November 1, 2015

Dear Faculty and Staff,

Welcome to the November edition of the “Bird’s Eye View.” The following items are of interest and importance for Folsom Lake College and are provided for your information. If you have any questions, or need additional information, please email me at rachel.rosenthal@flc.losrios.edu or call (916) 608-6570.

October – a Month to Remember
What a month! We hosted the external accreditation team site visit, cut the ribbon for the new Rancho Cordova Center facility, held an incredibly well attended all-college College Master Planning event, and dedicated the college’s new carillon (bell system on the main campus).

We now await the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges’ (ACCJC) official action on FLC’s accredited status in early February and confirmation of commendations and recommendations. In the meantime, the college will continue to make progress on our self-identified Actionable Improvement Plans (formerly known as Planning Agenda Items or our accreditation “to do” list) under the direction of the Accreditation Steering Committee, a subcommittee of the Institutional Planning Committee.

Rancho Cordova Center
The ribbon cutting ceremony on October 28 was met with much fanfare and a huge turnout from the college, the city of Rancho Cordova, and the community. Many attendees had attended the demolition of the abandoned hotel that once sat on the site in 2013, followed by the groundbreaking in spring 2014. The excitement was palpable as this project truly represents the “community” in community college.

Stay tuned for a community Open House next spring to showcase the new facility, as well as our programs and services.

College Master Planning Process
The College Master Plan (CMP) retreat on October 30 was a huge success. Over 120 faculty, staff, managers, students, and community members attended the all-day planning retreat. Based upon guidance from the CMP Steering Committee chaired by Brian Robinson and Molly Senecal, the retreat was led by facilitator Steve Weiss of The Weiss Group. The participants received an overview of an environmental scan representing
internal and external influences on the college, reviewed the results of the faculty and staff survey of strategic directions, discussed the trends they found most significant, and participated in a “SWOT” (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis for the college. Five strategic areas were identified: Community Engagement; High Quality Education; Innovation, Technology and Infrastructure; Student Engagement; and Student Success. It was inspiring and heartwarming to watch passionate educators discuss, and sometimes debate, the college’s future directions and priorities.

The next step will be forums hosted by The Weiss Group to solicit feedback on the college’s priorities stemming from the retreat. The six forums include: students, Harris Center for the Arts, feeder high school superintendents and principals, and community members from Folsom, El Dorado County, and Rancho Cordova. Spring convocation will include another opportunity for college wide collaboration as well as a report of progress to date on the CMP. In the meantime, you can always visit the new College Master Plan Steering Committee page on the Insider for updates.

Safety
Safety continues to be a foremost priority. As I shared in an email to all faculty and staff, PISO has developed both an employee College Safety page on the Insider under Quick Links, and a new student safety page on the college’s home page under Home>About Us>College Safety. Both pages include college resources, advice on how to keep safe, and information about our college’s safety related procedures and strategies. I will soon send an email to all students to inform them of the new student College Safety page.

As for other updates, the main classroom phones are tentatively scheduled to be reinstalled in their original locations the week of November 16. Classroom instructors are advised, however, to always keep a cell phone available. In addition, the Emergency Response Notification Icon (ERNI) has been installed on all employee and classroom computers at all three sites. The district’s Preparedness Assessment Team (PAT) will meet the week of November 9 to review the recommendations contained in the external consultant’s report on the district’s response to the September 3 shooting at Sacramento City College. A few key areas of discussion will include the WARN system, locking of doors, and public announcement systems.

In closing, I recently had the great delight of visiting several faculty’s classes. I was so impressed by their knowledge and talent and was personally reenergized by getting to be a student, albeit for a very short time. Watching the classroom in action, I was reminded of one of my favorite quotes, “Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be.” (Ralph Waldo Emerson) I sat there wondering, what great things are we inspiring our students to achieve? What gifts will they leave to society and our world?

Honored to be part of such a noble profession,

Rachel