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<http://www.ktla.com/videobeta/d1c2d3f8-9ace-4562-a2b3-61de6f042747/News/KTLA-State-Budget-Cuts-Send-Students-Scrambling-for-Classes-Glen-Walker-reports>

Why Teaching Is Not Priority No. 1

The Chronicle of Higher Education

September 5, 2010

By Robin Wilson

With lavish recreation centers and sophisticated research laboratories, life on college campuses is drastically different from what it was 100 years ago. But one thing has stayed virtually the same: classroom teaching. Professors still design lessons, pick out the readings, and decide how to test—in many cases, in the same way they always have.

In the last few years, however, a cottage industry has sprouted up in academe to measure whether students are actually learning and to reform classes that don't deliver. Accreditors now press colleges to show that they are teaching what students need to know. And as the Obama administration packs more money into student aid, it wants more evidence of educational quality.

But a roadblock may emerge: faculty culture. Not because professors care little about quality or students—indeed, many care deeply—but because of what colleges tell them is important.

"Faculty rewards have nothing to do with the ability to assess student learning," says Adrianna Kezar, an associate professor of higher education at the University of Southern California. "I get promoted for writing lots of articles, not for demonstrating learning outcomes."

A survey last year by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment found that provosts at doctoral universities identified "faculty engagement" as their No. 1 challenge in making greater efforts to assess student learning. Faculty members have long enjoyed autonomy in the classroom, and persuading them to change the way they teach is more difficult than it might sound.

But there are some small signs that concerns about teaching quality are having an impact. On several campuses, professors have embraced quality-improvement efforts. In those cases, carrots have worked better than sticks, officials find. Some universities, for example, have given professors small grants to assess and rework basic courses, while others have reduced professors' required office hours or simply paid them more if they agreed to spend more time making sure their courses delivered.

Universities have also added new tracks to graduate programs in education that teach doctoral students how to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching. And some faculty job advertisements in other disciplines, too, now ask for candidates who have an interest in the area.

Still, quality assessment in higher education is hardly state of the art. "Only a tiny, tiny fraction of all classes being taught now have been part of reform efforts," says Kevin Carey, policy director at Education Sector, a higher-education think tank, and a regular contributor to *The Chronicle*. "But with more people pursuing college degrees, we can't continue to assume they learned a lot without any sort of verification."

Little Demand From Students

Faculty members are accustomed to having the final say, indeed often the only say, on what goes on in their classrooms. Only if a professor deviates significantly from the norm do administrators intervene. A tenured professor at Louisiana State University was [pulled from the classroom](#) after she gave failing grades to most students in her introductory-biology course last year. Short of that, however, professors are typically allowed to conduct their classes as they see fit. That means there is often tremendous variation in what goes on even in different sections of the same course. And it is often hard to tell exactly what students have learned.

"If a student gets an A in my class, and an A in yours, then we say the student is good," says William G. Tierney, director of the Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis at USC. "We don't make any comments about what the student has actually learned."

That's the case in part because university prestige often stands in as a proxy for learning. "The general public, they want to go to Stanford whether you learn anything or not," says Ms. Kezar. "As long as employers and parents promote that system, it's not really about what you learn, they just care if students go to a prestigious place."

Indeed, many professors feel little pressure from either students or the public to change the way they do business. "Why I need to spend a lot of time working with my colleagues documenting learning outcomes is unclear to me," Mr. Tierney says of a hypothetical professor. "What is going to happen if I don't? Will no one take my classes? Will no students attend this university?" Faculty members, Mr. Tierney notes, are busier than ever, and assessing student learning is often viewed as just one more demand on their time. "Should they pay attention to learning outcomes rather than understand how to make their classes go online or how to update the syllabus on reading that's changed in their area in the last year?" he asks. "They can't do it all."

If there is any pressure from students, say professors, it is to keep classwork manageable. Mindy S. Marks, an assistant professor of economics at the University of California at Riverside, performed a study that showed college students spend 10 fewer hours a week studying now than they did in 1961. Meanwhile, college grades on average have gone up. Unless one is to assume that current students learn much more, much faster than students did 50 years ago, a natural conclusion is that professors are demanding less while giving better grades. Meanwhile, neither students nor their parents are complaining.

"We appear to be catering to students' demands for leisure," says Philip S. Babcock, an assistant professor of economics at the University of California at Santa Barbara who performed the study with Ms. Marks. "It doesn't look to us as though there is any external incentive to make courses more rigorous and grading more strict."

Even professors who believe they are good teachers with high standards often have no real way to confirm that. "I was looking at an English 101 composition class, and the professor was having them read Foucault," says Andrew Hacker, an emeritus professor of political science at the City University of New York's Queens College. "The kids will memorize it like quadratic equations, but they will forget it right away and never use it again." The young professor, though, probably thought she was doing the right thing, says Mr. Hacker, because "teaching Foucault is what she knows, and it will impress her elders."

But even Mr. Hacker, who is beginning his 55th year of college teaching, acknowledges that he has no way of knowing whether his own lessons get through to students. Yes, they seem rapt during class and compliment him on his teaching. Still, he says: "I couldn't say objectively or reliably what I do for students."

Researchers have found that there are different ways to measure a professor's effectiveness in the classroom. Scott E. Carrell, an assistant professor of economics at the University of California at Davis, studied student learning at the U.S. Air Force Academy and found that students who took introductory calculus from experienced professors didn't do as well in the intro class as students who took the course from less-experienced instructors. But students who had the experienced professors did better in subsequent courses, like Calculus II, than did students who had inexperienced teachers for introductory calculus. Mr. Carrell's results were published last spring in an article in the *Journal of Political Economy* called "Does Professor Quality Matter?"

Fear of Testing

Because professors prize their autonomy, they are leery of any efforts to standardize classroom teaching. That doesn't necessarily mean they just want to do their own thing whether it's effective

or not, or that they don't care about students. Gary Rhoades, general secretary of the American Association of University Professors, says good professors already pay attention to what works with students and what doesn't. "What do you think we've all been doing for 100 years?" he asks.

But no one wants a higher-education version of the testing spawned by No Child Left Behind, the standards-based reform created when the Bush Administration began questioning what students in elementary and secondary schools learned. Requiring professors to document student learning can be counterproductive, says Mr. Rhoades.

"There is the mentality that you have to have a lesson plan and learning objectives, and so you end up encouraging the professors to spend more time filing those than they actually do engaging students and working with them," says Mr. Rhoades. "Classes are like organic things: Not every one is the same. If you are a good professor, you are responding to what students are getting and what they're not. If you try and mechanize that, it can be a problem."

Mikita Brottman says listing learning goals on her syllabus doesn't make sense for the courses she teaches in psychology. "These aren't courses where I have certain information that I present to students, and students will have the ability to do A, B, and C," says Ms. Brottman, a professor in the department of language, literature, and culture at the Maryland Institute College of Art. "It's much more like an exploration. I don't know what the students are going to achieve. It will be something different for everyone."

Research and Results

Plenty of campuses, though, are beginning to evaluate courses—particularly those within the general-education curriculum—to ensure that students are learning basic skills. Getting faculty members involved in those efforts can be complicated.

North Carolina A&T State University is part of the Wabash National Study of Liberal Arts Education, which helps campuses "enhance the educational impact of their programs." North Carolina A&T asked students what worked and what didn't in the classroom.

Based on the students' responses, the university started leaning on professors to provide two hours a week of extra group tutoring for students, something that professors haven't been pleased about. So the university is experimenting with ways to entice professors. At first the university offered to reduce their required office hours. But that didn't prove enough of an incentive, so the university is now offering to pay professors extra if they give students more help. "Faculty members tend to have more independence," says Scott P. Simkins, director of the Academy for Teaching and Learning at North Carolina A&T. "They want to be their own agents and manage

their own time. But what we're trying to do is be more data-driven and show them what seems to work best."

Michelle D. Miller, an associate professor of psychology at Northern Arizona University, has worked with the National Center for Academic Transformation to help redesign the introductory-psychology course on her campus. First the university put a full-time professor in charge of coordinating all sections of the course. Then it collapsed several sections into larger ones with more students but increased the staff, by asking two professors to team-teach each section. The university also asked graduate teaching assistants to monitor questions that students e-mailed to professors, so that faculty members weren't on the front lines. Both the team-teaching and the e-mail filter appealed to professors and made them more amenable to helping with the course redesign and assessing the results. The university is now giving professors small grants to help redesign basic courses in three other academic departments.

"There is a right way and a wrong way to talk to faculty about assessment," says Ms. Miller. First, she says, "something is better than nothing, and it doesn't have to be perfect." Faculty members in psychology, for example, give students a simple multiple-choice assessment before and after they take Psych 101 to see how much they've learned.

The other thing that resonates with faculty members, says Ms. Miller, is to tell them that being able to measure student learning is in their best interest, like an insurance policy, if anyone does question their effectiveness. Ms. Miller developed an online psychology class for her university and was ready when her colleagues asked: Are students really learning? "I had my assessment tools, and I know students are not just sitting at home clicking buttons," she says. "There is no magic to assessment. You don't have to have a Ph.D. in it. Just think of something that makes sense to you."

Resignations follow California Chamber of Commerce's endorsement of Whitman

UC President Mark Yudof and the chancellor of the state community college system quit their positions on the board of directors, saying they will not participate in a partisan operation.



Republican gubernatorial candidate Meg Whitman, left, autographs a campaign sign for Rebecca Brown at a campaign stop in Columbia. (Rich Pedroncelli, Associated Press / September 4, 2010)

By Anthony York, Los Angeles Times

September 5, 2010

Reporting from Sacramento —

The president of the University of California and the chancellor of the California community college system have quit the California Chamber of Commerce board of directors after the group voted to endorse Republican Meg Whitman for governor.

The endorsement is the latest example of the state's largest business organization increasing its political profile.

Jack Scott, a former Democratic state senator from Pasadena who was appointed as community college chancellor by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, announced his resignation Friday in a letter to chamber President Allan Zarembeg after the endorsement vote.

"I do not believe the board is using sound judgment by catapulting the California Chamber of Commerce into the center of a fierce political contest," Scott wrote. "...It is destructive to the chamber's core mission and the businesses it represents when it becomes a partisan operation."

UC President Mark G. Yudof suspended his membership last week in anticipation of the vote.

"As the president of a public university, I cannot take sides in electoral politics," Yudof wrote in a letter to Zarembeg. "I must preserve my politically agnostic status."

He left open the possibility of returning to the board if he could serve as a "nonvoting, ex officio"

member. Charles B. Reed, chancellor of the California State University system, also sits on the board; he did not attend Friday's meeting because of the endorsement, a spokesman said, but remains on the board.

The chamber has traditionally stayed out of partisan politics, even though the group is often seen as Republican-friendly. In 2003, it backed Schwarzenegger with its first endorsement for governor in its 112-year history.

Earlier this year, the group withdrew an advertising campaign that some of its members complained was a political attack on Democratic gubernatorial candidate Jerry Brown and undermined the organization's credibility. The complaining board members, attorney George Kieffer, Los Angeles developer Kevin Ratner, movie producer Robert Simonds and land use attorney Cindy Starrett, said the board had not authorized attacks on candidates.

Brown and his wife, former Gap Chief Operating Officer Anne Gust, had mounted a lobbying effort to get the chamber to pull the spot, which Zarembert did after it had aired for less than two full days.

Now the chamber apparently plans to advocate openly for Whitman. The organization has booked time to begin running television commercials next week.

Zarembert was traveling Friday and could not be reached for comment.

The chamber board is filled with California business leaders, some of whom have contributed to Brown throughout his political career. Safeway Executive Vice President Larree Renda is chairwoman of the board; her company donated \$15,000 to Brown's gubernatorial campaign in April.

