



# SYNERGY



## LACCD CELEBRATES \$15 MILLION GRANT FROM CALIFORNIA CAREER PATHWAYS TRUST BY STEVE SPRINGER

*The morning of June 4th* was overcast with intermittent drops of rain falling on the Patsaouras Transit Plaza at Union Station in front of the Metro Headquarters Building. But for the 115 people gathered there, it was a radiant day, full of promise for a bright future. With smiles and applause, they were reacting to the formal awarding of a \$15 million grant to the Los Angeles Community College District by the California Department of Education. The grant was provided by the California Career Pathways Trust, a portion of the \$244 million awarded to 40 programs across the state that blend academic and career technical education, connect employers with schools, and train students for jobs in high-demand fields such as information technology, advanced manufacturing, health care and software development.

“This grant will transform the lives of thousands of students,” LACCD Board of Trustees President Scott Svonkin told the crowd. “Wherever their dreams take them, they can now go.”

“If we do a good job,” said LACCD Trustee Mike Eng, who chaired the Board committees having oversight over the District’s application process, “this is just the beginning of a great ride for our students.”

In attendance were the value-added partners for this program, including those from workforce investment boards, regional employers, unified school districts, economic development agencies and labor unions. Among the business leaders on hand were Phil Washington, CEO of Metro, Frank Spaeth, CEO of NIC Technology Partners and Tracy Rafter, CEO of BizFed

“Thank you LACCD for reaching out to the business community,” said Gary Toebben, president and CEO of the



Taking part in the ceremony were (from left to right) **Jasmin Ortega** of the California Department of Education, LACCD Vice Chancellor **Dr. Felicito Cajayon**, LACCD Board Trustee **Mike Fong**, Valley College student **Pedro Gonzalez**, LACCD Board President **Scott Svonkin**, LACCD Board Trustee **Mike Eng**, LACCD Chancellor **Francisco Rodriguez**, Metro CEO **Phillip Washington** and NIC Technology Regional Manager **Cheryl Lasko**.

Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce. “And thank you business community for reaching back.”

Representing the students at the press conference was Pedro Gonzalez from Los Angeles Valley College.

Implementing the program will be the Los Angeles Regional Career Pathways Project, one of the largest collaborative models in California. It unites community colleges, high schools, unified school districts, labor

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## CALIFORNIA CAREER PATHWAYS GRANT (CONTINUED)

unions, workforce investment boards, and industry-specific employers.

The program focuses on high-demand industry sectors that are projected to grow and offer job opportunities well into the future. The numbers that could be generated are staggering. The project includes over \$1,700,000 of in-kind/matched resources and will expand the \$15 million Career Pathways Trust grant to serve over 6,000 participants. LACCD's nine colleges and 20 local high schools will work with other project stakeholders to update articulation agreements, develop multiple career pathways, and align

systemic initiatives that will prepare high school and college students for good-paying jobs and careers. The Regional Pathways consortium will work with over 95 employers who will offer over 1,800 internships.

Dr. Francisco Rodriguez, LACCD's chancellor, told the audience there was no room for gloom despite the weather.

"I have 15 million reasons to be happy," he said. "Today is a day of investment. You, our value-added partners, are the wind in our sails. Now, let's get to work. Our students deserve it." ■

## BOARD PRESIDENT'S FORUM



As we head into summer, I want to thank all of you in the far-flung Los Angeles Community College District family for making this academic year a tremendous success. The 2014/2015 year was amazing and it looks like 2015/2016 will be just as good or even better.

Thanks to an improving economy that has reduced The Great Recession to a bitter memory, we find ourselves on the receiving end of increased funding that will result in more classes, more faculty and more students.

Our Board of Trustees has worked very hard to make the most effective use of this additional funding, maintained a balanced budget and created one of the strongest reserves so that we are prepared for any future crisis. As a result, we have earned the best bond rating possible, enhancing our ability to fulfill our commitment to the community.

On the academic side, we have received several important honors this past year. Three of our colleges – East Los Angeles College, Los Angeles Harbor College and Los Angeles Pierce College – were awarded national Achieving the Dream leader college status. And the West Los Angeles College dental hygiene program was selected for participation in the California Community College bachelor's degree program, one of only 15 schools picked statewide.

