FOR THE WEEKS OF JULY 12 — 26, 2007

Coverage


Norwalk Community News — June 15, 2007 — Article on scholarships earned by high school ROP students taking automotive classes at Cerritos College (from press release).


La Opinion — June 19, 2007 — Brief on ESL classes offered at Cerritos College to immigrants with professional skills.

Long Beach Press-Telegram — June 20, 2007 — Listing of upcoming concert series in a Cerritos park, mentioning the Cerritos College Jazz Band as one of the performers.


Downey Patriot — June 22, 2007 — Article about the appointment of Roger Brossmer to the Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee (from press release).

Whittier Daily News — June 26, 2007 — Short article on e-waste round-up to occur at Cerritos College.


Los Angeles Times — July 26, 2007 — Article mentions Cerritos College woodworking student who recently won a design contest.

Related News

Downey Patriot — June 29, 2007 — Article about a member of the Downey Unified School District, mentioning that the woman received her A.A. in computer programming at Cerritos College.

Los Angeles Times — July 13, 2007 — Article discussing the growing popularity of summer classes, saying that some schools offer incentives to students who take advantage of summer offerings.

Los Angeles Times — July 13, 2007 — Article in advertising supplement championing the value of community colleges.
Cerritos College Gains New Program Manager for Career and Technical Educator Training Program

Mirna Cardenas will Direct Development of State-Funded Grant

For Immediate Release: July 17, 2007
Media Contact: Kristen Habbestad, Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2287

NORWALK, CA - July 17, 2007 - Cerritos College recently hired Mirna Cardenas as project manager for the new Career and Technical Education (CTE) Teacher Pathways Program, a grant-funded initiative that seeks to provide training for potential CTE educators. In spring 2007, Cerritos College's Teacher TRAC program--an award-winning teacher-preparation academy--received a one-year, $264,571 "Teacher Preparation Pipeline Grant" from the California Community College Chancellor's Office to develop and implement a program to address the need for CTE educators at the secondary and community college level.

Six new CTE Teacher Preparation pathways will be supported: three for future high school teachers and three for future community college teachers. Career pathways will be developed in three CTE career sectors: Automotive Technology (Transportation Sector), Woodworking (Building Trades and Construction Sector) and Welding (Manufacturing and Product Development Sector). Grant funds will go toward developing curriculum, marketing and recruitment efforts and staff development.

Partners in the CTE pathways program include the Southeast Regional Occupation Program (SEROP), California State University Long Beach (CSULB), California State University Los Angeles (CSULA), and the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association (SMCDA).

Cardenas will oversee initial development of the program, recruit a new cohort of students and foster transfer relationships with CSU partners.

"The CTE pathways program is designed to allow students from our diverse community fulfill CTE education requirements and eventually gain employment as highly desired CTE teachers," Cardenas said.

Cardenas previously served in the counseling department at Glendale Community College and as a special programs coordinator at Rio Hondo College. She also served as chief of staff for a community devel-
Cardenas received both a bachelor's degree in political science and a master's degree in education and counseling from UCLA.

For more information about Cerritos College's CTE pathways program, contact Cardenas at (562) 860-2451, ext. 2745 or by e-mail at micardenas@cerritos.edu.

Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college's district include Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs and South Gate. Cerritos College offers degrees and certificates in more than 200 areas of study in nine divisions. Annually, more than 1,200 students successfully complete their course of studies, and enrollment currently surpasses 20,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at www.cerritos.edu.

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Cerritos College Honors Students Accepted to UCLA, UCI

Acceptance Rates to Top-Name Universities for Honors Students Average 95 Percent

For Immediate Release: July 17, 2007
Media Contact: Kristen Habbestad, Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2287

NORWALK, CA - July 17, 2007 - Graduates from Cerritos College's Scholars' Honors Program (SHP) in 2007 achieved a 95 percent acceptance rate to the University of California at Los Angeles this fall, up five percentage points from acceptance rates at UCLA in fall 2006. Additionally, the students had a 94 percent acceptance rate at the University of California, Irvine for fall 2007.

Twenty-six SHP students who just finished their classes at Cerritos College in May 2007 have been accepted to institutions including UCLA, CSU Los Angeles, UC Berkeley, UC San Diego, CSU Long Beach, CSU Sacramento, UC Irvine and UC Santa Barbara.

"Our students work incredibly hard and have proven that they have what it takes to enter some of the best universities," said SHP Director and English Instructor Timothy Juntilla.

