

Friday, October 10, 2008

The Budget Watch Continues

One of the most reassuring experiences for me on a weekly basis has to be the detailed discussion on the status of the State Budget and the immediate translation of that information as it impacts our District. While the news continues to be sobering in the midst of the larger national and international context, knowing what has changed and what has stayed the same enables not only a solid move forward with all of our campus operations, it also permits us to make adjustments, as needed, to prepare for the future; in other words, no major surprises. We all must be on the alert, keep a watch and keep each other informed. Our steadfast work with students is the best recipe for ultimate success.

Sad News and a Tragic Loss

Many of you are aware that on Saturday, October 4, at approximately 2:15 a.m., several individuals were involved in a violent incident near SDSU. Three Mesa College Students received stab wounds as a result of that incident, with one of those students, Luis Santos perishing as a result of those wounds. Santos was only 22 years old. The news brought much sadness to the campus, and we gathered together to conduct a reflective memorial activity on campus signing notes and messages to be forwarded to the Santos family.

This incident raised much concern during President's Cabinet, and it was determined that we needed to develop stronger, proactive educational activities to prevent senseless tragedies of this kind from continuing to occur. Brande Faris, Student Representative to President's Cabinet, suggested the development of a campaign with strong student leadership and support for our Health Services Center, Office of Student Affairs, and other members of the faculty and staff, to identify ways in which we can better educate students on issues associated with alcohol abuse, violence, and general safety.

An Active Student Body

We have often talked about the "Learning College" and we have described it in many ways. We also know that learning takes place in the classroom and outside the classroom walls as well. Research notes that one of the most important factors in student retention is the kind of campus climate that promotes engagement of the student in activities outside the classroom. I am proud to say that at Mesa, such opportunities exist aplenty. We have just completed "Club Rush," and Mesa counts 29 student clubs that cover the gamut of interests, skills and abilities.

The Week's Events in Review

10/6 - "Yours Truly, Miss Chinatown" Documentary Film, San Diego Asian Film Festival. Co-presented by the Mesa College Women's Studies Advisory Committee, Asian Pacific American Studies Program Committee, and Women's Student Union.

10/6-7 - Annual Majors and Transfer Day. Representatives from four-year colleges and universities provided students with information and assistance on topics such as transfer requirements and deciding on a major.

10/8 - Music Recital featuring jazz with Marc Dresser.

10/9 - Mesa College Biology Lecture Series. Phyllis Hauptfeld, J.D., Site Director, University of Oklahoma, College of Nursing program.

10/9-11/6 Mesa College Art Gallery Exhibit; "PreMeditated: Meditations on Capital Punishment." Prints, drawings and paintings Malaquíás Montoya. Mesa College Art Gallery,

10/10-19 - Mesa College Theatre Company Presents, "The House of Bernarda Alba" by Federico Garcia Lorca, in a new translation by Caridad Svich. Directed by Juan Castro, opposition and lust collide in this tragic portrait of a family caught between dying traditions and dreams of personal freedom. Apolliad Theatre, Friday and Saturday, 8 p.m., Sunday 7 p.m., \$10 General Admission; some discounts apply. Box Office: 619-388-2621.

10/11 - Mesa Organic Garden Kickoff. Students and faculty and staff members break ground, till the soil, add compost and plant the first seedlings in the Mesa College Organic Garden, which will serve as a laboratory, community resource, and garden for Mesa's culinary arts program. Local experts offer sustainable gardening tips. Public invited to attend. Saturday, 9-11 a.m., P100 Building at Marlesta/Genesee Ave.

President's Cabinet Update

This portion of the update provides you with a summary of key actions from our shared governance body, President's Cabinet.

At its meeting on Tuesday, October 7, the following actions were taken:

- Approved the publication of the Debate Watch 2008 event scheduled October 15.
- Accepted the proposed Strategic Planning Process and recommended the expansion of the current sub-committee to include students, staff, and additional faculty members.
- Reviewed the draft Mesa Campus Board meeting agenda and provided recommendations for greater inclusion of students and faculty.
- Discussed the tragic events related to the death of a Mesa student resulting from an altercation following an SDSU fraternity party. Identified steps that would be taken immediately to address psychological and emotional distress; including follow up steps to launch a preventative educational campaign to address issues of alcohol abuse, violent behavior and student safety.