Former Gov. Pete Wilson, co-chairman of Whitman's campaign, also sits on the chamber board. Wilson was not present at Friday's meeting but recorded a video statement that was played for the board urging a strong endorsement of Whitman's candidacy.

Zarembert heralded the endorsement in a statement Friday, saying: "Many of our board members expressed confidence in having a person with business experience run the state."

Anthony York is editor of The Times' state politics and government blog, [PolitiCal](#).

Giving Up State Funds

September 7, 2010

How bad are things in California? The budget cuts and fiscal uncertainty are so severe that the University of California at Los Angeles's business school is proposing that it give up all state funding -- in return for greater budget flexibility and the right to raise out-of-state tuition to the levels of private institutions. The plan has been approved by UCLA, but is awaiting a review by Mark G. Yudof, president of the university system.

Leading public universities regularly complain about the decline in the shares of their budgets that come from the state, even as regulation has not lessened. But being willing to give up those funds altogether is rare. The University of Virginia's business school did so, but has very much been considered an outlier.

"The driver here is the decline in state support," said Judy D. Olian, dean of the Anderson School of Management at UCLA. She stressed that she did not view the shift as changing the business school's mission or its connection to the rest of UCLA or the UC system. At this point, she said, state support makes up only about 18 percent of the business school's \$96 million annual budget, and she said that percentage overstates the contribution because much of the state support is tuition revenue that must go to the state first now before it is returned to the school. In a new model, that revenue would never leave the business school. In the end, the business school would truly lose less than \$6 million a year, Olian said.

In the 1970s, she said, about 70 percent of the business school's budget came from the state. "The decline makes it easier to say that the gap is not going to be large and we could overcome it," Olian said.

And there's more to it than the dollars. Olian noted that California does not have a state budget for 2010-11 so she doesn't know what her budget will be for the year. It would be much better, she said, to have that information and plan accordingly -- and to raise more money from private sources to offset whatever is lost.

There is also the potential to raise more through tuition. Right now, annual tuition at the business school is \$41,000 for California residents and \$49,000 for out-of-state residents. (Room and board and other charges aren't included.) Olian said that if the plan goes through, she would expect the non-resident charges to rise to the range of \$53,000 to \$58,000 -- similar to the rates of top-rated private programs. (The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, for example, currently charges \$54,000 in tuition.)

But Olian stressed that the differential for California residents would remain -- and noted that California's residency laws are loose enough that many who enter the program as non-residents are Californians by the time their second-year charges are due. Further, she noted that "tuition has been going up under the state-supported model," and she said that such increases might well be more predictable under the new approach.

She said she didn't anticipate a change in the mix of residency of those admitted from current levels: roughly 40 percent from California, 30 percent from the rest of the United States and 30 percent from outside the United States.

It is extremely unusual for academic units of state universities to give up state funds, and Olian said that "this is not the solution for the University of California" in that most academic units could not come up with the sources of revenue that a business school can. She noted that many of the university's programs -- such as an executive M.B.A. program and a program in Singapore -- are already self-supporting and may in some ways be subsidizing the M.B.A. program. "This is really a very marginal change," she said, and will not affect the way the UCLA faculty governance system will oversee academic programs, the tenure process and other procedures.

She said she thought the money saved by the state could go to other units at UCLA that are not able to support themselves.

Asked if it would matter to students that UCLA's business school would no longer be connected to the state in the same way, she repeated the figures about how the state has dropped its support year after year. And she added: "To our students and faculty, in evaluating excellence, I don't think it matters one iota to them if we are public or private. They want to go to the best place you can."

But she noted that California residents would still receive a tuition discount and that she expected UCLA to continue to place the vast majority of its graduates (including those from elsewhere) in jobs in California. "Our mission will still be public -- our mission will still be one that looks to make sure our students are helping East L.A. nonprofits or microfinance projects in Africa," she said.

In discussing the plan, Olian repeatedly talked about "self-sufficiency" and never used the word "privatization" (except in answering this reporter's questions about why she does not view the word as an appropriate description for the shift.)

Olian's choice of words may be politically wise. An article in the journal *The Public Interest* details the quest by the Darden School at U.Va. to trade away state dollars for more flexibility, and notes that the plan was "almost derailed" when the then-chair of the school's foundation board used the word "privatization" in a 1996 talk to discuss the idea. Only after everyone involved agreed that "self-sufficiency" was a better way to describe the plan did it move ahead.

The article -- by David L. Kirp of the University of California at Berkeley and Patrick S. Roberts of Virginia Tech -- is an early look at the impact of the changes at Darden. In many respects, the article says that Darden and its supporters were correct that the freedom from the state allowed the business school to raise far more money than it was receiving from the state -- helping to boost the business school's prestige and the quality of students it attracted.

The article, however, questions whether it is the role of a public university to make such tradeoffs, and the piece notes that many other parts of U.Va. lack the facilities or funds of the business school. By embracing the idea that those parts of the university that can bring in more

money should do so, and be rewarded for doing so, Kirp and Roberts write that the university was placing ideals at risk.

"Does the academic commons that Thomas Jefferson tried to embody in his design of the Lawn - professors and students with diverse academic interests coming together in a single open space -- stand a chance in this dollar-driven era? Can a university maintain this kind of intellectual community if learning becomes just another consumer good?" they write.

That point may well be contested at Darden (and now at UCLA, where the chancellor, Gene Block, came from the provost's job at Virginia). But another line in the article may be harder to challenge: "Darden is the canary in the mine, a sign of things to come, for across the country the privatization of public higher education proceeds apace."

— **Scott Jaschik**

Federal Judge Finds Former College President Personally Liable in Student-Conduct Case

The Chronicle of Higher Education

September 7, 2010

By Sara Lipka

A former public-university president who unilaterally dismissed a student may be held personally liable for legal damages, a federal court in Atlanta ruled last week.

The case involves Ronald M. Zaccari, a former president of Valdosta State University, and T. Hayden Barnes, who, as a sophomore in the spring of 2007, had protested plans to build parking garages on the campus by, among other things, posting fliers and a collage that referred to a "memorial parking deck." That May, Mr. Zaccari informed Mr. Barnes in a letter that he presented a "clear and present danger" and had been administratively withdrawn from Valdosta State.

Mr. Barnes appealed to the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, and in early 2008, as the process stalled, he sued in federal court. A few days later, the regents overturned his expulsion, but Mr. Barnes pursued the lawsuit with support from the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education.

"It was no longer about getting Hayden back in school," said Will Creeley, director of legal and public advocacy for the group, "but rather righting the clear wrong that had been committed against him."

On Friday a federal judge said that Mr. Zaccari, who discounted the opinions of counselors and fellow administrators that Mr. Barnes was not a threat, violated his due-process rights. Courts generally expect public universities to give students some type of notice and afford them a hearing before taking any disciplinary action.

Mr. Zaccari also disregarded advice from university lawyers about those requirements, wrote Judge Charles A. Pannell Jr. of the U.S. District Court in Atlanta. "The undisputed facts show that Zaccari ignored the lawyers' warnings that withdrawing Barnes would require due process."

By violating "clearly established" law, the judge said, Mr. Zaccari is not protected under the sovereign immunity constitutionally granted to state institutions.

The ruling also found the regents liable for breach of contract, because the university did not follow policies and procedures in its student handbook, which the judge determined to be a binding agreement between students and the board. Courts differ on the legal standing of such documents, but Judge Pannell was clear: "The VSU Student Handbook provided to Barnes upon enrollment constituted a valid, written contract."

The case will now proceed to a damages phase, as the court determines how much, if anything, Mr. Barnes is owed.

The Georgia system declined to comment on pending litigation. And a lawyer representing Mr. Barnes, Robert Corn-Revere, declined to discuss the damages his client would request. Mr. Barnes never returned to Valdosta State but graduated from Kennesaw State University and is now enrolled at the University of Baltimore School of Law.

FIRE, meanwhile, declared it had won a victory against the authoritative whims of administrators everywhere. "There might be a sense in a small state school," Mr. Creeley said, "that you can run the place like a fiefdom without fear of consequence."

Using the Label 'Threat'

Mr. Barnes was dismissed from Valdosta State a few weeks after the shootings at Virginia Tech. At that time, university judicial systems were already becoming less legalistic, and students' due-process rights were eroding, said Gary Pavela, a lawyer who frequently consults with colleges. Changes in policy and perspective after the tragedy at Virginia Tech have further jeopardized students' rights, he said.

"It's a great temptation to seize upon the fears that arose out of Virginia Tech and apply the label of 'threat' or 'perceived threat,' and then use it to get rid of people who bother us," said Mr. Pavela. "We are getting a little bit ahead of ourselves in thinking we can dispense with due process."

At Valdosta State, Mr. Zaccari had discussed Mr. Barnes's actions with staff members who typically compose a threat-assessment team: a counselor, a police officer, a lawyer, and student-affairs administrators.

Decisions about how to proceed when a student's conduct has raised concern are inevitably tricky, said Allen W. Groves, dean of students at the University of Virginia, who is also a lawyer.

"Obviously you're always trying to see where the line falls," Mr. Groves said. Even when a student is perceived as a threat, "those due-process rights don't go away," he said. "There has to be some opportunity to be heard."

Several lawyers characterized the Valdosta State case as the tale of an outlier president, as well as a reminder to follow due-process procedures. One saw it as a victory for midlevel staff members, like the ones who had recommended against dismissing Mr. Barnes.

"A dominant administrator can too easily ram something through," said Peter F. Lake, director of the Center for Excellence in Higher Education Law and Policy at Stetson University. "Let the people who know what they're doing do their job."

They're Baaack...

Inside Higher Ed

By Dean Dad September 7, 2010 10:20 pm

The first week of classes has a charm all its own. Students are everywhere, professors are rested and ready, nobody's behind yet, parking is a nightmare of Biblical proportions, a few professors turn up missing at the last minute, and everyone -- everyone -- complains about the bookstore.

It's the same every year. It's actually sort of reassuring.

I can count on hearing certain things, and have already gone through most of the list for this year:

“Books are too expensive!” Yes, they are.

“Can you believe what some students wear in public?” No, I can't.

“How was your summer? Oh, right...” Grrrr.

“We need more faculty/tutors/labs/classrooms/time/stuff” True.

“So-and-so hasn't retired yet?” Nope.

“I heard rumors of more state budget cuts.” Yup, and I heard the sun would rise in the East.

“You need more parking.” Yup, and the sun rose in the East.

That's not to say that it's entirely predictable. Each year brings a weird new personnel issue, but you never know exactly where it will strike. (Past years have included a full-timer taking another job three days before classes started, an aneurysm, a last-minute medical leave for the entire semester, and a request three days into the semester for a change to a three-day schedule.) There's also usually a really annoying IT glitch somewhere, but the exact glitch is always different. And each year the new students look juuuust a little bit younger.

The trick is to remember that no matter how many iterations of the first day I've been through, it's the very first one for a whole lot of people. They're excited, and scared, and lost, and easily overwhelmed. For others, it's the second time round, but after a long layoff. They're excited, too, though they show it differently. (They're usually the ones who show up a week early to figure out where their classrooms are. I love that.) And I remember from my faculty days that wonderful feeling on the first day of class when nobody is behind and there's nothing to grade. At that point, anything is possible.

That feeling of new possibility gets me every time. Educators as a breed are susceptible to it; it's why we do what we do.

Good luck, everyone. The cafeteria is that way.

Many College Boards Are at Sea in Assessing Student Learning, Survey Finds

The Chronicle of Higher Education

September 9, 2010

By Kathryn Masterson

While oversight of educational quality is a critical responsibility of college boards of trustees, a majority of trustees and chief academic officers say boards do not spend enough time discussing student-learning outcomes, and more than a third say boards do not understand how student learning is assessed, says a report issued on Thursday by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges.