Since its inception in 1997, SHP has provided its participants with the guidance and extra academic requirements to successfully transfer to four-year universities such as UCLA, UC Berkeley and UC Irvine. Last fall, students’ acceptance rate at UCLA was 91 percent, and 94 percent at UC Irvine.

"Our students are incredibly talented and motivated," said Juntilla. "I look forward to hearing of their successes down the road."

The SHP program is the academic and social home that Cerritos College provides for talented and motivated students who plan to transfer to four-year institutions. Through the SHP program, many students have the opportunity to apply and receive prestigious scholarships. Benefits offered to students by SHP include opportunities for independent research with leading faculty members through the Honors Contract program, small-enrollment honors sections of courses needed for transfer, workshops to help in transferring to 4-year schools, and scholarships to selected transfer colleges and universities. For more information on the SHP, visit the program online at www.cerritos.edu/shp or contact the SHP office at...
Cerritos College serves as a comprehensive community college for southeastern Los Angeles County. Communities within the college's district include Artesia, Bellflower, Cerritos, Downey, Hawaiian Gardens, La Mirada, Norwalk, and portions of Bell Gardens, Lakewood, Long Beach, Santa Fe Springs and South Gate. Cerritos College offers degrees and certificates in more than 200 areas of study in nine divisions. Annually, more than 1,200 students successfully complete their course of studies, and enrollment currently surpasses 20,000 students. Visit Cerritos College online at www.cerritos.edu.

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Cerritos College Foundation to Host 22nd Annual Golf Tournament

Scholarship Fundraiser to be Held August 6 at Friendly Hills in Whittier

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 26, 2007

Media Contact: Kristen Habbestad, Public Affairs; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2287

Event Contact: Janice Cole, Cerritos College Foundation; (562) 860-2451, ext. 2526

NORWALK, CA - July 26, 2007 - The Cerritos College Foundation will host its 22nd Annual Golf Classic on Monday, August 6 at Friendly Hills Country Club in Whittier. The day will begin with registration at 9 a.m. followed by a shotgun start at 11 a.m., a social hour at 5 p.m. and an awards dinner at 6 p.m. The tournament is hosted each year to help raise funds to support student scholarships and programs.

Cerritos College Foundation Board member Dr. Gerald P. Roodzant is this year's golf tournament committee chair-person. The deadline for tournament registration is Monday, July 30, and cost per golfer is $265 or $1,060 per foursome. The entry fee includes green fees, cart, golf shirt, photo, continental breakfast, lunch, on-course beverages and player package, snacks, goodie bag and dinner. The player package, included with all golf packages, includes two tickets for the putting competition, two mulligans, 15 door prize tickets and a ticket for the opportunity drawing for a Musty Putter.

Corporate sponsors may register for a $2,150 package that includes one foursome, corporate signage on the golf cart, a tee sign, special corporate shirts for each golfer, a corporate gift for each golfer and four additional dinner guests.


Corporate tee signs are available for $100 each, and those who wish to attend only the awards dinner may purchase tickets for $45 each.

To register, or for additional information, please contact the Janice Cole at (562) 860-2451, ext. 2526. Friendly Hills Country Club is located at 8500 South Villa Verde Drive in Whittier.

The Cerritos College Foundation, a non-profit organization, serves as a charitable vehicle for the community, individuals and alumni, to assist with financial support of Cerritos College beyond that which state funding supports. Visit the Foundation online at www.cerritos.edu/ccf.

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Downey residents to lead college students

Wave Staff Report

NORWALK — Downey resident Jason Macias, president-elect of the Associated Students of Cerritos College was sworn in June 6, at the regular board meeting of the Cerritos College Board of Trustees, as the student’s official board representative.

Macias is a graduate of Downey High School. A biology major who began attending Cerritos College in 2004, he has worked as a student in the college’s Project HOPE program and is active in the Chicanos/Latinos for Community Medicine and Applied Science, Engineering and Technology clubs.

Macias also served as president of the Computer Club and was the student commissioner of information technology.

During his term, he also seeks to increase law enforcement and start a book rental program, said the college’s public information officer Kristin Habbestad.

“I want to establish better communication and unity between students, faculty, staff and administration,” Macias said.

Michael Barrita, a Downey High School graduate, campaigned with Macias and will serve as the student body vice president, Habbestad said.

Barrita is double-majoring in philosophy and political science. In the past, he served on the executive board of the associated students as the commissioner of external affairs.

He is the current president of the Political Science Club and in the past was treasurer of the Computer Club.

