



Board of Trustees Report



October 24, 2023

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION FOR
POSTSECONDARY
EDUCATION AND
DISABILITY

Earlier this month, Frances Moy—our Student Accessibility Services Coordinator—had the opportunity to present at the California Association for Postsecondary Education and Disability (CAPED) state-wide annual conference. In collaboration with her Laney College colleague Nate Failing, their presentation focused on a new partnership between the Clausen House, Oakland

Unified School District’s Young Adult Program, and the Merritt and Laney SAS programs. This alliance was made possible by the federal *Adult Transition Partnership Project* grant, and we plan to utilize the funds to develop programs for adults with intellectual disabilities transitioning from high school to college. Specifically, Merritt and Laney will offer employment-related Learning Resource classes and certificates in Art, Music, and Culinary Arts. What is perhaps most compelling about this project is that expands our efforts beyond the traditional emphasis on developing "hard skills" required for initial employment. Rather, we are placing greater accent on helping our students cultivate the "soft skills" that employers are seeking, as well as the essential life skills that individuals with intellectual disabilities need to thrive.



CCCAOE (California Community College Association for Occupational Education) is a state-wide, membership-driven organization of career educators, faculty, staff, and administrators, with a focus on shaping career education throughout California. This past week, they held their Annual Fall Conference down in Palm Springs, and Merritt sent a team of faculty leaders to attend. As a "humble brag," our very own

VPAS, Marie Amboy serves on the Board for CCCAOE as the Regional Vice President representing the SF/Bay region. The Fall Conference theme was *Superpowers United: Embracing Diversity, Amplifying Impact, and Shaping the Future*, and the focus was on highlighting the innovative work happening in Career Education across the state. Our team had the opportunity to learn about new funding opportunities coming down from the Chancellors Office, as well as learn from colleagues about new and innovative ways to address low enrollments and maximize earning through the SCFF.

Here are a couple of takeaways from our attendees:

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.

"As a first-time CCCAOE conference attendee, I felt informed, inspired, and—honestly—overwhelmed. We have substantial work ahead to advance workforce opportunity and mobility. However, I will return to my college bolstered by the knowledge that colleagues and partners across the state are asking the hard questions, offering guidance and support, and striving in solidarity for a brighter economic future for our students. I look forward to the next conference to share ideas and stories." - Nghiem Thai, Librarian and CE Faculty Coordinator

"I learned about impactful strategies for equitable learning (access) and completion and will bring this back to Merritt College along with best practices and initiatives that are aimed at reducing disparities among our students." - Angela Khoo, Interim Dean of Allied Health and Public Safety



Cybersecurity

This past Friday, October 20, Merritt College hosted its annual Cybersecurity Employer Day event. This is one of our signature job fairs, as it provides the opportunity for our recent graduates of our top-rated cybersecurity program to connect directly with the leading computer information system firms, as well as companies and organizations that have a need to bolster that area within their institutions. This year we had the pleasure of welcoming Ronnie Lott as our keynote speaker. In addition to his storied football career, Mr. Lott is also active in the philanthropic and venture capital/start up spaces. But the event would not have been possible without the ongoing support of Mr. Jim Cates and Mr. Mark Egan (who teaches in the program as well). They both have been integral in helping us bring in experienced Silicon Valley executives to teach our courses, and have also been of tremendous help in securing funding for our program (including pledging \$80,000 at an event last Thursday evening that Chancellor Jackson and the Merritt faculty and administration attended).



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.