The issue of academic quality is important for boards to consider because it is central to each institution's mission, and ensuring that that mission is upheld is as much a part of board members' responsibility as guarding the college's financial stability, said Susan Whealler Johnston, executive vice president of the association and author of the report. Board oversight of educational quality is even more crucial at a time of heightened calls for accountability and greater focus on the quality of educational services. (See *The Chronicle's* series on quality, *Measuring Stick*.)

The report, "How Boards Oversee Educational Quality: A Report on a Survey on Boards and the Assessment of Student Learning," is based on a survey conducted in November 2009 that asked 1,300 chief academic officers and chairs of board committees on academic affairs how boards oversee academic quality. The response rate was 38 percent, with 28 percent of trustees and 58 percent of chief academic officers participating. Almost one-quarter of the respondents were from public institutions, and three-quarters were from private institutions.

Results of the survey were mixed, Ms. Johnston said. While slightly more than half of respondents said boards spend more time discussing student-learning outcomes now than they did five years ago, 61.5 percent said boards do not spend sufficient time in meetings on the issue. A smaller proportion—38.5 percent—said enough time was spent on the subject in board meetings.

"There is plenty of room for improvement," Ms. Johnston said.

According to the survey results, business matters take up the bulk of board-meeting agendas. A majority of respondents—56.9 percent—said much more time was spent during board meetings on financial and budgetary matters than on academic issues, and 22 percent said slightly more time was spent on those matters.

That isn't a surprise, because many trustees have business backgrounds, Ms. Johnston said. There may also be a feeling among board and faculty members that teaching and learning assessment isn't something the board should be involved in (21.5 percent of respondents said focusing on student-learning outcomes was not an appropriate role for a board).

"I can't remember a serious discussion about this in my 12 years on the board," one private-university trustee commented in the survey.

2 Bottom Lines

The report refutes the idea that boards should stay away from questions of educational quality, saying that colleges have two bottom lines—a financial one and an academic one. While boards should not get involved in the details of teaching or ways to improve student-learning outcomes, they must hold the administration accountable for identifying needs in the academic programs and then meeting them, the report says. Boards should also make decisions on where to allocate resources based on what works or what should improve.

The survey found that many boards do not receive adequate information from college officials that would help them assess how students are progressing. The most commonly received information by boards was college-ranking data, which three-quarters of respondents said were very important or somewhat important in monitoring educational quality. Rankings may look at graduation rates and retention, however, but not at the quality of student learning. The second most common information source was alumni surveys, which Ms. Johnston said can be a good indicator of how well alumni believe their college education prepared them for the workplace or graduate school.

In the report, the association makes several recommendations for boards and college administrators, including that they devote more time during board meetings to discussions of what the college is doing to assess and improve student learning. Boards should expect to receive useful high-level information on learning outcomes, the report says, and should make comparisons over time and to other institutions. Training in how to understand academic and learning assessments should also be part of orientation for new board members.

Richard L. Morrill, president of the Teagle Foundation and a former college president, said monitoring academic quality was part of the active oversight that boards are responsible for. Boards should not tell faculty members how to do their jobs, he said, but they should hold the administration accountable for how the academic mission is carried out. Board members should receive information about learning and academic programs, ask questions about it, and monitor the institution's progress, he said.

Presidents and academic officers have a responsibility to provide information to board members that is easy to understand and monitor, so they can perform that oversight, said Mr. Morrill.

"When questions are raised around a board table, it has a powerful effect" throughout the institution, Mr. Morrill said. "I know that, having been a president and a board member."

The Bulletin, Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Cervantes strikes again

College Board member denies she did anything wrong in suggesting someone burn down The Bulletin's office, makes false statements about paper's editor

By Cheryl Scott

Bulletin Staff Writer

Before a packed City Council Chambers on Sept. 7, College Board member Lorraine Cervantes denied that she did anything wrong last month when she solicited someone to burn down this newspaper's office and made bogus statements about the paper's editor.

"I don't know who tried to burn it down, but they need to do it again," Cervantes said in late July relative to a Jan. 2 fire at the newspaper's office. While that fire was ruled accidental, many believe it was the work of an arsonist.

Last week, she said she did nothing wrong in soliciting a would-be arsonist to strike again.

"I'm tired of being lied on. Retards, even the retards know that it was an electrical fire. So we know that nobody set that fire," Cervantes said.

"That was just a figure of speech referring to what they (the paper) deserved."

Cervantes also used her public comments to personally attack the paper's editor, Allison Jean Eaton, reading a letter Cervantes said she received

Anonymously that stated Eaton is dating a high-ranking Sheriff's Department official the letter named only as "Saunders" who works at the Carson Sheriff's Station.

She read the letter in its entirety before brandishing a sheaf of papers on which photos of Eaton had been printed. Cervantes waved them in the air and described Eaton as "immoral" and "sick" and described some of the photos as "pornographic."

Later, after William Kemp chastised Cervantes for attacking a journalist who was only doing her job, Cervantes delivered another tongue-lashing. "I didn't attack anybody. She attacked herself because she put all of that trash on Facebook for everyone to see," she said.

Eaton has recently reported extensively on the efforts of Mayor Eric J. Perrodin to re-establish a police department in the city of Compton, which currently receives law enforcement services from the Sheriff's Department.

She believes this has made her a target for retaliation from the mayor's backers and said at least one of Cervantes' comments suggests this is the case.

"The old police department is gone. Leave them alone," said Cervantes, who had entered the Council Chambers that day alongside former Compton police Lt. Reggie Wright Sr.

Eaton denies that she is or ever has been romantically involved with any employee of the Sheriff's Department.

Sgt. Gregory Saunders worked several years ago at Compton Sheriff's Station, where he headed up the Special Assignment Office. Eaton said she used to spend extended periods of time with the SAO sergeant and his team because in 2006 and 2007 she was working on a series of stories based on ride-alongs she took with the team. The series was aimed at providing the community a glimpse into the various ways in which the department was fighting crime in Compton, she said.

"Our relationship was strictly professional," Eaton said about Saunders, who she had not spoken to in more than a year until late last week. "I didn't even have his new phone number, but he called me last Thursday after hearing about that nonsense accusation.

He just wanted to know what the heck was going on.” She added that similar false allegations have been made about her over the past two years in various online postings made by anonymous individuals.

“I believe that the person or persons behind these lies are attempting to paint me as having some sort of allegiance with the Sheriff’s Department that prevents me from reporting on policing issues without bias,” she said.

“Ms. Cervantes is entitled to her opinion regarding the content of the paper,” said Eaton. “If she chooses to disagree with the facts, that is her prerogative.

It is unfortunate that she insists on spewing such negativity, but so be it, as she has her First Amendment right to free speech.”

Eaton said she draws the line, however, when people begin to spread lies about her in an attempt to destroy her reputation.

Cervantes said that the photos she has of Eaton were sent to her anonymously, but then asserted that they originated from Facebook. Eaton said this is not true.

“They are actually from my Flickr.com account,” said Eaton. “I am still trying to figure out how these photos were accessed because that account is set so that only my friends and family can see them.” She said the photos have been circulated around City Hall ever since she reported on the 95-page report of the internal Compton Police Department investigation that found that several kilograms of cocaine had gone missing from the narcotics vault and that the narcotics unit had been “severely mismanaged.”

“I was notified about the photos by a source back in July, when I was told that the mayor’s brother, Percy Perrodin, was allegedly circulating them,” said Eaton. “About a week later I was contacted by Basil Kimbrew, who told me that he had received a package of about 30 to 40 photos of me that cast me in a negative light. He told me the photos were accompanied by a note that stated, ‘You know what to do with these. Now you can get back at her for all the things she’s written about you.’ He said the note also stated that the photos had been sent to seven or eight other people.

“While I have not seen most of the photos being circulated, from what has been described to me, they are all older photos,” Eaton said.

“Furthermore, what I did back then in my personal life and what I do now in terms of my job are not one and the same. One has nothing to do with the other.”

Eaton thinks the circulation of the pictures and Cervantes’ personal attack is retaliation for her exercising her free speech and freedom of the press rights. And what happened at last week’s council meeting, she said, appears to have been planned.

During one of its meetings last month, Eaton said the Citizens Police Advisory Committee discussed the photos.

“Committee members made statements to the affect that The Bulletin would be taken care of and that they weren’t going to have to worry about the paper anymore because they had these photos of me and planned to distribute them in some manner,” Eaton said.

Members of that committee include chamber of commerce President Lestean Johnson, Bishop R.D. Sanders, Pastor Alex Leon, Compton Center employee Joseph Lewis, Compton Community United President Diana Sanchez and the Compton branch of the NAACP President Paulette Simpson-Gipson.

“Why these individuals who are supposed to be pillars of the community would stoop to such a low and immature level of behavior is beyond my comprehension,” said Eaton. “If they think for

one minute that they will succeed in intimidating me into backing off from printing the truth, they are mistaken.

Letter to the Editor

Officials lack leadership

Dear Editor,

Mayor Eric J. Perrodin, unlike President Barack Obama, has allied himself with a bunch of women with very low self-esteem with hopes of retaliating against the truth that Lynn Boone, William Kemp and I tell the public. He never stopped to realize Councilwomen Barbara Calhoun and Lillie Dobson, as well as College Board member Lorraine Cervantes, are pretending to be leaders. They're his weakest links!

Calhoun, in her council comments, referred to my writing that she wouldn't be re-elected and didn't have to say it at the council meeting.

I did have to say it, because she has proven she doesn't understand anything that is said! Dobson doesn't listen to herself when she tries to reprimand us when we present the truth to the public. She has little command of the English language, just as Calhoun, who won't learn to use correct grammar. They don't read.

And Cervantes knows so much because she says she has a bachelor's degree, yet no one can determine when she graduated Cal State Dominguez Hills.

No elected leader should degrade anyone the way she did The Bulletin's editor, Allison Jean Eaton, during her comments under the Urban Community Redevelopment Commission.

Everyone who knows Cervantes knows she can't be embarrassed, and she's a gutter rat with no business in an elected seat.

Perrodin is so insensitive and uncaring that he threw an elaborate party (costing nearly \$1 million of the taxpayers' money and charged them to attend) on Sept. 11 when other communities and the entire country mourned the death of 3,000 innocent people. Compton's leaders will find any reason to shake their money-makers. Perrodin hasn't gotten enough of being a television star regarding the money he's taking for not attending council meetings, as seen on his advertising posters with a microphone in his hand.

Unlike Perrodin, Sen. Roderick D. Wright and Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas presented a "School Readiness and Health Fair" at Jesse Owens Park on Saturday. They invited the public to join a discussion on current legislative issues and to receive valuable information affecting the public and the community. The event included children's activities, many huge bouncers, sack lunches, children's choirs and other performers. Merchants and exhibitors gave cloth bags, backpacks, pens, pencils, notebooks, binders, rulers, crayons and information about allergies, balanced meals, health care, health facilities and much more for FREE!

Young people had smiles while dragging bags too heavy for them, and parents with smiles helped tiny tots carry their bags. It was a great environment I wish for the residents in Compton!

I'm impressed how Wright and Ridley-Thomas make themselves available to chat with the public. They don't act like kings or dictators as does Perrodin.

I left that event and joined some Compton residents in a demonstration leading to the "great" Gospel Fest, which showcased Perrodin and expensive entertainers. There was nowhere near 3,000 people in attendance, in case the mayor and Council try to lie about. Most of the tickets were given to city employees who don't live in Compton!

Compton's residents will win in 2010!

Joyce Kelly

3rd District

Community Colleges to Take Center Stage at White House Next Month

The Chronicle of Higher Education

September 15, 2010

By Jennifer Gonzalez

Washington

The first-ever White House Summit on Community Colleges will take place October 5, officials from the vice president's office announced on Wednesday.

The vice president's wife, Jill Biden, a longtime educator and community-college instructor, will lead the event.