Barrita is an active member of Chicanos/Latinos for Community Medicine and works with the college’s Project HOPE program.
Eighteen high school students taking classes in Cerritos College's Automotive Technology Program through the Southeast Regional Occupational Program's (SEROP) Auto Careers Institute (ACI) received $250 scholarships toward the purchase of MATCO tools from the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association (SMCDA) on Thursday, June 7.

Students receiving the awards were: Elizabeth Arias, Lizette Arias, John Barrows, Ben Beivides, Jose Cuenca, Guillermo Diaz, Nate Haugh, Jared Hindman, Alex Lopez, Alex Macias, Desiree Martinez, Andrew Rhee, Danny Rojas, Ashley Royster, Bryan Ruiz, Heather Shapiro, Johnny Santiago, and Armando Solis.

Now that the students are finished with their classes as high school students, they have the opportunity to apply and join the Import Technician Training Program (ITTTP) or the Ford, Chrysler or General Motors corporate programs offered at Cerritos College.

"We encourage these students to pursue a future at Cerritos College," said Todd Leuthesser, executive director at SMCDA.

"Dealers in our association are always eager to hire Cerritos College Auto Technology students through work-study programs, and program graduates are highly sought as full-time employees. The students in this program receive excellent training. When they finish the program, they are by far more prepared and ready for the challenge of working at a dealership."

The student awards are actually worth $500 because MATCO provides Cerritos College students--who purchase tools to use in their classes--with a 50 percent discount on purchases.

The Southland Motor Car Dealers Association represents franchised new car dealers throughout Southern Los Angeles County.

Cerritos College has offered automotive technology training since the college began in 1955. Nearly 1,000 students annually seek certificate degrees and special programs in the disciplines of automotive repair, advanced transportation technologies, auto collision repair, intelligent transportation systems and alternative fuel and hybrids, making it one of the most comprehensive programs in the United States.

The program provides students with hands-on, nationally authorized training for GM, Ford, Chrysler and import vehicles, and operates a California Advanced Transportation Technology Center partially subsidized by the state to encourage development of alternative fuel sources. Funding through the California Community College's Economic and Workforce Development program and the state's AB 70 "Quick Start" Grants have assisted greatly in the continued expansion of program offerings at Cerritos College including opportunities for high school students to receive such training in their junior and senior years. SB 70 funding for career training was approved by the state legislature and supported by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger.
Macias sworn in as Cerritos College student president

NORWALK — Downey High School graduate Jason Macias was sworn in June 6 as president-elect of the Associated Students of Cerritos College (ASCC). Macias is a biology major who began attending Cerritos in 2004. He has worked as a student in the college's Project HOPE program and is active in the Students of Mexican-American Heritage. Macias also served as president of the Computer Science Club and as ASCC's commissioner of information technology.

Macias' campaign platform included the promotion of healthier food on campus, flexible hours at the Student Health and Wellness Center, and a book rental program. During his term, he said he will also seek to increase law enforcement and community involvement and dedication to serve the students with the utmost respect for their opinions and concerns of the entire population. Michael Barran, also a Downey High School graduate and majoring in philosophy and political science at Cerritos College, will serve as vice president of the ASCC student body.
**La Opinion**  
June 19, 2007

**Long Beach Press-Telegram**  
June 20, 2007
Eleven high school students taking automotive classes at Cerritos College display certificates and awards from the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association. From left are Todd Leatheuser, executive director of the association; Eli Jaramillo, director of transportation technology at Cerritos; Israel Andrade, auto tech instructor; students Guillermo Diaz, Bryan Ruiz, Lizbeth Arias, Jared Hindman, Nate Haugh, Lizette Arias, Alex Lopez, Johnny Santiago, Armando Solis, Andrew Rhee and Jose Cuenca; Manny Parras, instructor; Carmen Lizarraga, ROP coordinator; and Ken Cook, instructor.

ROP automotive students earn scholarships at Cerritos

Wave Staff Report
NORWALK — Eighteen high school students taking classes in Cerritos College’s Automotive Technology Program through the Southeast Regional Occupational Program’s Auto Careers Institute received $250 scholarships toward the purchase of tools from the Southland Motor Car Dealers Association.

Students receiving the awards were Elizabeth Arias, Lizette Arias, John Barrows, Ben Benivides, Jose Cuenca, Guillermo Diaz, Nate Haugh, Jared Hindman, Alex Lopez, Alex Macias, Desiree Martinez, Andrew Rhee, Danny Rojas, Ashley Royster, Bryan Ruiz, Heather Shapiro, Johnny Santiago and Armando Solis.

