March 1, 2015

Dear Faculty and Staff,

Welcome to the “Bird’s Eye View” for March 2015. This monthly series focuses on topics of interest and importance for Folsom Lake College (FLC). “Bird’s Eye View” is intended to complement FLC’s bi-monthly “In Touch” and will be sent to all FLC faculty and staff during the first week of every month. If you have any comments or concerns, or suggestions for future topics, please feel free to contact me at rachel.rosenthal@flc.losrios.edu or 916-608-6570.

Accreditation External Evaluation Visit Date Confirmed, October 5-8

As most of you are aware, FLC will be visited by an External Evaluation Team next fall as part of the six-year comprehensive evaluation cycle in support of reaffirmation of accreditation. We now have confirmation from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) that each of the four Los Rios colleges and the district office will be assigned separate teams, and all teams will visit their respective locations Monday through Thursday, October 5-8.

The accreditation steering committee, under the direction of faculty Co-Chair John Alexander and the Accreditation Liaison Officer Monica Pactol, is currently completing the accompanying Self Evaluation Report (formerly called the Self Study) of institutional effectiveness for FLC. The Self Evaluation Report will be presented to the Board of Trustees at their May 13th meeting. FLC has made substantive progress since the last visit in 2009 and I look forward to sharing our progress with the visiting team.

Achieving the Dream Conference

Folsom Lake College sent seven representatives to the Achieving the Dream conference in Baltimore in mid-February. Attendees included: Jill Bradshaw, Melanie Dixon, Juan Flores, Carlos Lopez, Angela Prelip, David Williams, and me. The FLC contingent was joined by representatives from our three sister colleges and the district office.

Achieving the Dream (ATD) is a student success reform network that includes approximately 200 higher education institutions across the nation. Originally funded as a national initiative by the Lumina Foundation,
the goal of the initiative is to provide an evidence-based institutional framework for change that will close the achievement gaps and accelerate student success. FLC team members had the chance to hear presentations on student success programs instituted by various ATD member colleges, and attend a myriad of workshops on evidence-based institutional change and policy reform. I encourage you to visit with any of the attendees to get their perspectives on the ATD initiative.

As an aside, one of the highlights of the trip for me was a dinner for the entire Los Rios team hosted by Rwandan Ambassador to the US, Mathilde Mukantabana. Mathilde was a full time faculty member at CRC until she was named Ambassador two years ago. Mathilde was effusive in her support and fondness for the Los Rios Community College District and it was fascinating to hear her and her Rwandan colleagues describe the political and educational issues facing their home country.

**Safety**

There are few things more important than safety. Ensuring the safety and security of our students, our faculty, and our staff is vital to a healthy environment in which to learn, work, and thrive. Admittedly, Folsom Lake College has had more than its fair share of incidents in its short history so it’s critical that the college is prepared, and stays prepared, for the unexpected. If you currently serve on an ACES (Action Coordinators for Emergency Survival) or CCERT (Community College Emergency Response Team) team, thank you!

It is imperative that we are all familiar with best practices and available resources regarding personal and public safety. Therefore, you’ll be hearing more about campus safety, emergency response and preparedness, and available resources and workshops in the coming weeks - so stay tuned!

**Thank You**

I mentioned above how proud I am of the progress Folsom Lake College has made, but I don’t say it often enough. This college is growing and maturing into a full-fledged comprehensive community college. I am so delighted with our new annual planning and program review processes, the new SSSP and SEP plans and their student success initiatives that will kick off this year (Summer Bridge, First Year Experience, Embedded Instruction, Math Boot Camp), increased professional development activities, growth in athletics, and events such as the 10th Anniversary, CTE Spotlight Night and Steps to Success. I could go on and on!

A great workplace can be defined as one where you trust the great people you work with and have such respect and admiration for what they do for our students.

That, my fellow Falcons, is you!

Rachel