All through the year, our bond program continued to transform our colleges thanks to the generosity of the voters of our county. We opened several new buildings on our nine campuses and remodeled many others in an ongoing effort to provide an environment conducive to academic achievement for our students and service to our community.

Proof of the high regard in which we as a district are held across the country is the fact that both President Obama and Vice President Joe Biden chose to visit our colleges last year, President Obama speaking at Trade Tech in July and Vice President Biden visiting WLAC in January.

I want to wish a fond farewell to departing board members Steve Veres and Mona Field, both of whom decided not to seek reelection. I salute them for their hard work helping our students and the community we serve.

Finally, I wish to thank all of my board colleagues for affording me the privilege of serving as board president. Being a board member the past four years was a dream come true for a kid from the east side. I never imagined that I could go from being a high school dropout to president of the largest community college district in the nation. I wanted to serve on this board because community college turned my life around and allowed me to get to the place I am at today, and so, every day, I try to give back and help students like me who need a second chance, and want a better life and a more promising future.

While my term as board president is ending, my service will continue thanks to the voters who have entrusted me with the awesome responsibility of helping my six colleagues lead this dynamic district for four more years.

LACCD has resources beyond any other single community college district in the nation. We have the "Power of Nine" of the best colleges working together to serve the most diverse student body anywhere in America.

We will continue to use those resources for the betterment of our students next year and in all the years that follow.

— **Scott J. Svonkin**,  
President of the LACCD Board of Trustees

# THREE NEW FACES ON THE LACCD BOARD OF TRUSTEES

BY STEVE SPRINGER

*When the LACCD Board of Trustees convenes* for its first meeting in July, the highlight will be the swearing in of three new board members for four-year terms along with Scott Svonkin, the current board president who won a second term in Seat No. 5 in the March election.

Having three new members — Michael Fong, Andra Hoffman and Sydney Kamlager in Seat No. 3 — will be a big change for a board that totals seven in all.

Fong has already been on the job since March, having been appointed to complete the term of Miguel Santiago, who left in December after winning a seat in the State Assembly. Fong will begin his own full term in July. The other two new trustees replace Steve Veres (Seat No. 3) and Mona Field (Seat No. 1), neither of whom ran for reelection.

Here is a look at the new trio:



## **MICHAEL FONG – Seat No. 7**

“As Trustee, my priorities will include increasing student success, improving access to educational opportunities, expanding workforce education and high-growth sector training programs, and creating jobs.” Fong said. “I look forward to working with trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, and community members to move LACCD forward and provide opportunities for students to reach their goals and realize their aspirations.”

A lifelong Angeleno, Trustee Fong works with the Los Angeles Economic & Workforce Development Department on youth employment, financial empowerment, and education programs. He also audits and monitors various YouthSource Center agencies that help young people pursue educational goals and join job training programs.

He previously served as East Area Director for Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, acting as the primary liaison between the mayor’s office and the dynamic and diverse communities in Northeast and East Los Angeles. Trustee Fong was also policy analyst for Workforce Development in the mayor’s administration and the senior liaison to the Asian Pacific Islander community in Los Angeles.

He is chair of the PBS Southern California Asian Pacific Islander Community Council, vice chair of the White Memorial Medical Center Community Leadership Council, Director of Community Relations for the Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA), Greater Los Angeles chapter, and serves as a board member and immediate past president of the Los Angeles City Employees Asian American Association.



## **ANDRA HOFFMAN – Seat No. 1**

“I am honored to have been elected to the LACCD Board of Trustees and I’m looking forward to serving the students of the district,” Ms. Hoffman said. “I ran because I want to remove barriers and make sure

that all students regardless of race, gender, ethnicity or socio-economic status have an opportunity to benefit from an affordable, high quality public institution of higher education.

“My first priority will be to work with my colleagues on the board to make sure that we are on track with regard to accreditation.”

“I’ve been an advocate for gender equality, LGBTQ rights, economic justice and workers’ rights, applying an intersectional racial justice lens throughout the process, and I am committed to continuing that work as a trustee.”

For the past 18 years, Ms. Hoffman has been at Glendale Community College directing AmeriCorps programs for Early Childhood, Welfare-to-Work, and Teacher Training. Currently, she serves as a professor of California and American Government and runs the Job Placement Center.