President Obama had announced that Ms. Biden would lead the summit back in March, when he signed legislation overhauling the federal student-loan programs. The signing ceremony was held at Northern Virginia Community College, where Ms. Biden teaches, and the president used the occasion to reaffirm his administration's commitment to those institutions, calling them "one of the great undervalued assets in our education system."

The summit will bring together community colleges; business, philanthropy, and federal and state policy leaders; and students to discuss the role that two-year colleges play in developing America's work force and achieving the president's goal of leading the world by having the highest proportion of college graduates by 2020.

Community colleges are the largest segment of America's higher-education system, enrolling more than eight million students each year.

As part of the summit dialogue, Americans across the country are encouraged to submit their thoughts and questions for discussion. The White House has set up a number of ways for the public to participate in the summit, which can be found online at <http://www.WhiteHouse.gov/CommunityCollege>. The White House especially wants to hear how students' lives have been transformed after attending a community college.

The Quest to Get Into Class Inside Higher Ed

September 15, 2010

For many community colleges around the country this fall semester, the song remains the same. Yet again, enrollments are at an all-time high, and waiting lists for classes remain long, but the search continues for ways to accommodate the growing demand.

In California, where public institutions have struggled mightily amid a well-documented budget crisis, the number of students being turned away from open-access institutions is swelling for a second straight year. Many of the state's community colleges have had to cut sections, meaning that enrollment is down. Demand, however, is higher than ever.

Take Los Rios Community College District, in greater Sacramento, for example. Classes at its four colleges started four weeks ago, but the institutions have a total of 40,000 students on various waiting lists for courses — or about one for every two students actually enrolled in a course.

“We had to cut course offerings by about 6 percent this fall (which equals about 850 class sections) and so our enrollment is down by nearly 5,000 students from last year,” wrote Susie Williams, associate vice chancellor for communications and research at Los Rios, via e-mail. “We have 85,593 students enrolled this year compared to 90,563 who were enrolled at the same time last year. Given that for a number of years we have seen annual growth between 5 percent [and] 6 percent, we should have increased enrollment by 5,000 to 6,000 students this fall.”

Maximizing Classroom Space

One state eastward, state budget cuts have made their mark at the College of Southern Nevada, located in metropolitan Las Vegas, but they have not forced the institution to turn away students by the thousands like some in California. Instead, sacrifices are being made in other areas to accommodate for the 5 percent or so growth in the college's enrollment.

“Nevada, like much of the country, is experiencing a very serious budget crisis (shortfall could be \$3 million in the next biennium — 50 percent of the state budget), thus adding large numbers of new faculty positions to add a plethora of new class sections is simply not possible,” wrote Darren Divine, vice president of academic affairs at Southern Nevada, in an e-mail. “Having said that, we are trying to keep our entire full-time faculty lines already in the budget staffed, and are relying on part-time employees as much as ever to try and squeeze every single class section we can into the schedule.”

Divine explained that the college is offering some “specialized courses with lower demands” on a less frequent basis so faculty members are freed up to teach “higher-demand classes.” In keeping with this move, he noted that the college is seeing increased interest in general education classes that are “designed to meet core degree requirements and transfer efforts” in addition to entry-level courses in “more applied” disciplines.

Though Southern Nevada does not maintain waiting lists per se — it does not have registration software capable of handling them — it does keep track of the number of “attempted enrollments” past the capacity point of its classes. By this measure, college officials note that their efforts to maximize classroom space are making some progress.

Take biology 187, a key “gateway course” for many science majors at the college. Last fall, the course’s 22 sections had 925 students. Another 1,691 tried to enroll but did not get a spot. This fall, the course has 27 sections and a capacity of 1,082 students. The number of students who tried to enroll but did not garner a spot declined to 1,541 — still, of course, more than the total who actually got into the course. There were similar declines in attempted enrollments in some of the college’s other gateway courses, including commerce, sociology, and psychology 101.

Some of the new sections offered at Southern Nevada this semester, however, meet at some very nontraditional hours. Last year, inspired by a string of institutions that had done the same, the college introduced late-night classes between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. Now, enrollment in these sections is up and the college is offering 20 different courses at these unconventional times. Divine said that these late-night offerings are here to stay for the foreseeable future, as at least one way to keep students from being turned away from the college.

Temporary Fixes

Growing enrollment — in many cases continuing year after year — is testing many community colleges nationally.

At Central New Mexico Community College, in Albuquerque, enrollment has grown by more than 25 percent in the past three years. Currently, at 29,773, enrollment is at an all-time high.

Interestingly, though, noted Phillip Bustos, the college’s vice president for student services, students are taking more credit hours than they did in the past, by nearly a class or two per semester. This accounts, he added, for some of the waiting lists in the college’s core courses, such as introductory English and math. Sections of these courses during what Bustos calls the “bottleneck times” of 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 to 7 p.m. usually have about 50 students still waiting at the start of the semester.

To accommodate those who cannot get into a section of a course essential for graduation, transfer, or continuance to a higher-level course, Bustos said, the college is getting some faculty and students to work together for something akin to an “independent study” — meaning faculty do additional one-on-one work with a few students. Also, though the college has not done so yet, Bustos said, it may alter its traditional practice of keeping classes to less than 30 or so students before the beginning of spring registration.

Meanwhile, at Calhoun Community College, the largest two-year institution in Alabama, students are being advised differently than in the past if they are unable to get into the class of their choice. Recently, the college topped the 12,000-student mark for the first time in its history — up about 6 percent from last fall.

Alicia Taylor, the college's vice president for instruction and student success, noted that the college is increasingly granting more students the ability to substitute equivalent courses within programs of study for one another if they are a course or two short of graduation or transfer. This offer is never made for "core" or "general education" courses; it is most often used for "prescribed electives" within disciplines.

"Let's say a computer science student missed taking a Java course, we would let them take a C programming or advanced Visual Basic instead," Taylor said. "These equivalent courses would prepare them for the market, albeit with a slightly different slant. We'll allow this mixing and matching as long as it's not impacting students in the overall training."

At Tulsa Community College, in Oklahoma, the answer to meeting increased demand is more adjuncts. This fall, the college had a 35 percent increase in the number of first-time students. The college's overall enrollment, now 20,000, is at an all-time high. But, perhaps more telling of today's economy, the enrollment for its Tulsa Achieves program — which waives tuition for many local residents — is also serving an all-time high of 1,637 students, up 187 students from last year.

"So far, we have been able to keep up with the growth," said Lauren Brookey, college spokeswoman. "Our state budget got cuts last year, the year before and our employees haven't had raises in two years. But we haven't had to lay off employees."

The college is, however, relying on more part-time faculty, Brookey noted. The college has seven more full-time faculty members than last year, pushing their number up to 300; meanwhile, it has 48 more adjunct faculty members, for a total of 1,185.

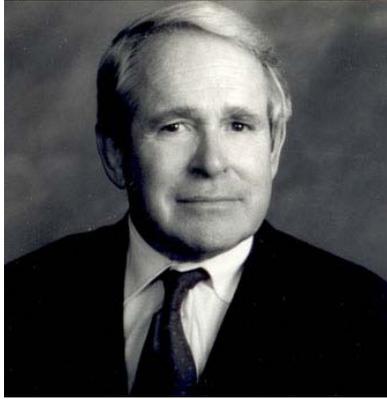
— **David Moltz**

Former El Camino College trustee Gerald Hilby dies at 81

The Daily Breeze

By Rob Kuznia Staff Writer

Posted: 09/15/2010



Gerald Hilby, former El Camino College Trustee and Manhattan Beach resident, has died at age 81.

He lost an arm early in life and lost his ability to read late in life. But Gerald "Jerry" Hilby never let health problems get in the way of professional achievement, civic engagement and athletic recreation.

A memorial service will be held Saturday for Hilby, a South Bay lawyer and former longtime El Camino College trustee who died Sept. 2. He was 81.

A Manhattan Beach resident who practiced law in Redondo Beach, Hilby sat on more than a dozen civic organizations.

He was born in Spokane, Wash., and grew up on a farm.

At age 9, a farming accident left Hilby with a compound fracture in his right arm. He developed gangrene and had to have the arm amputated. He was thus forced to retrain his left hand for primary use.

Despite the accident, as an adult Hilby golfed, bicycled, water-skied, Alpine skied, played poker, hunted, grew an impressive garden and even used a table saw to create and install wood floors in his home on The Strand in Manhattan Beach.

"He was a very, very focused and tenacious man," said his daughter, Heidi Hilby Bush, speaking by phone from her home in Seattle. "He had a large number of friends in the South Bay area, and a lot of it was around these civic duties that he felt were very important."

Family members described his passing as a "peaceful, nonmedicalized death" in his bed at home.

A firm believer in education, Hilby received his bachelor's degree from Washington State University in 1952 and his law degree from Loyola University in 1960.

Hilby started his professional career as a history teacher in Spokane. He moved to Manhattan Beach in 1958 and took a job teaching history at Aviation High School, which closed in 1982.

After passing the bar exam, he took a job working in the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Office. But Hilby eventually struck out on his own and opened a Redondo Beach office, where he specialized in matters ranging from divorce to child custody to wills and estates. He retired in 1985.

His daughter said he sometimes used a wooden prosthetic arm with a hook.

"That was used mostly to fill up his suit when he went to court," Bush said. "Otherwise you never saw him with it on."

In November 1973, Hilby was elected to the El Camino College Board of Trustees, beating out three competitors. He stayed on the board for 18 years.

In addition, he sat on the Manhattan Beach Planning Commission, South Bay Union High School District board, South Bay Bar Association, Los Angeles County Beach Advisory Committee and the International Surf Festival. He served as president of the Redondo Beach Chamber of Commerce, a board member of the Alcoholism Council of the South Bay; and treasurer of the Lincoln Republican Club.

In 1996, Hilby suffered a massive stroke that forever robbed him of his ability to read. For a time, the hemorrhage left him unable to speak coherently, but he regained his verbal abilities after six weeks of intensive inpatient therapy.

"He could read major headlines in the newspaper, but could no longer read novels," Bush said.

Hilby never lost his passion for golf or gardening. Even after his stroke, he often hit the links six days a week. Meanwhile, his home on The Strand is one of the few that was never built out to consume the entire lot. Bush said this is partly because he was committed to his expansive English garden, which covered about a third of his property.

In addition to his daughter, Hilby is survived by a son, Larry Hilby, and five grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents and an older brother, Jack.

Services will be held at 1 p.m. Saturday, at the White and Day Mortuary Chapel, Manhattan Beach, with a reception immediately following.

The family asks that any donations be made to The American Stroke Association, 1710 Gilbreth Road, Burlingame, CA 94010-1795, or a favorite charity.

State Sen. Rod Wright indicted on voter fraud, perjury

LA TIMES

ON POLITICS IN THE GOLDEN STATE

September 16, 2010 | 11:20 am

A Los Angeles County Grand Jury on Thursday unsealed an eight-count felony indictment against state Sen. Roderick Wright (D-Inglewood), accusing him of filing a false declaration of candidacy, voter fraud and perjury beginning in 2007, when he changed his voter registration to run for the Legislature.

Wright listed as his residence a home in the district he wanted to represent, but county authorities allege that he did not live there. A candidate for state legislative office is required by California law to reside in the district he or she seeks to represent.

The indictment also alleges that Wright fraudulently voted in elections in 2008 and 2009.

If convicted, he faces up to eight years and four months in state prison and would be barred for life from holding elected office.

Wright, 58, was arraigned Thursday morning before Superior Court Judge Patricia M. Schnegg. He pleaded not guilty and was expected to be released after posting \$45,000 bail. He is due back in court Oct. 8.

Wright had no immediate comment, but one of his attorneys, Winston Kevin McKesson, predicted that his client would be "fully exonerated." "We believe he fully complied with the law," McKesson said.

