



Board of Trustees Report



September 13, 2022

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



Having passed the Census Date and completed the first few weeks of the Fall 2022 semester, we are pleased to report that *Free 4 Fall Campaign* is having a positive effect on enrollment and morale. Given the number of late start and dual enrollment sections that we have in the schedule and are yet to be counted, we expect to surpass our FTES total from Fall 2021. We can also report that we are now serving between 250 and 300 free breakfast meals per week. Finally, the *Free 4 Fall Campaign* has yielded a 22% increase in the number of students who have applied for financial aid and are taking at least twelve units. Stay tuned for what we have planned for Spring 2023!

On September 8, 2022, Merritt College was proud to partner with the East Bay Consortium to host its Annual Financial Aid Training (co-sponsored by the California Student Aid Commission and the California Student Opportunity and Access Program). Over 120 high school counselors, college outreach specialists, and student advocates registered for this event, and they received essential information on how to best assist the students they serve in applying and completing the application and financial aid process. We also provided attendees with a comprehensive overview of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the California Dream Act Application. Our overarching goal is to equip our high school partners with the information and resources necessary to guide students through the transition to Merritt College!



For the second time in less than three months, we have lost a beloved member of our Merritt Family. Jim Gordon, our Principal Library Technician, passed away on Tuesday, September 6. He succumbed to injuries sustained after being hit by a cyclist while walking near his home in Sausalito. As his family shared with me, “we can only make sense of this tragedy knowing that the organs and tissues he donated are helping to save the lives of others.” Jim came to Merritt College several years ago, and immediately became a beloved figure on campus. Jim was funny, caring, and extremely intelligent and I got to know him much better over these past two years, as we were both on campus throughout the pandemic. I saw his patience and selflessness first-hand, as he would stop to help students who were wandering the campus. While passing time waiting for students to pick up their Chromebooks from the library, we talked often about our days at CAL and our shared love of history. When I spoke with him the day of his passing, I had no clue that would be our last conversation. But I take comfort in being able to remember him so fondly as such a dignified and kind man.

Merritt College puts students first. Through our rich educational programs, we foster a culture of equity and inclusion that empowers students to achieve their greatest potential and make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and our global society.