



SYNERGY



COVERED LACCD WEEK STRESSES IMPORTANCE AND AFFORDABILITY OF HEALTH INSURANCE

BY STEVE SPRINGER

In the ongoing effort to launch the Affordable Care Act, often referred to as Obamacare, and reduce the ranks of the uninsured in this country, special emphasis has been placed on the young, the group that has been the most resistant to the new law.



Peter Lee, executive director of Covered California, addresses the crowd at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College.

With that in mind, coupled with the fact that those who fail to sign up by March 31 will face a federal fine, the Los Angeles Community College District launched a massive enrollment effort called Covered LACCD Week at the end of February.

All nine District colleges took part and the results were impressive.

“The efforts by the Los Angeles Community College District to help students comply with federal law by signing up for health insurance before the March 31

deadline resulted in over 12,000 students being contacted on the nine campuses during the week of February 24,” said LACCD Board of Trustees member Mike Eng. “Students will continue to have the opportunity to be enrolled until the end of March. This was the largest effort to sign up college students in California.”

The week began with a large kickoff event at Trade Tech College. Among the speakers there was Peter Lee, executive director of Covered California, the state-run arm of the ACA. Three students also spoke at that event, encouraging their classmates to enroll in available low or no-cost health plans.

The next day, Michael Cooper, the former Los Angeles Laker star and Los Angeles Sparks and USC women’s basketball coach, was the featured speaker at a Covered LACCD Week event at Southwest College. He told the gathered students that he knows many young people question the value of health care, considering themselves far removed from medical concerns. But he warned them that nobody, regardless of age, is guaranteed invulnerability when it comes to illness and injury.

“The Affordable Care Act was intended to benefit our community college students — twentysomethings who work full- or part-time and are part of entire families who have little or no health coverage — and that’s why I sponsored Covered LACCD Week,” said Eng.

All nine LACCD colleges staged outreach and informational events. They held enrollment fairs, offered

In the next SYNERGY, an interview with new LACCD chancellor, Dr. Francisco Rodriguez.

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COVERED LACCD WEEK (CONTINUED)



Pictured (L to R): Michael Cooper, LACCD Trustee Mike Eng, Southwest President Dr. Yasmin Delahoussaye.

health care resources, explained the requirements, costs and coverage of health care plans and supplied information on Medi-Cal eligibility. Enrollment coordinators were available at the nine colleges throughout the week.

“Our aim is to not only help our students get the information they need to determine their eligibility for

health insurance,” said Dr. Adriana Barrera, LACCD chancellor, “but also to provide a one-stop process for enrollment.”

Trade Tech has also partnered with several health service providers to develop a network of resources and information surrounding Covered California. Those partners were in attendance at the kickoff event.

“We have been aggressive in providing outreach, information and enrollment access to the communities we serve at Trade Tech, using the campus as a point of contact and familiarity,” said LATTC president Larry Frank. “Along with our sister colleges, we can mobilize a significant amount of resources to help with the continuing success of Covered California. On our campus alone, more than 1,500 people have been identified through our campus Salud Team, as Affordable Care Act or Medi-Cal eligible. They will have health care for their families and loved ones without the financial burden.”

LACCD is planning a second enrollment outreach in October.

TRADE TECH HOSTS SKILLS USA BY DAVID YSAIS

More than a thousand high school and college students descended on Los Angeles Trade-Technical College to take part in a unique event, the Southern California regional competition for Skills USA.

Comprised of a series of vocational and technical contests covering numerous disciplines, Skills USA involves both school teams and individual students in categories ranging from culinary arts, robotics and web creation to cosmetology, advertising design and cabinet making.

This year’s Skills USA regionals included more than 40 separate competitions and another 20 demonstrations. Trade Tech alone had 100 competitors in the event and won a total of 37 medals, including 17 golds, a tribute to the efforts of Joe Guerrieri, LATTC Dean of Student Services, who played a leadership role in organizing the event. Winners of Skills USA regional contests are moving on to the state finals in San Diego on April 24-27, and, if successful there, will compete in the national championships in Kansas City this summer.