The indictment comes almost a year from the day in 2009 when authorities searched two homes owned by Wright, one in Inglewood, in the 25th Senate District that he was elected to represent in 2008, and the other in Baldwin Hills, in the neighboring 26th District.

In confirming the searches of the two properties last year, David Demerjian, head of the district attorney's public integrity division, said the investigation stemmed from a tip the office received that the legislator had not been living in the district despite listing the Inglewood address as his home when changing his voter registration in March 2007.

Voter registration affidavits and declarations of candidacy are signed under penalty of perjury.

Wright won the Senate seat in November 2008. His district runs from the coastal cities of the Palos Verdes Peninsula through the harbor area and part of Long Beach, as well as through Compton, Gardena, Hawthorne, Inglewood and some portions of Los Angeles city and unincorporated areas.

Even if Wright is convicted of one or more felonies, it is unclear whether he would be forced to give up his seat. With few exceptions, including a recall election, legislators cannot be expelled from office except by a two-thirds vote of their colleagues in the Assembly or Senate.

Neither E. Dotson Wilson, chief clerk of the Assembly, nor Gregory Schmidt, secretary of the Senate, could name an instance in which a member of either house had been removed by colleagues over a matter of residency.

The Wright indictment marks the second time in less than two months that a local elected official has faced criminal charges over possible residency fraud.

On Aug. 4, Los Angeles City Councilman Richard Alarcon and his wife were indicted on 24 felony counts when a criminal grand jury alleged they had committed perjury and voter fraud when they listed their home as being in Panorama City but actually lived outside Alarcon's 7th Council District.

Alarcon and his wife, Flora Montes de Oca, both pleaded not guilty.

-- Jean Merl

Education Pays, but How Much?

The Chronicle of Higher Education

September 21, 2010

By Beckie Supiano

Higher education has a public-relations problem. Family incomes are stagnant, but tuition keeps going up. Many students who begin college don't graduate. Even among those who do, students who borrow are finishing with greater and greater average debt burdens. And then they're walking into a tough job market. So what is a college degree really worth?

The answer to that question is clearly important for higher education. But trying to find it isn't easy and brings a fair bit of controversy.

On Tuesday, the College Board released its latest installment of "Education Pays," a report that showcases the financial and nonfinancial payoffs of earning that degree. In the introduction, the report's authors make clear that they know the fray they're stepping into: "Too often, colorful anecdotes about individuals who have had unfortunate experiences capture the spotlight and lead to inaccurate generalizations about the dangers of making this major life investment," they write.

The last iteration of the report, released in 2007, was publicly criticized by Charles Miller, the former chairman of the federal Commission on the Future of Higher Education, who wrote a response letter taking issue with the report's methodology, which he said overinflated the value of a degree.

The College Board is a membership organization representing colleges, and its mission is "to connect students to college success and opportunity." As Richard Vedder, director of the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, puts it, "the College Board is not in the business of turning people away from college."

Despite that mission, Sandy Baum, an independent analyst for the College Board and one of the report's authors, says that "Education Pays" is about data, not advocacy. "This report per se is presenting evidence," says Ms. Baum, who also writes for *The Chronicle* on its Innovations blog. "We're not telling anyone to do anything."

And she wonders a bit about the criticism surrounding the report's finding that college graduates fare much better than nongraduates. "When people talk about 'well, maybe people shouldn't go to college,'" she says, "ask the people if their kids go to college."

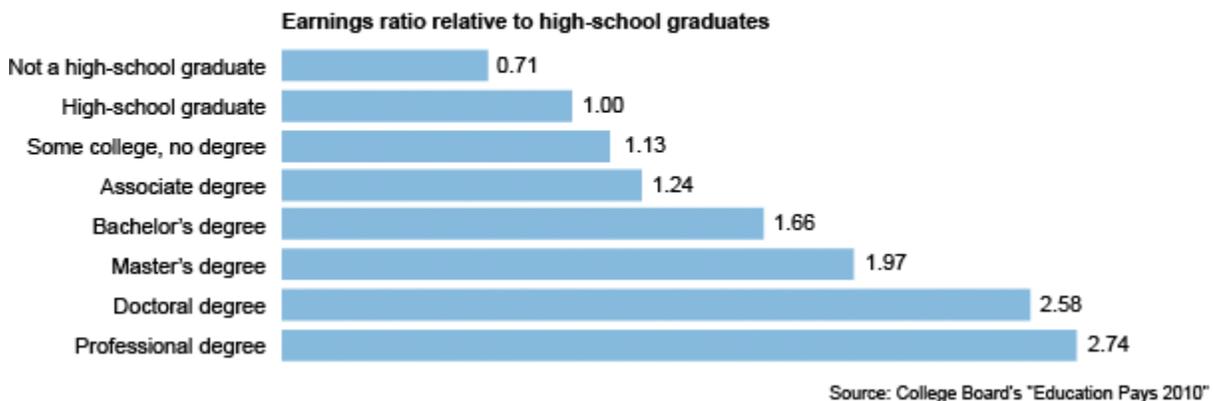
Even Mr. Miller, who says the report greatly overstates the benefit of a degree, doesn't take that to mean people shouldn't go to college. Instead, he sees that as evidence that higher education's financial system is broken.

The report's findings will be no great surprise to anyone who has read the previous installments. Education, it finds, does pay.

Over the course of a 40-year career, the average college graduate earns about 66 percent more than the typical high-school graduate, and those with advanced degrees earn two to three times as much as a high-school graduate, according to the report.

Higher Education Raises Earnings Ratio

The typical bachelor's-degree recipient can expect to earn about 66 percent more than a high-school graduate during a 40-year working life. The chart below shows expected earnings relative to those of a high-school graduate.



Unlike previous reports, this time around the College Board did not include a dollar figure to show how much money college graduates earn over a lifetime compared with nongraduates. The 2007 report said that college graduates earn up to \$800,000 more over a career than nongraduates, a figure that climbs to \$1-million with the inclusion of advanced-degree holders. When taking into consideration that some of those earnings are in the future, the bachelor's-degree holder earns an additional \$450,000 in today's dollars, or \$570,000 when including advanced-degree holders. Those figures were taken out of context, Ms. Baum says, which is why no equivalent numbers were used this time around.

The Value Debate

"The point is, yes, you make more going to college. There's no question about it," says Mr. Vedder, who is a professor of economics at Ohio University and also writes for Innovations. The question is whether the report adequately accounts for those who do not graduate, he says.

The report does show the expected lifetime earnings of students who begin college but do not complete an associate or bachelor's degree, finding that they earn more than high-school graduates but less than degree holders.

"There is evidence that there is a payoff to every year of education," Ms. Baum says. "On average, every year of education does pay off. Every year pays off more than the year before." But those are averages, she adds—that doesn't make taking on \$30,000 in loans and then dropping out after six months a good idea.

The financial value of a degree depends heavily on what that degree is in and where it is earned, says Anthony P. Carnevale, director of the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. That's because what a student majors in decides her occupation, which decides her earnings, he says: "There is no job called 'B.A.'"

At the same time, Mr. Carnevale adds, having a postsecondary degree does lead to higher earnings within an occupation, at least through the bachelor's degree.

Another point of contention—and a moving target—in the value debate is the time and the expense required to earn a bachelor's degree. The new College Board report considers this and finds that by age 33, the typical college graduate has earned enough money to compensate for taking four years out of the labor force and for borrowing the entire cost of tuition and fees at the typical public college.

Mr. Miller continues to take issue with the assumptions used in "Education Pays." For example, he says, the report combines GED recipients and high-school graduates into one group, which pulls down the high-school graduates' earnings, as GED holders tend not to fare as well. Ms. Baum agrees that this isn't ideal, but she says getting separate figures for the two groups is impossible.

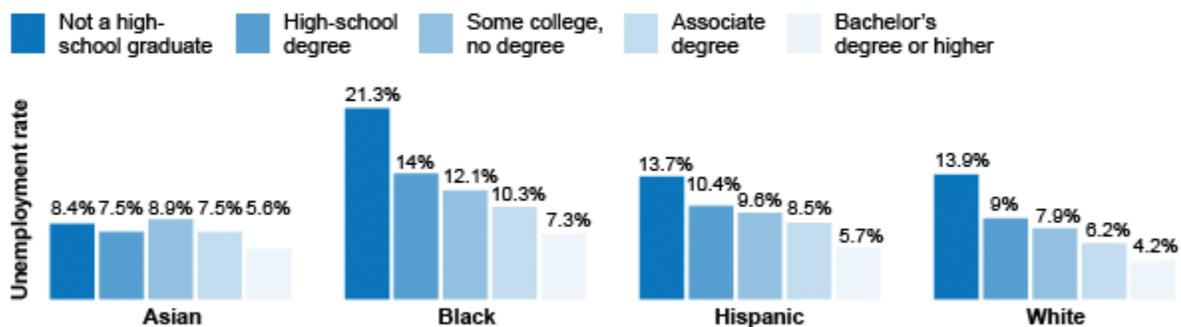
Mr. Miller also disputes the authors' decision to assume that students go to a public college and graduate in four years, because a significant minority of students go to private schools, and because many students do not graduate on time. It would take longer to pay back the cost of a more-expensive private-college degree, Ms. Baum agrees, but all that means is the crossover point happens a year or two later for students who attend independent colleges. And many students who don't graduate on time work and are not full-time students.

While some of her assumptions may favor colleges, she says, others—like that students don't work or receive grant aid—are unfavorable from the institutions' perspective.

In addition to earnings data, the report highlights that college graduates are less likely to be unemployed. In 2009, the unemployment rate for those 25 and older with at least a four-year college degree was 4.6 percent, compared with 9.7 percent among high-school graduates in the same age group. Still, a college degree is no guarantee of a job, Ms. Baum says: Nothing is. But having one increases a person's employment chances.

Unemployment Rates by Education Level and Race, 2009

Among Hispanic, black, and white adults, the unemployment rate decreases significantly as the education level increases; the effect is less pronounced among Asian adults.



Source: College Board's "Education Pays 2010"

Not Just Money

The benefits of a college degree are not only financial. The report points out other positive outcomes that correlate to having earned a college degree: Graduates are more likely to vote, to volunteer, and to exercise, and less likely to smoke or to be obese. While the report focuses on correlations, other research, some of which is highlighted in the report, shows that education itself is one cause for these behaviors, Ms. Baum says.

Mr. Carnevale is skeptical. He thinks most of the nonfinancial benefits of education boil down to social class: "When you stand on the stage and they give you the degree, how did you become healthier? Was it because you walked up the stairs?"

But Mark Kantrowitz is fascinated by the idea of an education-health connection. While there may be a selection bias that explains part of the overlap between people likely to go to college and those likely to be healthy, it's possible to account for at least some of those factors, says Mr. Kantrowitz, publisher of the Web site FinAid, which provides student-aid information to families. And, he says, he suspects that college graduates make better health choices, in part,

because they're better informed. "It's nice to say if you graduate with a four-year degree, you won't just be wealthier, you'll also be healthier."

California community colleges need to raise student fees

LA Times

Raising fees would qualify the colleges for more federal money, helping to offset budget cuts and opening up space in classes students need.

California must make community college more affordable by raising student fees. Seriously.

In the second round of federal stimulus money for higher education, California's community colleges received \$5 million this month. That's nice, but not half as much as they would have gotten if they'd raised fees by a mere \$1 a unit from the current \$26. For the average full-time student, that would amount to a total increase of perhaps \$30 a year; it would have boosted the colleges' budget by \$12.5 million. A \$10-a-unit increase would bring in \$125 million more a year, and the state would still have the least expensive community colleges in the nation.