Now that the students are finished with their classes as high school students, they have the opportunity to apply and join the Import Technician Training Program or the Ford, Chrysler or General Motors corporate programs offered at Cerritos College, said Kristen Habbestad, the college’s public information officer.

“We encourage these students to pursue a future at Cerritos College,” said Todd Leatheuser, executive director of the dealers’ group.

“Dealers in our association are always eager to hire Cerritos College auto technology students through work-study programs, and program graduates are highly sought as fulltime employees. The students in this program receive excellent training. When they finish the program, they are by far more prepared and ready for the challenge of working at a dealership,” he said.

The student awards are actually worth $500 because Matco Tools provides Cerritos College students — who purchase their own tools to use in their classes — with a 50 percent discount on purchases, Habbestad said.

Cerritos College has offered automotive technology training since the college began in 1955. Nearly 1,000 students annually seek certificate degrees and special programs in the disciplines of automotive repair, advanced transportation technologies, auto collision repair, intelligent transportation systems and alternative fuel and hybrids, making it one of the most comprehensive programs in the United States, Habbestad said.
Adult School principal appointed to committee

DOWNNEY — At their June 6 meeting, the Cerritos College Board of Trustees appointed Downey Adult School Principal Roger Brossmer to the Cerritos College Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee as an at-large member.

Brossmer joins several other committee members who reflect a broad cross-section of the community, including long-time district residents, taxpayers association members, Cerritos College students and retirees, and local civic leaders.

The Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee was established in 2004 and is responsible for overseeing the college’s use of bond funds and for serving as a “check-and-balance” to ensure that the bond proceeds are only used for the projects included in the bond measure project list. Each committee member serves a term of two years.

“Cerritos College is an asset to the community, and I wish to see it continue to thrive,” said Brossmer.

Brossmer brings a wealth of experience to the oversight committee. Annually, he oversees $7 million annual budget at Downey Adult School, which serves more than 14,000 students each year. Since 2000, Brossmer has actively served on the City of Downey Planning Commission. He also serves as the chairperson for the American Cancer Society’s annual 24-hour relay in Downey and is a youth director for Rotary International.

“We’re so pleased to have Roger join the committee,” said Donna Jones, chairperson for the Citizens’ bond Oversight Committee. “His familiarity with our community and students, along with his experience in educational administration, are incredibly valuable to the committee in ensuring the success of Cerritos College’s bond management process.”
Colleges to host e-waste recycling

CERRITOS — A “Household Hazardous and Electronic Waste” round-up event will take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. July 21 at Cerritos College, 11110 Alondra Blvd.

Los Angeles County residents will be allowed to dispose of household hazardous waste — including used pharmaceuticals, antifreeze, batteries, pesticides and fluorescent light bulbs — and e-waste such as televisions, computers, monitors, VCRs and cell phones.

Residents can bring up to 15 gallons, or 125 pounds, of household hazardous waste per vehicle to the round-up.

The round-up will take place at the college’s stadium parking lot C-1.

Another county household hazardous and electronic waste round-up is scheduled to take place Aug. 4 at Rio Hondo College, 3600 Workman Mill Road.

For more information on either round-up, call the county’s Department of Public Works at (888) CLEAN-LA, or (888) 253-2652, or visit www.888CleanLA.com; or the Sanitation District of Los Angeles County at (800) 238-0172 or visit www.lacsd.org.
College gets automotive award

1929 Wave Staff Report

NORWALK — Richard Aragon, Cerritos College’s auto technology instructor and coordinator for the campus DaimlerChrysler College Automotive Program, recently accepted DaimlerChrysler’s Outstanding Achievement and Superior Outreach Award on behalf of the college.

DaimlerChrysler presented the award during a conference June 5-7 at the DaimlerChrysler Academy headquarters near Detroit in Auburn Hills, Mich.

The award recognizes Cerritos College’s Automotive Career Institute, which has enrolled and trained automotive students from area high schools through the Southeast Regional Occupation Program since 2005, said Kristen Habbestad, the college’s public information officer.

“We appreciate everything that Cerritos College does to help our dealers develop their next generation of employees,” said Michael Collins, national manager for Career and Technical Education at DaimlerChrysler Academy, as he presented the award.

The Cerritos College program allows students to gain experience servicing Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep vehicles through DaimlerChrysler’s College Automotive Program.

During the two-year program, students take part in classroom learning and gain hands-on internship experience at local dealerships — something that has become increasingly necessary as automobiles become more complex each year.

Training for auto technicians now encompasses not only the technical skills needed to repair vehicles, but also computer knowledge and math and engineering skills, Aragon said.