The Trade Tech students moving on to the state competition are: *Jose Padilla* (automotive refinishing technology), *David Hernandez*, *Lisa Delgado* and *David Harvath* (automotive service technology), *Benjamin Montanez*, *Michael Spitzer* and *Chioke Conner* (carpentry), *Hugo Gonzalez*, *Ray Tornero* and *Saul Gutierrez* (computer maintenance technology), *Maria Solis*, *Sonia Munoz*, *Carmen Baez-Tornero* and *Perla Diaz* (cosmetology), *Jeremy Vera*, *Kenny Bravo*



and *David Tang* (culinary arts), *Miguel Rodriguez*, *Neil Emerick*, *Atron Ward* and *Brandon Cruz* (diesel equipment technology), *Manuel Hernandez* (electrical construction wiring), *Jennifer Torres* (electronics technology), *Steven Harris*, *Federick Dayao* and *Matthew Reyes* (heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration), *Abraham Barrios* and *Dax Weiss* (industrial motor control), *Reuben Canonge*, *Paul Lee*, *Mark Reed*, *Bill Pena*, *George Lopez* and *Wifred Williams* (plumbing), *Victor Medina* (precision machining 1), *Vigen Zadourian* (precision machining technology), and *Yamill Perez*, *Freddie Pantoja*, *Jose Esparza*, *Bruce Rivera*, *Marvin Gaynair*, *Julio Cesar Trejo*, *Robert Almazan* and *Arsen Snagoian* (TeamWorks). ■



PIERCE TAKES SOUNDS OF ITS CONCERT BAND TO CHINA BY DOREEN CLAY

The Los Angeles Symphonic Winds, Pierce College's critically acclaimed wind ensemble, took their distinctive sound to China in January, facing some of their largest audiences on a 12-day tour that included six concerts. Seventy musicians from the 100-piece ensemble performed in five concert halls in the Shanghai area and Nanchang.

Conductor Stephen Piazza and his talented students played American tunes that included "Stars and Stripes Forever," "When the Saints Go Marching In" and "Theme from Star Wars." The repertoire also featured international compositions such as Wagner's "Ride of the Valkyries" and Bach's "Toccatina and Fugue in D Minor."

Bringing their tubas, French horns, flutes, piccolos and trombones, the band encountered highly enthusiastic, autograph-seeking audiences. During their non-performing days, the students visited silk and jade factories, a tea plantation and Tiananmen Square.

L.A. Winds raised \$100,000 to offset the cost of travel and expenses for its members while China covered expenses inside the country. Temperatures were frosty, but band members reported that they were well taken care of by their hosts, housed in good hotels with fine food. The concert halls were beautiful and acoustically sound, enabling the band to produce a strong, rich sound.

Conductor Piazza is a retired chair of the music department at Pierce, who also plays bass clarinet with the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra. The Pierce-based

Los Angeles Symphonic Winds, founded in 1983, plays regular subscription series, and children's and senior concerts, and has held traditionally held Fourth of July concerts in Warner Center Park in Woodland Hills. ▀



HARBOR COLLEGE'S *HARBOR ADVANTAGE* GUARANTEES STUDENTS PRIORITY ENROLLMENT

BY DANIELLE JACK

Los Angeles Harbor College is the only public college in our local service area to guarantee a full schedule of classes to both incoming and continuing students with fewer than 10 units through the Harbor Advantage program.

Starting at the end of last month when students began to enroll, Harbor Advantage is a redesign of the current enrollment process, giving students priority if they commit to three steps:

- Enroll in four classes for the fall 2014 semester and four classes in the spring 2015 semester, including an English and math class, a Student Success (personal development) class and a general education class that connects students to their areas of interest, aptitude and/or high school career pathway.
- Actively participate in the LAHC orientation and complete both their English and math assessment and their initial LAHC education plan in compliance with the Student Success Act of 2012 (SB 1456).
- Participate in English and math boot camp experiences prior to their English and math assessment.

Harbor College officials, aware that many students have difficulty enrolling in classes due to high demand, are confident that this new approach will not only allow students to get the classes they need, but will also boost graduation and completion rates. This will benefit not



only the students, but the community at large by fostering a local, highly skilled workforce.

Harbor College will also offer ten Associate Transfer Degrees that will guarantee, upon course completion and meeting minimum GPA requirements, transfer to a California state university in a similar major with a maximum cap of 60 units at the CSU to complete degree requirements. —

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