That \$10 increase, or about \$300 a year, would in fact save students money. Because of budget cuts, students are competing for seats in the classes they need for a vocational certificate or to move on to a four-year school. Many cannot get into enough classes to be considered full time, which means they don't qualify for student health insurance. Worse, they must spend an extra semester or even a year to earn the credits needed for a degree, certificate or transfer. One extra semester of living expenses costs a lot more than \$300.

The extra money should be reserved for two purposes: offering more of the classes students need, and waiving the fees for students who can't afford them. Most working-class students already qualify. Those with more robust financial resources don't lose out either — the federal tuition tax credit that began last year effectively reimburses them for up to \$2,000 a year in fees and textbooks.

A 2009 [report](#) by the state Legislative Analyst's Office suggested raising fees, but there is always such an emotional and irrational outcry that legislators cower. A proposal this legislative year to raise the fees by \$14 a unit — which would still leave the colleges the second-best bargain in the nation — never even sparked a serious conversation. The report also noted that higher fees do not keep students from enrolling, but lack of classes does. Community college enrollment has fallen by 200,000 this academic year, which the colleges attribute to the unavailability of classes.

Students are starting to see the folly of overly low fees in a bad economy. A Sept. 9 [editorial](#) in the student newspaper at El Camino College in Torrance suggests an increase. "Education is all we can strive for during this time," the editorial board wrote. "We're willing to pay more, we're willing to help pitch in, we just want to save our campus." Smart kids. Imagine what they could accomplish with a college education.

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Comments (4)

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kdholland at 1:50 PM September 27, 2010

This article completely fails to mention that the fees students pay at community colleges do NOT stay at the campuses! Those fees are sent directly into the state budget, and only a small portion of that returns to the community colleges. Perhaps the author needs to return to college....

susangate at 9:40 AM September 27, 2010

How many illegal immigrants are going to these Jr. colleges? Why aren't they paying what out of state or country students are paying? Let them pay higher education fees as they should. They can apply for student visas like all foreigners do. That ought to go a long way to close the budget gap for Jr. colleges and open up more spaces for legal and citizen students. That would be justice.

Kurfco at 8:39 AM September 27, 2010

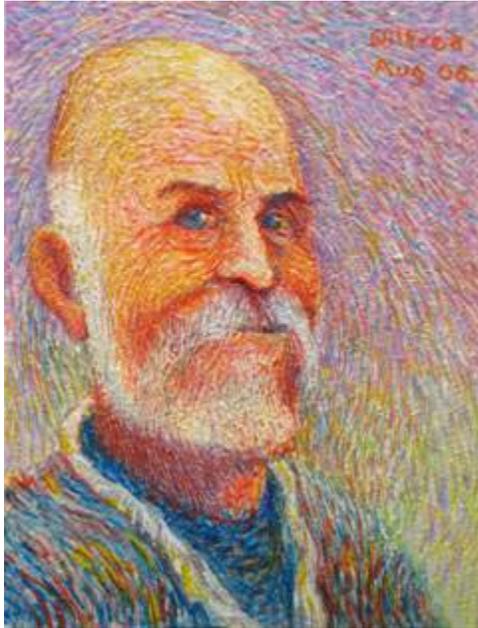
Two studies in the last 5 years have revealed that less than 25% of community college students who enter planning to graduate with a two year degree or transfer at the end of two years accomplish their goal in six years! Why? Because fees are so low, the community colleges, at great taxpayer expense, are full of dabblers or woefully unprepared students who pay next to nothing to fool themselves and their parents that they are accomplishing something. A large proportion enroll in classes, take up valuable space, then drop out.

We should raise fees, perhaps to \$50 a unit, and rebate \$15 per unit to students when they satisfactorily complete the course.

Fifty years and a day

By [Mark McDermott](#) | September 29th, 2010

Wilfred Sarr's life in art



Self portrait by Wilfred Sarr

In September of 1960, a very unlikely GI went on leave.

Wilfred Sarr was 24. He'd been drafted the previous year, unceremoniously yanked from Compton College, where he studied psychology for one very good reason.

“Well, I knew that I was crazy, no doubt about that,” Sarr said. “I looked at the way my mind worked and played tricks on me – I had so many automobile accidents, just little things to let me know there was a mechanism in me somewhere that was at odds with my progress.”

Army life was surprisingly pleasant. Even basic training was no problem. Sarr had been working in a clown diving act, so he was plenty fit. He was then trained as a medic and sent Germany.

“Of all the things I could have gotten into, to be a medic was wonderful,” Sarr said. “If I had been in a light outfit, I would have cracked up and gotten killed by my own men.”

He was stationed in a beautiful German village called Birkenfeld, a pristine little farm community that had somehow avoided the destruction of WWII and still had cottages made out

of mud and wattle. Sarr would frequently wander the fields and admire the old farm implements, which reminded him of his own upbringing working on farms in California.

Then the rain came. For seven weeks and one day, it poured. Sarr went in search of the sun. He and a buddy drove south, towards Barcelona. But as they passed through the villages of Germany and then France, something was happening.

“When you don’t see the sun for 50 days, they say screw it and go inside the cellars and bring out the wine and everybody gets shitfaced,” Sarr recalled. “It was funny. Every little town we came to, we’d stop and somebody would hand a bottle in one side and you’d take a long slug and then pass it along and out the other side, over and over. After going through about 30 little villages, by about 5 o’clock, we were really drunk.”

Finally they made it to Barcelona. It was 105 degrees and sunny and there seemed to be art everywhere – drawings, painting, sculptures – and Sarr remembers thinking, “I could do that.”

The thought percolated as he began to drive back north a few days later. The forests, the villages, the skies: everything seemed aglow. As he crossed into France he had an epiphany.

“The vineyards, the blue sky, the puffy clouds, it was just this special beauty,” Sarr said. “I was driving through, and I thought, ‘Yeah. This is what I want to do.’ I had been thinking medicine and psychology and that kind of thing. It was the last day in September of 1960, and I said, ‘Goddamn it, I am going to be an artist.’”

He returned to Germany and began painting and drawing and within a few months had a show at the local service club that was well attended by the doctors and medical staff at the general hospital where he worked. One of his first drawings shows a cave man looking somewhat quizzically at his hands.



Caveman. by Wilfred Sarr

“He is looking... ‘These are pretty cool. Wonder what they are for?’ Little cave man,” Sarr said. “That is where the questions started.”

Sarr knew exactly what his hands were for. Fifty years and one day later, Sarr returns this Friday to Cannery Row Studios in Redondo Beach to show the fruits of a prodigiously productive lifetime in art. The show is a retrospective titled *50+1 (what was the question?)*.

He has produced more than 5,000 works of art and become — over the course of four decades, before leaving for Santa Cruz in 2001 — the man who more than any other painted this town. His work has ranged exuberantly, from pointillist portraits to impressionist landscapes to dancers to mandalas, from Picasso-like abstractions to Matisse-like exercises in simplicity, grace and color. But over and over again, he has drawn perhaps the most daunting comparison in all of art.

As longtime art collector and Hermosa Beach resident Maggie Moir said, “Wilfred is truly our Van Gogh.”

Sarr has certainly shared this much with Van Gogh: he has not painted with the current market in mind. His ambitions have been less material and more spiritual. He has made very little money.

“He is determined to do it his way, and I think that was the same with Van Gogh,” said Richard Stephens, a painter and curator at Cannery Row Studios. “He saw things differently, and just did it because that is all he knew how to do. Wilfred is the same way — he sees things differently, and he paints it the way he sees it. He never tries to fit in with anything. That is how you become an independent artist, and a leader.”

“I think Wilfred will be one of those people, in a hundred years, they will know who he is,” Stephens said.

Sarr suggests perhaps another reason why Van Gogh keeps coming up.

“Maybe because I’m apeshit crazy,” he said. “Over the last 50 years I bet 30 people have come up to me and asked, ‘What’s up? Why do you still have both ears?’ It’s amazing. People in my racket are supposed to be crazy.”

Nebraska to Hermosa

Sarr never received a day of formal artistic training in his life. But his whole life he was an artist.

He was born in Iowa and moved to Nebraska as a very young child. His memories are spare but intensely visual.

“I remember it was flat, and in winter, black and white and flat,” he said. “I remember we lived on a pig farm, way out of town, and there was a windmill, and if you got up on the windmill, man, it was just flat as far as you could see. That was Nebraska.”

A kindergarten teacher named Miss Coolin noticed a few unusual things about young Wilfred. First of all, every piece of paper that got within his grasp would be filled with drawings. It was a habit that would persist all his childhood.

“I was always drawing on every piece of paper I’d turn in to any teacher,” Sarr recalled. “She would have to look around to find the writing, because there was always drawing.”

Miss Coolin quickly realized that these weren’t like other kids’ drawings. Wilfred had an intuitive understanding of perspective, for one thing – the faraway man would be small, the nearby cow, big – and his buildings were solidly two-dimensional.

“In kindergarten, everyone else was drawing houses with three sides,” Sarr said. “I knew damn well you couldn’t see any more than two at any one time.”

His family moved to Arizona when he was eight and then to the Sierra foothills town of Lindsay, California a year later. Sarr felt like he’d been plunked down in the Garden of Eden.

“I realized I had arrived,” he said. “It was spectacular – all flowers, rocky hills, big boulders the size of semi-trucks. It was just fantastic.”

In grade school in California, the other students started to notice Wilfred’s unusual abilities. Kids would gather around his desk for an hour at a time and watch him draw. But back home, his parents, Charles and Opal, didn’t see much use in his burgeoning talents.

“To be an artist was like, what are you talking about?” he said. “You think you are going to be an artist, great. One in a million, playing the lottery, that was the message I got...Of course, you learn to pick cotton, pick beans, pick tomatoes, pick squash, do dishes. That is real.”

By high school, he’d largely put away any artistic notions, although one time, as a sophomore, a teacher named Mr. Shipman noticed a portrait Wilfred had just idly drawn of him. He asked for it, and Wilfred gave it to him.

“That was my first portrait,” he said.

He would barely think about such things again until his epiphany in the military. After the military, he would barely think about anything else.

When Sarr arrived in Hermosa Beach in February of 1962, by his count, he was one of three bearded men in town. One was former mayor Mike Bigo (also the founder of the Pitcher House). The other was artist Willie Maloney, who did the original Tim Kelly surf sculpture and eventually left in a drugged haze with Sarr’s first wife, Sandra.

“I’ve had a respectable number of failed marriages, collapsing under the weight of art and drugs...enough to be respectable in any art market in the world. Forget the fucking formal education,” Sarr said.

Hermosa Beach in the 1960s was arguably one of the most vibrant artistic communities anywhere. The Lighthouse Café was blowing hot with some of the finest jazz musicians of the era; poets and philosophers wafted in and out of the Either/Or Bookstore just up the street; and the short-lived but long-remembered Insomniac Café was home to every assortment of artist.

Insomniac owner Bob Hare – who also operated an avant-garde gallery called the Argo – argues that Hermosa at that point was the epicenter of the LA art scene.

“There were a lot of artists in the South Bay,” Hare said. “So many of them, in fact, that what really ought to be explored is how the LA art style was really generated in many ways from Hermosa Beach....And it was something Hermosa ate with a spoon, baby. It was truly an artist’s colony, and all those wonderful people came out and supported it. And it grew like a wildfire.”

Sarr had moved into a little house on the corner of Manhattan Avenue and Eighth Street in Hermosa. He had ambitions.

“I had envisioned really taking over the town,” he said. “I was going to be the artist laureate of Hermosa Beach. It didn’t happen.”

Painting the town

He was known as Bart Sarr back then. Other artists recognized the unruly talent that arrived in their midst.

Painter Sari Staggs had seen these striking ballpoint pen drawings of male nudes that were done with no models. They were unlike anything she’d seen.

“They were from his imagination,” she said. “He didn’t have models, so the anatomy was kind of strange, but they were so good....I just went, ‘Who is this guy?’”

