



Board of Trustees Report



November 12, 2024

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



In the month of October, Merritt College held a series of events that reflect the rich and diverse culture and history that we are so blessed to have here. On

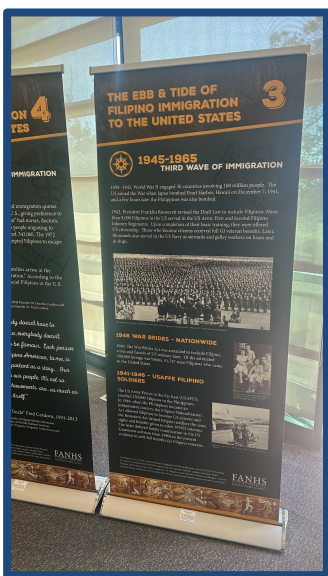
October 15, we had our Black Panther Day Brunch to commemorate the 58th Anniversary of the founding of the Party. We enjoyed hearing from speakers, supporting Black vendors, and enjoying food and music. But more than that, taking the day to reflect not only honors the Party's enduring legacy (especially given the connection to Merritt College), but also reinforces the importance of community engagement and self-empowerment.



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Next, I want to thank Maria Spencer for organizing a series of talks/presentations for Filipino American History Month. In addition to learning about the indigenous Aeta People who live in scattered, isolated mountainous parts of the Philippines, and Maria’s own father’s migration story, we were entertained by the talented group DAKILA, who holds the distinction of being the first Filipino American band signed to a major American music label.

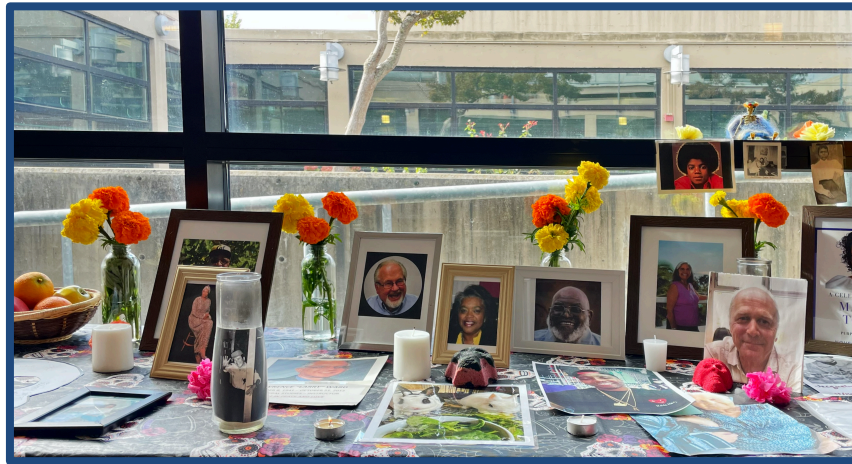


On Wednesday, October 30, our college community—students, staff, faculty, and administrators—came together for Dia de los Muertos to honor and remember loved ones who have passed. This meaningful gathering occurred in the Student Lounge, Library, and hallways of the R-building. During the event, Sociolzzogy students and our Puentistas acknowledged the children and parents who have lost their lives in Palestine. Professor

Alex Garcia and La Danza enriched the celebration by providing a historic lens for ceremonial drumming, Aztec dancing, and a beautiful altar presentation. Dr. Lilia Chavez shared two songs and a prayer about taking care of ourselves and honoring our ancestors. The Puente Program also shared the history of Día de los Muertos, pan dulce, and champurrado (hot chocolate). The

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following Sunday, November 3, Merritt College was out in the Fruitvale as part of the City of Oakland's Dia De Los Muertos Festival.



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Kudos to the Counseling Department Faculty/Staff, our Student Accessibility Services Team, and Dean Angela Khoo for putting on an amazing Transfer Day. We had a total of 170 students attend the event, with representatives from more than three dozen colleges. In addition to providing our students with an opportunity to learn more about

potential transfer destinations (some were even able to apply on the spot), we collected useful data that will help us better identify areas of focus and student need. We learned, for example, what motivated students to attend the event, how we can do a better job of messaging to our students, and where we need to place more emphasis on program planning. Related to this last point, we found out that while 92% of those in attendance had met with a counselor, and 63% had completed a Student Education Plan (SEP), only 41% had completed transfer-level English, and just 33% had passed a transfer-level math course. We will utilize the data to ensure that students are adequately prepared for transfer, and that we are reaching our SCFF metric goals.

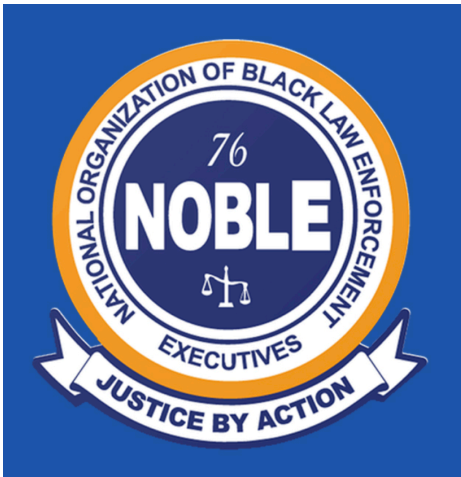


Earlier this week, Merritt College sent a group of classified professionals, faculty, and administrators to the annual COLEGAS Conference in Sacramento. COLEGAS, the California branch of the National Community College Hispanic Council (NCCHC), is dedicated to advancing the development of Latina/o/x professionals in the California

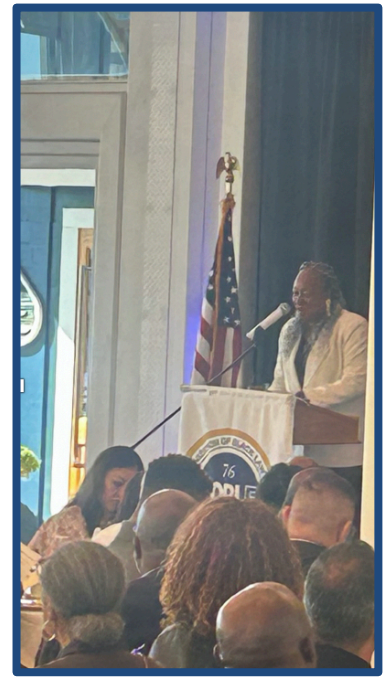
Community College system. The theme of this year's conference was Collective Resistance: Justicia y Liberacion (Justice and Liberation), and included workshops focused on the Latinx student experience, Latinx leadership, advocacy for undocumented students, and programs that support Men of Color. Merritt sent representation from various areas of the college including Undocumented/Dreamer Student Resources, Basic Needs, Admissions & Records, Counseling, CalWORKs, Student Accessibility Services, Child Development, Allied Health, the ASPIRA Project (Developing HSI Grant), and the Office of the VP of Student Services.



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Finally, I had the privilege of joining Chancellor Gilkerson, Director Pridgen, Merritt Faculty, and a few students in attending a celebratory event for our dear colleague Ms. Margaret Dixon. The National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) honored Ms. Dixon at their Fourth Annual Achiever's Luncheon held at Jack London Square. She received the *Partner Award* in recognition of her



long career as a Oakland Police Officer, community leader, Oakland Police Activities League (PAL) coach, and mentor to countless officers, students, and co-workers. Congratulations Ms. Dixon and thank you for your many years of faithful service to Merritt College and the Oakland community!



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