



President's Report to the PCCD Board of Trustees



February 10, 2026

President Melanie Dixon

Black History Month Engagement and Community Learning



College of Alameda is observing Black History Month with a series of thoughtfully designed events that center education, culture, reflection, and community connection. A highlight of the month was *The Rich Blend: Black Excellence, Freshly Brewed*, held on February 3, 2026, which was well attended by students, faculty, staff, and members of the broader community.

The event went beyond hospitality, intentionally pairing African-inspired coffee, food, music, and short educational videos to ground participants in the African origins of coffee and the enduring contributions of Black creativity, labor, and innovation.

At a time when civil rights, freedom of speech, and belonging are under increasing strain, *The Rich Blend* served as both an educational experience and a space for collective grounding. These moments of learning and connection are especially important during a heavy and complex social climate, reinforcing the college's role as a place where history is honored, dialogue is encouraged, and community care is actively practiced.

The Rich Blend is part of a broader Black History Month calendar that includes opportunities for cultural celebration, intergenerational learning, wellness, and joy, such as Black History Bingo, Savoring Tradition, Sunday Dinner, and the Breathing Room wellness session.

Together, these events reflect College of Alameda's commitment to fostering inclusive engagement and deepening historical understanding across our campus community.

We extend sincere gratitude to the Black History Month planning committee - Jennifer Sanoh, Marcean Bryant, Lashawn Brumfield, Linda Dewrance and all others behind the scenes for their leadership and care in curating meaningful experiences. Appreciation is also extended to the Laney College Culinary Program for food service support, our custodial and IT teams for ensuring seamless execution, and

our Associated Students for their partnership and presence. Their collective contributions have strengthened knowledge, engagement, and community at a moment when such efforts matter deeply.

Launching Spring with Purpose, Adaptability, and Momentum



The College of Alameda has begun the Spring semester with strong momentum, driven by extraordinary collaboration across Instruction and Student Services. An enormous amount of effort has gone into building an efficient and responsive schedule - one that maximizes limited resources while remaining intentional about the courses and pathways offered to best serve our students.

College leadership is especially proud of our faculty, who continue to adapt with creativity, professionalism, and an unwavering commitment to student success amid a rapidly changing higher education landscape. Their flexibility and dedication have been essential to meeting both enrollment and instructional goals.

We extend deep gratitude to our Classified Professionals, who kicked off the semester with a sharp focus on enrollment, access, and the overall student experience. Their behind-the-scenes work, combined with visible frontline support, played a critical role in helping the College meet its Spring enrollment targets, an outcome made possible only through collective effort.

We are also excited to welcome Dr. William Ochoa as our new Dean of Instruction. His return to College of Alameda brings strong instructional leadership, institutional knowledge, and a people-centered approach that will further strengthen our academic programs.

Finally, we are proud to recognize several important faculty milestones. We celebrate our tenure candidates, Edwin Ochong (Biology) and KL Nadeesha Dias (SAS Counselor), who have demonstrated sustained excellence, dedication, and service over many years in achieving tenure faculty status. We are also honored to welcome Yazid Kahil as a newly hired faculty member in Diesel Mechanics (DMech), further reinforcing our commitment to high-quality workforce education.

Together, these efforts reflect the strength, resilience, and shared purpose of the College of Alameda community as we move forward into the Spring semester.

College Council Retreat: Guiding CoA Through Institutional Change

On Friday, February 6, 2026, the College of Alameda College Council convened for a half-day retreat focused on charting the course for the college's future, guided by the Peralta Community College District (PCCD) Transformation Plan.

The retreat created intentional space for Council representatives across constituency groups to engage in reflection, dialogue, and planning at a pivotal moment for the institution.

The Council engaged in rich and candid dialogue centered on CoA's institutional opportunities and threats, including governance effectiveness, fiscal sustainability, student success metrics, and instructional division alignment. Discussions were grounded in data, lived experience, and a shared commitment to access, belonging, persistence, and completion.

A recurring theme throughout the retreat was the acknowledgement of the magnitude and pace of change currently underway at both the college and district levels. Council members openly named the range of emotions associated with this moment - uncertainty, concern, optimism, and resolve and affirmed the importance of leading with transparency, empathy, and shared responsibility as the college navigates transformation.

Notably, the Council demonstrated a collective willingness to make progress amid a new level of ambiguity, recognizing that adaptive leadership in today's higher education landscape requires forward movement even when outcomes are not fully defined. This included a thoughtful examination of historical beliefs, practices, and attitudes that may have previously limited CoA's ability to operate as a nimble, innovative, and student-centered institution capable of responding to an ever-changing environment.

The retreat reinforced the Council's role as a key governance body committed to aligning decision-making, communication, and committee work with the PCCD Transformation Plan and the college's long-term vision. The dialogue and direction set during the retreat will continue to inform governance recommendations, implementation efforts, and cross-constituency collaboration as College of Alameda advances its work to become a model higher education institution grounded in equity, adaptability, and student success in alignment with our sister colleges.