Pretty much all she knew about Sarr is that he wore a long beard, he had a high-ceilinged studio along the old Redondo waterfront, and there was something utterly compelling about his art. A little while later, Staggs was visiting a friend when a statuesque, disheveled blonde woman came striding towards them.

“She came barreling across the street, this gorgeous, big blonde woman, the most beautiful woman you could ever meet,” Staggs said.

They talked. The woman’s name was Sandra Sarr. Staggs asked if she was related to the painter.

“He’s my husband,” she said, not particularly pleased with the notion.

Finally one day Staggs was teaching a class at a studio in downtown Hermosa – the Way Up Gallery, on the corner of Pier on Hermosa, above where Rok Sushi is now – when she noticed a man intensely hunched over a canvas. It was Sarr.

“He turned around,” she remembered. “I had never seen him before but I’d seen his art for four or five years. ‘Oh my God,’ I said. ‘Are you the guy?’”

Sarr was a fury of artistic creation. At one point he had a house on Guadalupe Street in Redondo Beach that was infamous for its revelry. “My house was where everybody went and did all the shit they wouldn’t do in their own neighborhood,” Sarr said.

He was a big, muscular man, and he caroused with an even bigger, more muscular guy named Robi Hutas, a Hungarian painter and photographer known as Bull who had Popeye arms and a voice that could be heard a town away. They shared an utter commitment to art. But even Hutas was occasionally stunned by the intensity of his friend’s focus.

Hutas remembers one time when Sarr was away for three days on an industrial paint job at an airplane hangar and everybody decided to throw him a surprise party when he returned. Of course, Sarr hadn’t slept in three days.

“We are all waiting for him at his home, all hiding, he walks in and we are all yelling,” Hutas said. “I look at his eyes and they are completely covered with little tiny specks of paint. I said, ‘Bart, how can you look out of those eyes?’ He goes into the kitchen, gets a bowl of soup, goes to the back yard to this little shack he had with broken down steps. He had this tall three legged stool and he’s sitting there balancing it eating soup...And he starts painting! I said, ‘Jesus Christ, Bart, aren’t you tired?’” He was just laughing at me. I will never forget that. It was unbelievable. It was past being human.”

The women and the parties came and went – he drank heavily and was eventually married and divorced three times – but no matter what, he kept painting. He doesn’t remember the 1960s as a happy time. He’d become an artist, but he wasn’t yet free.

“I had little unctious, little bubbles of light, but it was pretty dismal,” Sarr recalled. “What we are dealing with is fear. Oh gosh, until 1968, my life was dominated by fear. Everybody was so ugly, and I wanted to prove it. Then I began to have these really wonderful experiences that were so overwhelming I just gave myself over to them. I can’t imagine how I could have gotten out of this cast iron jail of my intellect. It was really badly constructed. It was horrible.”

Something shifted inside Sarr that year. The world came fully alive. He was living at the Way Up with a perfect perch on Pier Avenue. He sometimes stayed awake 24 hours at a time, staring out the window and marveling at the unfolding cycle of life: the pre-dawn “hide and seek” between cops and speed freaks, the surfers heading to the ocean at first light, the mid-morning bikini parade, the bustling arrival of the lunch crowd, the human market of the Strand, the first pangs of the night people at dusk, the midnight limousines disembarking jazz musicians outside the Lighthouse, and the beginning of the hide and seek game all over again.

He was beginning to see more than fleeting glimpses of beauty. His work was beginning.



non-titled dancers. by Wilfred Sarr

Laughing Van Gogh

In 1969, Sarr's quest for beauty became clearer after meeting the man who would become his spiritual teacher. He was originally just called Old Man George. Eventually, he would journey to India and return as a monk. Then he would be known as The Monk.

The Monk knew that Sarr was drawn to Van Gogh, but he didn't think he understood him. Van Gogh, The Monk said, was fundamentally a religious person – he'd walked away from the material things of the world to live more honestly. Picasso, The Monk said, served himself; Van Gogh served the people. And beauty.

“He was totally overwhelmed with some crazy malady, but no question, he somehow saw beauty beyond the conventional experience of beauty,” Sarr said. “And he was honest to that. He did his best to portray the beauty he saw in what he painted.”

“The Monk told me, ‘Never forget you are a servant of the people.’ An artist is a servant. You have to drag yourself beyond conventional experience and somehow have to skill to take someone else there. That's where Van Gogh goes way beyond Picasso. Picasso got involved in self-promotion. Van Gogh realized he was not important at all. He was a nobody, a servant of the people.”

Sarr's own ambition became more spiritual in nature. He did not drink for the next 31 years. He spent two years in Santa Cruz, then returned and lived on a box on a roof of the old Beach Cities

Newspapers building (where the Beach House Hotel is now) and painted in an old printing press room down below. He paid \$50 a month and lived there the next 11 years. He became Hermosa's artist laureate in a way he himself may not even have recognized.

Maggie Moir hired him to teach her children to paint.

"I wanted them to have the experience of truly knowing him, because of the spirituality and the interesting way he looked at the world," she said. "Wilfred is like Van Gogh, but he was never crazy. He is as grounded as anyone I know. His beliefs are just very different than most of us – this is an aerospace area, and there is that whole mindset, very different from where he was coming from and this wonderful spiritual journey he was on."

Sarr continued to experiment wildly – from minimalist art to portraits, clouds, landscapes, and abstract masks, whatever way his spirit inclined. It probably wasn't something that endeared him to the art market, but it gave him utter freedom.

"He is consumed by his passion for putting images on whatever surface he's got in front of him," Staggs said. "I don't think he spends any time being judgmental, second-guessing himself if it may not be the best thing to do. He just plunges ahead. And he just never seems to quit, through whatever adversity he has had to go through. He just never quits."

Staggs has always admired Sarr's independence and outright artistic brilliance. But she has admired watching his kindness grow over the years perhaps even more.

"He had to fight serious demons – alcohol, drugs, huge problems with drugs, everything you can name," she said. "It would have killed most people, or they would have killed themselves, but he has somehow survived and he has never as far as I have known him not been a nice human being. Ten other men going through what he went through would have become killers or criminals, and Wilfred just keeps getting kinder and more compassionate the longer you know him."

Staggs, who has had a very successful career and has raised four children making her living in art, credits Sarr for much of the good fortune she has enjoyed. She said back in 1967, Sarr and another painter were visiting a prominent art collector in West LA. They knew she couldn't get away because of her children, so they offered to take some of her paintings for her. When they returned, the collector hadn't bought either of the two men's work. But he'd bought Staggs's work, a prominent purchase that launched her career.

"I owe my career to Wilfred," she said. "That is where my serious money-making, big-time go-out-and-meet-the-world started, and it was Wilfred who did it.... It would have been ego-crushing for any guy wanting to get ahead in the arts. And Wilfred gave it to me on a plate."

Sarr moved to Santa Cruz for good in 2001. He spent 17 months living back country – finally living that plein air dream he had in France in 1960 – and has continued to range wildly in his work. Last year, he began a series of single dancers – called "The Dancer is the Answer" – brash, colorful, flowing figures that seemed ready to jump off the canvas.

“I’ve been thinking why people dance,” Sarr told the *Easy Reader* last year. “You remember Zorba the Greek? When everything just totally came unraveled, he danced. That was his reaction. I said, wow, there’s some sanity in that.”

This year, he may have pulled off his most unlikely trick yet. Fifty years in, at the age of 74, he is producing paintings that many longtime observers – including himself – think is his best work yet. His new series – “What was the question?” – features pairs of dancers and is a meditation on the great mystery of male-female relations.

“When you are feeling totally self controlled and doing your work and involved, on balance, things are easy,” Sarr said. “But then you get involved with a woman and crazy things start to happen. You find yourself doing things you can’t believe. You start playing roles. We get so lost in the man-woman thing, but that is how we all got here. To me, that is fucking amazing.”

He is painting at a prodigious clip – since April, he has completed 100 paintings in the series. His painting is more spiritually afire now than ever before. “This is as far as I’ve ever gotten,” Sarr said. “Oh yeah...Listen, I don’t have any family ties, I don’t have any plants, I don’t have any cats. I don’t have any distractions. If I don’t paint now, I should be shot. Boom!”

John Cantu, another resident Cannery Row painter and sometime curator, thinks that Sarr has reached a high point. “It is a playful melody splashed about on canvas, board, and paper,” he said. “I think he has decided that intricate detail lacks the genuine soul/spirit which art is meant to convey. Loose playful free strokes, unconfined freedom mixed with genuine emotion.”

Cantu also believes on some level Sarr may be playing for different stakes now, later in his career.

“I think he is looking to be remembered,” he said.

Sarr does have a wish in this regard.

“I kind of wonder what Van Gogh would have painted if he had had a sense of humor,” he said. “See, I would like to be Van Gogh with a sense of humor. That is what I’d like to be. That would be the height of aspiration for me – I’d like for people, when they come in and see a painting, just to laugh and fall down, just fall down on the floor. I might have to get them really drunk before they come in.”

Cannery Row Studios presents Wilfred Sarr 50+1 What is the question? Beginning Oct. 1 at 6:30 p.m. and running daily 4:30 to 9 p.m. through Oct. 10 at 601 N. Francisca Ave. See www.canneryrowstudios.com or www.wilfredsarr.com for more info. ER

South Bay / Harbor Area business calendar

From staff reports

Posted: [09/27/2010 04:30:26 PM](#)

Import/export workshop

Wednesday. the Small Business Development Center is offering a free workshop, "Import/Export Orientation," from 1 to 5 p.m. at El Camino College Business Training Center, 13430 Hawthorne Blvd., Hawthorne. Call 310-973-3177 to register.

TV actors to read from classics at El Camino College

By Rob Kuznia Staff Writer

Posted: 09/23/2010 05:51:14 PM

Mainstream TV and classic literature will merge Saturday night at El Camino College, with actors from shows such as "Desperate Housewives," "NYPD Blue" and "Grey's Anatomy" performing readings for the purpose of raising money for the cash-strapped community college.

Called "The Road Ahead," the 7:30 p.m. event will feature readings from 15 television and film stars reading education-themed short stories in the El Camino College Campus Theatre.

For instance, Joe Spano, formerly of "Hill Street Blues" with a current role in "NCIC," will read from a Victor Hugo work. Miguel Sandoval, who plays a district attorney on the NBC supernatural drama "Medium," will read Ernest Hemingway.

Produced and directed by the nonprofit group WordTheatre, the event will raise money for The Osher Initiative, a \$100 million endowment for California community colleges, as well as programs for El Camino students.

It is co-chaired by South Bay philanthropist Melanie Lundquist and Adrian Pasdar, the star of "Heroes" formerly on NBC. The show is sponsored by Southern California Edison, ExxonMobil and Schools First Credit Union.

Tickets are \$150. Faculty tickets are \$75 and student tickets are \$35.

City getting prettied up with Public Works projects

THE COMPTON BULLETIN – Wednesday, September 29, 2010

END OF 2010 WILL SEE MORE BRIGHTLY LIT STREETS, STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS, PARKWAY WORK

By Allison Jean Eaton
Bulletin Editor

COMPTON—The Public Works Department announced earlier this month that it is optimistic that the new year will be accompanied by the completion and start of several long-awaited improvement projects.

Wendell Johnson, the city's new Public Works director, gave a special presentation during the Sept. 7 council meeting detailing some of the work his department is busily embarking upon.

Introduced were plans for the Willowbrook Transportation Enhancement, Citywide Street Lighting and Greenleaf Parkway projects.

Streetscape solutions

The Willowbrook Transportation Enhancement Project aims to beautify Willowbrook Avenue with a series of landscape and streetscape improvements along Willowbrook between Rosecrans Avenue and Alondra Boulevard, Wendell Johnson explained.