“Students who receive training from DaimlerChrysler’s CAP program are well-poised to fill the many waiting positions in a wide open career field, as there are currently not enough skilled auto technicians to meet demand,” he added.

Cerritos College also offers specialized corporate training for General Motors, Ford and import vehicles.

Aragon has taught in the Cerritos College Automotive Technology Program since 1994. He recently completed his master’s degree in industrial and technical studies at Cal State Los Angeles.

Cerritos College has offered an automotive training technology program since the college began in 1955, Habbestad said.
Students earn top honors for fine woodworking

A storage unit made by a Cerritos College student is among winning entries.

WINNERS of the 2007 Fresh Wood national student woodworking competition were announced last week in Las Vegas, where 210 handcrafted entries ranged from period reproductions to wholeheartedly futuristic visions.

The competition, open to high school and college students, awarded its best in show award to Chris Hedges, 31, of the University of Rio Grande/Rio Grande Community College in Ohio. His entry was a Penn secretary reproduction crafted of curly cherry wood; Hedges spent two months on research and design for the project and seven months on construction. Fine finials, intricate rosettes and other detailing helped his entry to stand out, he said.

In the case-goods category, first place went to Christian Lazcano, 21, a woodworking manufacturing technology major at Cerritos College in Norwalk. Lazcano crafted his elegant storage system in wenge, zebra and alder woods.

First place in the tables category went to Cortney Schiappa, 21, an interior design major at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Her angular, low-slung design called for planes of African mahogany to wrap around glass.

Winners were announced at the biennial convention of the Assn. of Woodworking & Furnishings Suppliers, which started the competition in 1999 to encourage careers in the furniture industry. The association awarded prizes ranging from $1,000 to $2,500, but the biggest payoff may be to come. Hedges is selling his secretary. Asking price: $23,000.
DUS’s Nancy Swenson steeped in family values

By Henry Veneracion, Staff Writer

DOWNY — Within her extended family circle, Nancy Swenson is known for her frankness and forthrightness, and she abhors dishonesty. “No lies,” she says. “Lies are too hard to remember.” An aunt once quoted Nancy’s mom: “Never ask Nancy a question unless you really want the answer.”

Her parents, her mom especially, stressed family closeness and family unity, and the sharing and caring for one another that went with it. “Mom was a source of strength,” she says, adding that she inherited her penchant for math from her (“She also loved puzzles”). She was the finance person in the family, Nancy says.

A Warren High grad by way of OLPH and St. Matthias High (Huntington Park), Nancy earned an A.A. degree as a Computer Programming Analyst from Cerritos College, and went on to get a BS degree in Computer Information Systems, with honors, from CSUDominguez Hills, in 1995. It was no mean achievement: she was the first to earn a college degree in the family.

And she did it as a single mother. Already divorced then, she had in the meantime secured a job at Hughes Aircraft (now Raytheon Systems) after an employment string that over several years included the House of Pies on Lakewood, Jon’s Coffee Shop on Imperial, Neil’s Stationery, and Downey Savings and Loan. She has now been with Raytheon for 22 years, where she says she supervises a team that’s responsible for management of a multi-million dollar budget in support of the F-16 Segundo facility’s engineering computing component that numbers 6,000. Some of her team’s functions: ordering, tracking and reporting on the hardware and software requirements of the engineering community. She also directs database development and drives the team to initiate and implement improvements to existing systems.

Because of the time constraints imposed on her, her community involvement at the time was confined to helping her children, nieces and nephews (of whom she had—and still has—a plenty in Downey), their friends and the children of the neighborhood “whenever possible.” She tutored the high school students in algebra and helped set up and operate the first computers for family members and friends in her neighborhood.

It was this combination of strong family values, mathematical and professional expertise, experience, and a winning attitude that she would bring before Area 5 voters in her run for a seat on the DUSD board Betty Ferraro was vacating. This was two years ago. She won over Luis Marquez, aide to Sen. Hector de la Torre.

Nancy can’t say enough about the role her predecessor played in her victory. Longtime neighbors here in Downey, Nancy and the Ferraros had formed a close friendship. It was not unusual for Ken Ferraro to borrow tools from her handyman dad who “could fix anything.” If someone in the Ferraro family were to catch chicken pox, Nancy would always come to the rescue, and vice-versa.

At the time Betty was contemplating giving up her board seat, Nancy’s two children (daughter Cheyenne, 32, is a second-grade teacher at Gallatin, while son Sven, 30, is currently an account manager for a logistics company in Carson) were grown, and she was seriously considering joining any of a number of voluntary associations in Downey to “give back to the community.” Betty, who Nancy says “knew all the organizations here,” invited her over for dinner once a month, and suggested Nancy run for her seat.

