the university’s budgetary options are necessarily limited. The four state-supported colleges are statutorily obligated to retain their own tuition revenues, necessarily instilling those units with one of the hallmarks of an RCM system. At the same time, Mangum says that only the law school and the Samuel Curtis Johnson Graduate School of Management function independently as “tubs,” controlling revenues and expenditures independently.

“I think what most people want to know is that they will be treated fairly, and they can understand [the budget process] and they will be accountable,” Mangum said.

Economic pressures, she added, are another incentive for rethinking how budgeting is done.

“I think that’s probably what is [compelling] a lot of people to examine how they actually allocate their resources,” she said, “and on what basis they should allocate those resources.”

College sued over public records fees

Califwatch.org

December 14, 2010 | Lance Williams

Have you ever gone to pick up some official document and winced when you saw the Xerox bill?

When that happened to Terry Francke, lawyer for the Californians Aware good government group, he filed a lawsuit under the state Public Records Act.

Francke's target is the Contra Costa Community College District, which includes 35,000-student Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill.

"We heard – I can't remember how – that there was a high charge for public records there, and we decided to test it," he says.

So Francke filed a request for basic documents about Helen Benjamin, the district's \$272,000-per-year chancellor: her employment contract, her financial disclosure report and her recent expense account billings.

The district presented Francke with 80 pages of documents – and a bill for \$80. It included a \$60 fee for 90 minutes of "staff time," at \$40 per hour.

Francke complained, noting that state law explicitly says that agencies can charge the public only the "direct cost of duplication" for documents. The state attorney general's guidelines on the Public Records Act say that fees must "not include the staff person's time in researching, retrieving, redacting and mailing the record."

When he pointed that out, the district was unmoved, Francke said. Vice Chancellor Kindred Murillo said the fee was the district's "business procedure."

Now the district must defend a lawsuit filed Monday in Contra Costa Superior Court. If Californians Aware wins, the district – and thus, the taxpayers – must pay his legal fees. That's in the law, as well.

Last spring, when trustees of CSU Stanislaus tried to keep a secret of the speaking fee they were paying former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin, Francke sued to pry loose the documents. The fee turned out to be \$70,000. The college had to pay Francke's lawyers that time, too.

Another \$1 Million Invested in Grants for Green Workforce Programs

Edison International has invested another \$1 million in its innovative Green Jobs Education Initiative for green education and job training at California community colleges. The company has provided a total of \$2 million for the program within the last 12 months.

"This initiative provides a vehicle for us to create a vibrant 21st century workforce as we engage our communities and work together to address strategic needs. The grants enhance education programs, support environmental efforts and skilled-employee training," said Theodore F. Craver Jr., chairman and chief executive officer, Edison International. "The Green Jobs Education Initiative also has the additional advantage of giving an economic boost to community colleges across the state coping with pressing financial needs."

The company established the program last December, and with these additional grants 10 selected colleges each received a total of \$200,000 in grants. These colleges are:

- Cerro Coso Community College, Ridgecrest
- El Camino College, Torrance
- Golden West College, Huntington Beach
- Long Beach City College, Long Beach
- Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles
- Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, Los Angeles
- Rio Hondo College, Whittier
- San Bernardino Valley College, San Bernardino
- Ventura College, Ventura

Los Angeles Trade-Technical College will be the first recipient of the grant to distribute scholarships. Awards will be presented to 13 students at the downtown Los Angeles campus on Wednesday.

The Green Jobs Education Initiative funds scholarships for students demonstrating a financial need and who are enrolled in green jobs workforce preparation classes. The training programs include the study of renewable energy, solar panel installation, water and wastewater management, transportation and alternative fuels, biofuels production, environmental compliance and sustainability planning.

For more information about the Green Jobs Education Initiative, visit www.edison.com/greenjobs.

About Edison International

Edison International (NYSE:EIX), through its subsidiaries, is a generator and distributor of electric power and an investor in infrastructure and energy assets, including renewable energy. Headquartered in Rosemead, Calif., Edison International is the parent company of Southern California Edison, one of the nation's largest electric

utilities, and Edison Mission Group, a competitive power generation business and parent company to Edison Mission Energy and Edison Capital.

El Camino College's board of trustees is finally back at full strength

By Rob Kuznia Staff Writer

Posted: 12/14/2010 10:45:32 PM PST

Updated: 12/14/2010 10:45:57 PM PST

El Camino College near Torrance has a complete five-member board of trustees again.

After operating for about a year with only four regularly attending members, community college district trustees Monday filled the vacancy by appointing physics instructor and engineer Kenneth Brown of Inglewood.

Brown prevailed over 10 other hopefuls who had applied to fill the seat vacated by the late Nathaniel Jackson, who died Nov. 21 at age 80 after a battle with cancer. Jackson, also an Inglewood resident, hadn't attended a meeting for more than a year because of his illness.

Brown has been an engineer and product controls liaison with NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena since 1987, currently working with the Mars Science Laboratory Terminal Descent Sensor. He has also been an adjunct instructor in physics, computer science, math and business at California State University, Dominguez Hills, as well as Santa Monica College.

Brown earned bachelor's degrees in physics and computer science from Morehouse College in Atlanta and a master's degree in applied physics from Clark Atlanta University.

The physics and science enthusiast also has an athletic streak. Brown was a co-captain and a two-time All-American in track and field while a student at Morehouse College. He also played on the school's NCAA Division II basketball team.

Brown serves on the California Department of Education Technology Advisory Committee and is an advisory board member for the computer science departments at Santa Monica College and Los Angeles City College.

He will represent Trustee Area One, which includes Inglewood and Ladera Heights. Jackson's seat was officially vacated about a week before his death.

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