Also part of that project is the planting of trees on the east side of Willowbrook between Oris Street and Greenleaf Boulevard west of the Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way.

The city has hired the Fullerton-based firm of MIG to develop design options for the streetscape improvements along the Union Pacific Railway Corridor.

MIG's Oscar Johnson, a project manager with the organization and is of no relation to the Public Works director, presented illustrations of the various options the company brainstormed for the project, which will include art signs to emphasize intersections and installations along the street.

Oscar Johnson said that Union Pacific has agreed to allow the city to use the first 2.5 feet along the street for the slated improvements. He showed slides featuring photos and digital specs of what various concepts might look like once installed. The options include what he called an arc fence concept, which would feature 2.25-foot-long galvanized piping accentuated with boulders; a meandering wall and steel fence concept; and an undulating wall and word mount concept, which would feature 5-foot- to 3-foot-high mounts of powder-coated steel blocks emblazoned with inspirational words such as "Growth," "Proud," "Opportunity," "Hope" and "Strong."

Citywide illumination

The long-awaited plan to brighten up the night sky throughout the city is also finally underway.

The city first hired Mayor Eric J. Perrodin's Sunday school teacher, Verna Porter, two years ago under a one-year, \$90,000 contract to address the poor nighttime visibility on most Hub City Streets despite her lacking any qualifications. At the contract's conclusion, the streetlight project remained incomplete.

Then, last summer, city officials orchestrated the creation of a City Hall position for Porter by sneaking it into the fiscal year 2009-2010 budget, and she was hired full-time by circumventing the civil service process.

Now, a full two years later, the project is finally being initiated. Wendell Johnson said on Sept. 7 that the city has about 6,000 streetlights that provide light using high-powered sodium “cobra-head” lights, which cast that sometimes dingy, amber-yellow glow.

Those lights will be replaced with metal halide bulbs, which cast a bright, white light that is expected to better illuminate streets currently shrouded in darkness each night, Wendell Johnson said.

Changing out all those light bulbs is expected to cost about \$3 million. The Public Works director said a third of the cost will be covered by funds from the redevelopment agency’s recent tax allocation bond issuance and that Southern California Edison, which owns about 4,800 of the city’s streetlights, has committed to covering another \$1.5 million. It was not discussed how the remaining \$500,000 would be covered.

“Specifically, the project involves modifying the street lighting systems, installing new luminaires on existing poles, new electroliers, service equipment, conduit, conductors, and pull boxes and performing other items required by the plans, standard specifications or the special provisions,” the Sept. 7 staff report reads.

No explanation was given as to why it has taken two years for what appears to be a simple project to finally be getting off the ground. Perrodin did say that while the city owns about 1,200 the streetlights, it is the city’s aim to transfer control of them to SCE, a statement that came as a surprise to some because in the past he has criticized SCE’s maintenance of SCE-owned streetlights in the city.

Increasing open space

Another project Porter was first contracted and then hired full-time by the city to complete is the transformation of the SCE right-of-way along Greenleaf Boulevard into a parkway.

Wendell Johnson and contractor Oscar Johnson presented the parkway master plan while Porter sat in the audience and looked on.

The project will bring the city closer to compliance with its open space requirements as outlined in the city’s General Plan. It will also eliminate blight and promote wellness among residents, officials said.

Earlier this year, Perrodin said during a council meeting that public health is a major factor in his desire to create the park belt.

“In Brown and Black communities, there’s an overabundance of diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure, and part of that is contributed to the fact that in low-income areas, they don’t have enough park space,” the mayor said earlier this year.

“According to our General Plan ... we’re supposed to have so much park space per 100 residents, I believe,” Perrodin continued. “I’m talking off the top of my head, so don’t quote me, but in doing the research ... we’re almost 80 to 90 acres behind what we should have in the city of Compton.”

The parkway will run along the south side of Greenleaf from Long Beach Boulevard to Central Avenue beneath the SCE power lines. Currently, that stretch of land is home to overgrown weeds and several nurseries.

Monument signs will be installed at each corner at major intersections along the future parkway, Oscar Johnson said. The entirety of the parkway will be planted with grass, trees and other foliage. Along the parkway will be two major development parcels, according to the Sept. 7 staff report.

The Walton site runs from Wilmington Avenue to Central, while the Mayo site is essentially the area surrounding **Compton Center** along the right-of way.

These sites will feature the installation of recycled concrete benches and three-rail recycled metal fencing.

The Walton site was named after Walton Middle School, which is located at the intersection of Greenleaf and Central. That site will feature art signs created by Walton students through collaboration with the school.

Officials said that as per SCE restrictions, the trees to be planted cannot be any taller than 15 feet and all metal installations must be grounded.

Perrodin said that similar parkways along SCE right-of-ways in other cities feature trees taller than 15 feet, but that is because SCE has since augmented its requirements.

“When we spoke to the Edison representatives, their policies have changed since other such parks were built,” Perrodin said.

Work at the Walton site began Sept. 1, officials said, and is expected to take about 90 days to complete.

That site alone comes with a \$1.8 million price tag. The Mayo site and the development of the remaining parkway areas will both cost \$3 million each, and work on both is expected to begin later this fall. The parkway is expected to be completed shortly after the new year.

“You will see a substantial change in how Compton looks by the end of the year,” Wendell Johnson said.

El Camino College Compton Center Invites Community to Participate in the California Nisei College Diploma Project Enrichment Activities

- Posted by [Hub City Livin'](#) on September 30, 2010 at 9:54am

For Immediate Release September 30, 2010

As part of the California Nisei College Diploma Project, El Camino College Compton Center has developed a series of academic activities to celebrate Nisei history (second generation Japanese Americans), as well as a more comprehensive history of the local area which now encompasses the cities of Compton, Carson, Lynwood, Gardena and Dominguez Hills.

The purpose of the educational enrichment activities is to connect our contemporary student body to the history of the college and of the surrounding area. The month-long series of educational events are complimentary and open to the public.

El Camino College Compton Center academic enrichment activities include:

* A showing of the film, *Rabbit in the Moon*, an award-winning recollection of the life, political tensions, social and generational divisions in the internment camps, providing a "snapshot of that time" according to filmmaker Emiko Omori. The film will be shown on September 28 through September 30 at 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. each day in the Staff Lounge.

* A library exhibit highlighting "The Nisei Student Experience at Compton Junior College" debuts on October 1. The exhibit will remain for approximately a month and will display an array of photos, documents and various other artifacts of former Japanese American students and historical Compton Junior College circa 1942.

* A special guest lecture on October 6 by Alan Nishio titled "Balancing National Security and Civil Liberties in a Democratic Society: A Lesson from History." Nishio, former associate vice president for student services at California State University, Long Beach, is a founding member of the Nikkei for Civil Rights & Redress (NCRR) organization, formerly known as National Coalition for Redress/Reparation. Nishio was actively involved in the successful campaign to gain redress for Japanese Americans who were unjustly incarcerated during WWII. The lecture will take place in the Student Lounge. Nishio's bio may be viewed at <http://karl.papubs.csulb.edu/students/history/memory/nishio/>.

* A Nisei Graduation Ceremony is scheduled for October 16 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at ECC Compton Center. This is a special ceremony held to confer honorary college degrees to approximately 35 Japanese American students (or their family members in absentia) whose education was interrupted by internment during World War II at the former Compton Junior College. Assembly Member Warren Furutani as the featured keynote speaker.

* A student debate staged by students from the speech courses will take place on Tuesday, November 16 in the Student Lounge. Debate topics will include discussion of civil liberties, civil rights and issues related to the internment of Japanese Americans during WWII.

The California Nisei College Diploma Project's goal is to provide honorary degrees to Japanese Americans whose studies were forcibly suspended in 1942 when they were ordered into internment camps as a result of Executive Order 9066 during World War II.

The project is the implementation of Assembly Bill 37, a bill introduced by Assemblyman Warren Furutani (D-Long Beach), passed by the Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. The California Community College, California State University and University of California systems are all participating in this project.

Phillies help fund city's first Urban Youth Academy

By SHIRLEEN ALLICOT

PHILADELPHIA - September 26, 2010 (WPVI) -- There's a field of dreams in South Philadelphia, other than where the Phillies play. But the Fightins' are involved - helping make this field a safe haven for more kids.

The Marian Anderson Rec Center has been the home of Major League Baseball's RBI program for more than a decade - allowing kids like Demetrius Jennings to play big and dream big.

"There's a lot of violence and drugs out in the streets right now and you could very easily get sucked into those negative things, and this is a positive value to have," explains Jennings.

Now this field of dreams is about to be expanded to even more kids.

Members of the MLB, the Phillies and the City announced a \$3-million project that will turn this place into an indoor training ground for Philadelphia's first Urban Youth Academy.

The project will also include two state of the art fields that will be built at FDR Park.

This urban youth academy will be modeled after the first of its kind in [Compton, California](#) where from inception, 100 student athletes have been drafted.

But this is not only about chasing that dream - they're also pushing for education.

"I look forward to the day when I come back as Dr. Demetrius Jennings."

As a young man whose already being looked at by top schools like Duke, Yale and Princeton, it seems their efforts are already working.

Letters to the Editor

Perrodin's dog-and-pony show

Dear Editor,

Dictator, deputy district attorney and Mayor Eric J. Perridon thought he was slick by “crying” to his choir, worshippers and goddess-Sunday school teacher (and unqualified to be assistant city manager) Verna Porter about how Tuesdays are his busy day in the court as his reason for not being at council meetings.

Who gives a damn when he's taking money from the residents of Compton to be the mayor? He isn't man enough to resign and suffer the consequences he'll face when he can't replace misappropriated money!

He also said he was committed to the job he took as deputy district attorney!

Residents should know those idiots (Council members Barbara Calhoun, Lillie Dobson, Yvonne Arceneaux and Willie Jones) voted to change all council meetings to begin at 5:45 p.m. That means if one wanted to register to speak at the meetings they would have to sign at 5:30. If they pass this ordinance (after the second vote) there would be only one meeting time to appease one person, and not the residents and voters! Dobson said that at that time the city is closed. Please wake her, because after eight years on her throne she's unaware City Hall closes at 6 p.m.

This was Arceneaux and Jones' “thank you, Mr. Mayor, for allowing us to spend \$12,500 each of the taxpayers' money to go to China.” That was Calhoun's “thank you” for having Juneteenth at the golf course. Dobson's “thank you, Massa, for appointing me to a leadership position without knowing how to spell the word and knowing what it means!”

If Lynn Boone, William Kemp or I had lied about the corruption of Perrodin's administration, he would not have passed laws to quiet us. He's changing everything for his greed (money). Since his friend-girl's loan was crushed, maybe he needs the money, allegedly. He has cut off audience comment from cable Channel 36.

The Ralph M. Brown Act sec. 54953.5 (a) states, “If an agency (council) records an open meeting either on video or audio tapes, the tapes and a tape recorder must be made available to the public if a request is made.” Section 54956.6 says, “...The legislative body may not impose fees to defray its costs in carrying out the provisions of the Act.”

Also, sec. 54953.5, 54953.6 states, “A legislative body may not prohibit any person attending an open meeting from video recording, audio recording or broadcasting the proceedings, absent a reasonable finding that such activity would constitute a disruption of the proceedings.”

Calhoun hasn't done anything for District 1, yet she wants to stop us from going to Bell to learn how they got their crooks arrested! She should try and cover up her alleged participation in a campaign money-laundering scheme in Perrodin's campaign.

She and Lorraine Cervantes won't win their seats this spring.

Wasn't Cervantes one of those people busted by the Sheriff's Department after being caught drinking beer illegally at the Latino concert at the golf course that Diana Sanchez and the Our Lady of Victory Church group presented Sunday?

Sanchez sure didn't mention that part of the concert at the council meeting.
Residents will win in 2010!

JOYCE KELLY
3rd District