The timing was good. Nancy said she’d mull it over while she visited her in-laws’ ancestral town in Sweden. By the time she got back from her trip, she had made up her mind.

Betty, in all sorts of ways, helped with her campaign, of course. “She’s such a wonderful person. She has always been there for me,” says Nancy. Her mechanical engineering boss at Raytheon, Allison Sheridan, whom she describes as “an enthusiastic person” and to whom “everything is exciting,” as well as “not afraid to try anything,” along with other colleagues, walked with her to knock on doors during the campaign. Into technology, Allison is helping her set up a planned website for Gangs Out of Downey soon.

Two years later, with the benefit of hindsight, Nancy sees her role with the district with greater clarity. She says she shares with her district board associates the “same goal for the kids.”

“They’re our citizens,” she goes on. “That’s why ‘Character Counts!’ is so important. This is such a key issue. This will lead our kids down a path that leads to good citizenship, to a bright future. It’s things like this that make Downey such a welcoming city. And even if we board members don’t agree on everything, we’re not afraid to express ourselves. It’s such a good environment to work in. I was a little apprehensive at first but they make me feel welcome.”

There’s no ceiling on her praise for Superintendent Wendy Doty. “She has the vision and she knows where she’s going with her vision. She knows how to get enthusiastic about anything, and she’s not afraid of listening to divergent opinions. I think she’s the heart and soul of the district right now.”

“I go to the schools during the day sometimes, meet with the principals and see what’s going on,” Nancy says, “so I can have a better overall picture of what’s going on in the schools ... I’m particularly interested in the AVID and ASPIRE programs. I go to the recognition events, attend band and music events at the schools, keeping an ear out for how healthy the food dispensed at the schools is. Thus I visit the cafeteria, and so on.”

To further improve their effectiveness on the board, Nancy and fellow board member Martha Sodetani plan to take the recommended Masters of Governance program in October.

Nancy was born pigeon-toed. “A correcting cast was put on my feet before I could walk,” she relates. “My transportation was on wheels. So I learned to skate before I could walk. When the cast came off, I continued to skate as a way to train my feet to go straight. It was my therapy. Eventually I was able to walk straight.”

She was on the Warren High drill team her junior year, making team leader the next year. “I played softball for a while when in my forties, and played in a women’s league in Long Beach.”

Her dad, who worked at Southwestern Steel Mill in South Gate for 40 odd years, earlier had a business that carried scuba diving equipment, including the “Kelsudit” brand. Nancy says her dad was sure he once taught Charlton Heston how to scuba dive. Her mom disputes the story. She said it was Lloyd Bridges (of “Seahunt” fame) he taught. Following a brief stint at Fremont, Oregon, her dad went to work for Martin Marietta, from which he retired. Now 83, he lives with her in Downey.

“My only regret is that my mom is not around to see what I’m doing now. I know she’d be proud of me,” she says.
More collegians spending their summers in class

Many are trying to earn their degrees sooner.

Some like the different atmosphere. And a number of schools offer students incentives.

By LARRY GORDON

LA TIMES ASSIGNEE

His students at Cal State Long Beach said they enjoyed professor Graham Thomas’s upper division English class that surveyed children’s literature from ancient times such as Aesop’s fables to modern events such as Lois Lowry’s “The Giver.”

But they also had another reason to enroll in the summer course: They want to graduate from college sooner at any time.

While friends hit the beach or work full-time summer jobs, some students think of every class they take as a step closer to graduation.

Many Cal State and UC campuses are marketing their summer sessions more strongly than in the past, and some schools are offering discounts on fees to encourage attendance. Besides, of course, is the increased competition. It means that for part, the library and gym are less crowded and the six or eight-week sessions still allow for some hot-weather relaxation before school begins.

Wendy Carr, a liberal studies major enrolled in the summer Thomas class and a psychology course at Cal State Long Beach, plans to attend summer session next year too. “Without this, I would have to graduate in five years,” said Carr, who will be a junior in the fall and plans to become a teacher. She skipped her summer trip but made the sacrifice “to continue through school. Just to get through it.”

Attitudes like hers please state higher education officials, who see summer sessions as a way to cope with the current enrollment bulge at Cal State and UC campuses and to reduce the drive to build more classrooms. State budget uncertainties led some campuses to cut back on summer classes four years ago and to increase the fees that students pay for summer classes.