Every year she brings students, faculty and staff to Sacramento to lobby the legislature and teach the students how to advocate for lower fees, more financial aid, and supportive services.

Ms. Hoffman has nearly 20 years of experience as a community college educator and advocate.



## **SYDNEY KAMLAGER – Seat No. 3**

“I am very excited about the joining the Board of Trustees,” said Ms. Kamlager. “I ran for this seat because I believe in community colleges (I have attended quite a few). They are the backbone of the higher education system and are

one of the few remaining gateways into a better existence for most. Students attend community college because they want an affordable education and/or because they want to learn a skill that will translate into a career.

“I support those goals and I will be focusing on ways in which LACCD can make a meaningful impact on the lives of students, families, and others who rely on this community college system. I recognize that this won’t happen in a vacuum. It will take the district’s stakeholders (faculty, staff, administrators, business, labor, community organizations, and others) working collectively toward student success. “

Ms. Kamlager is currently District Director for State Senator Holly J. Mitchell (D-30). Ms. Kamlager is responsible for the daily and strategic operations of Sen. Mitchell’s district office, including legislative and constituent initiatives, communications and programming.

Ms. Kamlager comes to her current position with close to 20 years of experience in the nonprofit, entertainment and policy sectors.

She has taught at California State University, Los Angeles, and has spoken before local, national and international audiences on education and ECE issues, economic development, the arts, environmental justice, criminal justice reform, and other issues that impact the daily success of working families. ■

# LASC INSTRUCTOR DIRECTS AWARD-WINNING FILM NOW ON HBO

BY BENJAMIN DEMERS

**Rachel Goldberg**, a second-year theater instructor at Los Angeles Southwest College, has directed an award-winning short film that addresses media discrepancies between instances when a child of color and a white child are reported missing.

Entitled “Muted,” Goldberg’s work won the HBO Short Film Competition last June at the American Black Film Festival in New York City and started airing on HBO and HBO Go in February.

The film looks at the difficulty a mother has getting help from law enforcement and the media in finding her daughter after she goes missing. Established actors such as Chandra Wilson of “Grey’s Anatomy,” who performs as the mother, and Malcolm-Jamal Warner, formerly of “The Cosby Show,” star in “Muted.”

“Wilson’s character quickly realizes that not all missing children are created equal and so it is a very sad film,” Goldberg says. “However, we hope the film will help spur change and raise awareness for this important issue.”

The film may be sad, but it also carries a wealth of truth in describing the current media landscape. Despite boys and girls of color making up 65 percent of missing children, an overwhelming amount of press coverage goes instead to missing Caucasian kids, especially pretty, blond girls who have been raised in an upper-middle class or wealthy family. This phenomenon is called “Missing White Woman Syndrome.”

Los Angeles-based actor Brandi Ford wrote “Muted” after she became dismayed at seeing the lack of national media attention directed toward Mitrice Richardson, an African-American woman who vanished a few hours after leaving Lost Hills/Malibu sheriff’s station in summer, 2009. Richardson’s body was finally found in August, 2010 in Malibu Canyon.

“We are not saying that white children shouldn’t be getting press coverage, because they should, but so should everybody, regardless of race,” Goldberg says.



She brings a wealth of experience to LASC as a director and writer on numerous theater and short film productions. She has also taught bachelor and master of fine arts programs and at Ivy League schools and at conservatories throughout the country.

“I have taught a number of incredibly talented actors, directors and writers, but the sheer volume of talent at LASC is astounding,” Goldberg says.

She makes every effort to expose that talent to the theater and film industries through her numerous contacts.

“I try to find as many opportunities for my students as I can, often bringing my industry contacts to campus to meet the talent we have here and to hold workshops for our students,” Goldberg says. “I also strive to introduce our students to the thriving theater and film community in Los Angeles by obtaining free or discount tickets to plays in the Los Angeles area, and helping them to secure acting opportunities and crew positions on local films.”

Pay close attention to the credits at the end of the film where LASC faculty member Dr. Jon Bremen and LASC students are thanked for their help in collecting and composing the film’s music. 🎵

## LOS ANGELES COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

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