

# Friday, October 3, 2008

## The Week That Was

At the start of the academic year, it has been our practice to gather together over a meal, namely breakfast. We do this to signal the start of the new year, meet and greet one another, receive some orientation regarding new programs, policies or practices but most of all to remind one another why education is not a career but a vocation. It is something we love to do, it is beyond imparting expert skills within our academic discipline, it is beyond providing student support services, it is truly something that ends up being more than the sum of its parts. It has to do with the sense of well-being that comes from working in an institution of higher learning that we know is truly transformative in nature.

I chose to start this Friday update with a reminder of that inner sense of well-being, because we have just lived through one of the most difficult weeks in the history of our nation. I imagine that most of us do not pay daily attention to the comings and goings of Wall Street; well I certainly don't. This week however, I found myself paying very close attention and learning more than I ever wanted. In a matter of days, Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. went into bankruptcy, Merrill Lynch & Co. was snapped up by Bank of America Corp. and the insurer American International Group, Inc., was bailed out by the government. Fannie and Freddie were not characters in a friendly neighborhood sitcom and my own bank WaMu was sold to JP Morgan (the good news is my ATM password still works). Then came the enormous drop on Monday when the Dow tumbled 778 points after the House voted down the financial rescue plan in the midst of the probable (maybe yes, maybe no) signing of a "bail out bill" or is it the "rescue bill." There was Finger pointing, there were charges and counter charges. Offended Congressmembers "took their toys and went home;" what next.

Oh yes, the Vice Presidential debates some said historical, others said hysterical; what say you?

In the midst of all this we hold on to the belief that this is a great nation and that we can withstand this and more but only because it, too, is greater than that sum of its parts. It is greater than the 304,865,108 million persons that call this country home ( [U.S. Census Bureau](#), the current U.S. population, as of 5:20 [GMT \(EST+5\) August 14, 2008](#)). It is a belief that "We can do it," and knowing full well that this too shall pass, not because we sit passively awaiting doom and gloom, but because we have decided to continue with the "good work" that goes on unceasingly at throughout our country including Mesa College. Here are a few examples:

## Awards and Recognitions

On Saturday, September 27, I was privileged to receive, on your behalf, The National Minority Role Models Access Diversity Award. Mesa was in great company that day with other awardees that included Michigan, Purdue, University of California San Francisco, Texas Tech University, and others.

On Tuesday, September 30, we received a much awaited award letter from the National Institute of Health (NIH), to continue the great work of the Mesa College the Bridges to the Baccalaureate

Program. The grant is in the amount of \$1.2 million and is to be spent over the next five years. Thanks are in order to Yosh Kawahara and Jaye Van Kirk who originated the program and worked arduously during its first five years and now gratitude is extended to Joanne Hamilton, Bridges new Principle Investigator and Jodi Corliss both of whom wrote the current grant. You will be hearing more about the fruits of this work that already boasts brilliant students, gifted researchers and distinguished alumni.

## **October is Transfer Month**

How much do we know about the transfer function and its significance? Following are a few questions to test your prowess:

Faculty question:

- Do you know if the courses you teach transfer?
- Is your course degree applicable?
- If your course transfer, does it transfer as part of the major requirement or only as part of the lower general education requirement?

Questions for all:

- Who is the Transfer Center Director for Mesa College?
- Who is our Articulation Officer?

I imagine that most of you know the answer to these questions, if not; October is your month to find out.

## **The Beat Goes On**

Great events that helped to lift our spirits.

**10/1 - Music Recital** featuring Robert Williams on flute and koto

**10/2 - Reading and Lecture: Xicana Poet and Activist Lorna Dee Cervantes.** Readings and discussions by one the Chicana Literary community's most powerful and creative voices and author of *Emplumada*, *From the Cables of Genocide* and *Drive: The First Quartet: New Poems, 1980-2005*.

**10/3 - Workshop: Engaging Students in Chinese Language Learning Workshop.** Prof. Qian He, UCSD, discusses how to engage students in one of the fastest-growing foreign languages taught in the U.S. today.

**10/4 - Orientation Session: Health Information Technology Program.** Potential students interested in this career program are invited to attend. Saturday, Oct. 4, 9-10:30 a.m., Room F-118. To register, call 619-388-2229.

**10/4 - Orientation Session: Physical Therapist Assistant Program.** Potential students interested in this career program are invited to attend. Saturday, Oct. 4, 9-10:30 a.m. Room F-114. To register, call 619-388-2684.

I'll conclude my notes to you this week by reintroducing a term I used during one of our "beginning of the year" meetings. The term was "chaordic." I was a little hesitant to use this term to describe our work at Mesa. After all wouldn't it be better to use other terms like systematic, predictable, established, methodical, orderly, regular, efficient, logical (well you get the message I did think about it a great deal). When we met on August 21, I had no way of knowing how applicable this term would be in the weeks to come.

**Chaordic:** - is a "portmanteau word." These are words that are created as a result of a linguistic blend, namely "a word formed by blending sounds from two or more distinct words and combining their meanings. In this instance the two words combined are **chaos** and **order**. The term was coined by Dee Hock in his book *The Chaordic Age*. The principles of a chaordic system:

**Are based on clarity of shared purpose and principles. • Are self-organizing and self-governing in whole and in part. • Exist primarily to enable their constituent parts. • Are powered from the periphery, unified from the core. • Are durable in purpose and principle, malleable in form and function. • Equitably distribute power, rights, responsibility and rewards. • Harmoniously combine cooperation and competition. • Learn, adapt and innovate in ever expanding cycles. • Are compatible with the human spirit and the biosphere. • Liberate and amplify ingenuity, initiative and judgment. • Are compatible with and foster diversity, complexity and change. • Constructively utilize and harmonize conflict and paradox. • Restrain and appropriately embed command and control methods.**

After reading this information, don't you think that Chaordic is a good definition for our current situation and, ultimately, a very optimistic and reassuring one?

### **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, September 30, the following actions were taken:

- Approved for publication the Drug and Alcohol Awareness event scheduled October 29, 2008.
- Dr. Cepeda announced that this year's theme for the Site Board meeting presentation will be, "Building a Culture of Evidence: We Measure What We Treasure," with a focus on research and best practices.
- Reviewed Vice Chancellor Terry Davis' Budget Report to the Board of Trustees at its meeting September 25. The report will be sent electronically to the shared governance groups, and Ron to provide a summary.

Introduced and welcomed Nancy Bromma, Assistant Professor/Nurse Practitioner, and Genevieve Cabanilla, Outreach Coordinator.