For example, across the 23-campus Cal State system, summer course offerings declined substantially in 2004. As a result, so did enrollment.

But renewed state subsidies to schools in the last few years have turned things around. Enrollment has risen, with about 68,000 Cal State students taking state-subsidized summer classes in 2005 and about 91,000 last summer.

Figures for this summer have not yet been compiled, but Jim Blackbourn, the Cal State system’s associate director for enrollment management services, said he expected another increase. “It does seem to be a movement among students and among campuses to encourage people to graduate sooner,” he said.

At the University of California, state subsidies for thesis salaries and other summer school costs were extended from three campuses in 2004 to all nine undergraduate campuses last year, a process that took longer than originally expected because of state money problems.

But, summer enrollments of UC students rose from about 49,000 seven years ago to 66,000 last summer, according to Carol Copperud, the system’s vice director of academic planning and budget. Most campuses are reporting rises again this year, some as much as 50 percent.

Besides signing up for courses that may be oversubscribed at other times, many summer students tackle “that really hard class and concentrate on it without the distraction of a heavy load,” Copperud said.

“Because of the time frame, they are pressed to get things done,” she said. “And I think they learn it knowledge more in a six-week summer session than in a regular semester because of the continuity. This is three days in a row—boom, boom, boom.”

Cal State Long Beach sophomore Friday Rhash said she liked the fast pace and the chance to interact with other teachers more in the summer. In part to meet requirements for an exchange program in England, the international studies major is taking courses in English composition and economics this summer. “It’s a lot of home

Of the summer session.

“It’s a sort of financial aid package to anybody who is agnostic in the summer, who wants to finish their degree faster and fill in their holes,” he said.

UC Davis is giving a 50 percent discount on some popular sophomore-level chemistry and physics courses to relieve pressure on laboratory facilities during the rest of the year. Enrollment in these classes is at least a third higher than last summer, said Fred Wood, UC Davis’ associate vice president for undergraduate studies.

UC Davis also is giving a 20 percent break on all summer fees to seniors who will finish their degree by September.

It is not clear whether how low is working because about 1,000 seniors have enrolled this summer, nearly the same as last year, when the deal was not offered. But many seniors have used Wood that they appreciate the financial help to graduate because they don’t want to sign a lease for an apartment for another year and want to begin employment in the fall.

UC Davis has an alternative that only a driver familiar with Westwood can appreciate. Students who take at least two summer classes and earn at least a C in both are eligible to enter a raffle for that most keenly sought prize: a free parking pass for the fall.
A shortcut to success

Community College programs offer quality, value and myriad education options

By CARLA WHITE
Special Advertising Sections Writer

What does actor and comedian Jim Belushi have in common with Nolan Archibald, chief executive officer for the Black & Decker Corp.? With former California Congressman James Rogan! With choreographer and artistic director Bella Lewitsky?

They are all graduates of community colleges. Along with thousands of other successful artists, business executives and owners, journalists, physicians and technicians, politicians and other professionals from all walks of life, they have discovered one of America’s proudest secrets: an outstanding community college system that makes education affordable and accessible to everyone. With 72 districts in the state, the California Community College System (CACC) is the largest higher-education system in the country, serving more than 2.5 million students every year at 109 campuses. Within that network, the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) educates more than 188,000 students each year at its nine colleges: East L.A. College, L.A. City College, Harbor College, Mission College, Southwest College, L.A. Trade-Technical College, Pierce College, Valley College and West L.A. College.

According to LACCD Chancellor Darroch “Rocky” Young, there are many reasons that the community college system thrives, especially in a dynamic and diverse state like California.

“Whether it’s preparing for a job or completing the first portion of a baccalaureate degree, community colleges offer quite a unique commodity in that you get the highest quality for the lowest price,” said Young, who will retire from his post in August. That price, at $20 per unit for California residents, is far less than cost-per-unit at a public four-year college and vastly less expensive than units at a private four-year college. Students from other states pay $159 per unit and international students pay $1.69.

Recent statistics provided by the American Assn. of Community Colleges (AACC) show that the national average annual tuition and fees for community colleges is $2,272, compared to $5,836 for public four-year schools. In California, tuition and fees for private universities can cost from $18,000 to $50,000 annually.

Young’s sentiments are reinforced by Dr. Marshall “Mark” Drummond, who is leaving his post as chancellor of the California Community College system to return to LACCD as chancellor, a post he held for more than four years before moving to Sacramento.

Drummond stated that: “Community colleges are the best deal in town for young people. They can get their first two years of college out of the way.”

Very often, they’ll take their credits and transfer to a four-year university where they’ll graduate with the same diploma and same degree they would have received had they attended all four years.

“Sixty percent of all California State University graduates went to community colleges first,” Drummond said. “It’s affordable, accessible, quality education.” The fact that community colleges offer the same caliber of general education courses available in four-year schools, and that most classes will transfer to state and private universities, is a major factor for these students considering pursuing baccalaureate degrees, he added.

In fact, according to Pierce College communications specialist Doreen Clay, her school’s transfer admission agreements help students meet requirements that can guarantee successful transfer to schools in the University of California system, including UCLA, UC Riverside and UC Irvine.

Another popular transfer school, Santa Monica College, alone in its own college district, is ranked as the No. 1 transfer college to UC schools, USC and Loyola Marymount. It also transfers students to renowned institutions including Julliard and Stanford, as well as train them for careers in nursing, new media, graphic design and more. Rolling Stone ranked SMC among the top 10 community colleges in the U.S.

Clay also offers insight into another growing segment of people who are attending community colleges: professionals and executives who seek to enhance their skills and training or to embark in entirely new career directions.

She’s one of them.

After earning a bachelor’s degree in communications, Clay spent two decades working as a musician. Then, with a goal of returning to a more traditional workplace, she turned to Pierce College to explore new career ideas. There were a lot of options at Pierce, given that the school offers 92 majors, 43 associate degrees, 25 certificate programs and 72 skill certificate programs.

Clay began with a journalism class and found herself registering for courses including photography, graphic design, computer applications and marketing. Eventually, with an updated, real-world education and hands-on training in the many facets of marketing, communications and public relations, Clay was prepared to jump when the opportunity presented itself to become a Pierce College employee.

Clearly, affordability and quality education are two of the most pervasive reasons people are attending community colleges in ever-increasing numbers. But what about jobs and the all-important ability to earn money? According to Lisa
Two-year trip

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Telson, vice president of student services for Saddleback College in Mission Viejo, part of the South Orange County Community College District, this is a key question for those considering education options.

“Vocational and career training [culminates] in associate degrees, licensing [such as nursing] and sometimes just the number of needed courses to be able to be paid more on the job or seek better-paid positions — this improves people’s ability to earn a livable wage in California, which is a challenge in itself,” she said. Saddleback has more than 300 academic and career programs to choose from, and a strong roster of support services.

Telson, who has served California Community Colleges for nearly 30 years, also noted that the system offers a strong student services staff, with a statewide network of resources, that will go the extra mile to help economically or educationally disadvantaged students or students with disabilities.

For all students, campus access and program accessibility are critical. Many community college students work full- or part-time, jobs, making proximity to the campus vital in terms of time and money, especially as gas costs continue to rise. Jim Parsons, associate vice chancellor for public affairs and advancement for the Riversides Community College District (RCCD), believes that proximity to home and work, flexible schedules, smaller class sizes and programs — ranging from theater to biology — tailored to regional audiences are vital. RCCD offers all of the traditional community college services, such as student financial aid, job placement assistance, academic counseling and student activities, but the district has also articulated a strong outreach mission and developed programs to achieve this.

“We offer more programs like Puente, Upward Bound, Talent Search (high school to college bridge programs for first-generation college students and under-represented populations), Workforce Development programs, Gateway to College (for high school drop-outs) and Weekend College (for working adults and nontraditional students).

Here are some telling stats that help illustrate today’s community colleges, according to the AACC:

■ Fifty percent of new nurses and the majority of other new health-care workers are educated at community colleges.

■ Approximately 95% of employers that hire community college graduates recommend community college workforce education and training programs.

■ Nearly 80% of firefighters, law enforcement officers and Emergency Medical Technicians are credentialed at community colleges.

■ The average expected lifetime income for a graduate with an associate degree is $1.6 million — about $400,000 more than a high school grad earns.

And another fact, closer to home: “The need for an educated workforce in California is reaching critical proportions,” said Diane McBride of LACCD’s Workforce Development program. “We educate students about the latest career opportunities and we give them state-of-the-art technology and training in their chosen field, with a strong academic component.”

There is no doubt that California community colleges are helping meet the needs of the state and its people — no matter what age, ethnicity or ability level, she said.

As Telson put it, expressing her strong belief in this system: “Students arrive at any level of ability and, if they use the system seriously, they leave having learned a skill, earned a degree, transferred, learned more about the world and themselves and having earned respect for themselves, their environment and others.”

For more information on California Community Colleges, visit www.ccccco.edu.

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