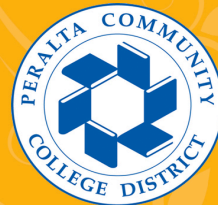




# Board of Trustees Report



May 14, 2024

Dr. David M. Johnson, President

Last week, Merritt College hosted two amazing events focused on career education and opportunities for our students. On Wednesday, May 1, we co-sponsored the **Merritt College Job and Career Fair** with Insight Housing (a non-profit organization committed to ensuring supportive, equitable, and sustainable housing solutions). More than thirty-five employers from the following sectors represented their organizations and recruited our students: *Banking, IT Services, Healthcare, Transportation, Sales, Retail, Customer Service, Marketing, Security, Manufacturing, Food Service, Law Enforcement and Human Resources*. By the end of the day, we had a total of 278 students and community members take advantage of this wonderful event. And while this was a team-effort supported by classified professional staff, faculty, and managers, I want to give special thanks to Ms. Sara Alturk, co-chair of the counseling department!



Two days later, we invited the OUSD High Schools to the campus for the **Career Education Open House**. We had over 100 students attend the event where they learned about our signature CE programs in Administration of Justice, Business, Real Estate, EMT, Fire Sciences, Medical Assisting, Nursing, COSER, and CIS. Faculty from our Biology, Communication, English, and Math departments represented as well (we wanted the students to understand that these disciplines support and often enhance one's career education pursuits as well). So a big shot out to everyone who made this day possible—but especially Feather Ives and Angela Khoo for all of their planning!



*Merritt College puts students first. Through our rich educational programs, we foster a culture of equity and inclusion that empowers students to achieve their greatest potential and make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and our global society.*

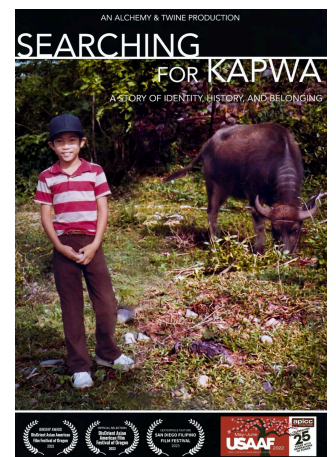




On May 3, 2024, Merritt College was proud to host the very first district-wide Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Graduation Ceremony. This inaugural AAPI Class of 2024 represented! Many students came dressed in graduation regalia or traditional cultural attire—with family, friends, and employees from across the District cheering them on. In an act of commitment and love, several Merritt colleagues worked until nearly midnight the day before to sew customized graduation stolls for the students (thank you Loan Nguyen, Thao Ha, Phasasha Pharr, and Lilia Chavez). The evening also featured inspiring speeches from Roger Chung, Laney Ethnic Studies Instructor and faculty lead for the Restoring our Communities (ROC) academic support program, and Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson, who has the distinction of being the first Asian chancellor in Peralta's history.



The following Monday we continued our celebration of AAPI Month at Merritt with the ASMC hosting a screening of *Searching for Kapwa* - an award-winning documentary about identity, history, and belonging. Several salient themes recurred through the film, include immigration, colonialism, living as part of a diaspora, and thriving as a member of more than one underrepresented group in the United States. This film was the centerpiece of the 2023 Filipino Film Festival in San Diego, and the filmmaker—Larry Lariosa—once worked as a therapist here at Merritt College.



*Merritt College puts students first. Through our rich educational programs, we foster a culture of equity and inclusion that empowers students to achieve their greatest potential and make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and our global society.*

I would like to end this report by highlighting some of the recent successes of our Merritt Track and Field Team. This upcoming weekend Merritt College will have three student-athletes competing for state championships. After taking the gold in their respective events at the Northern California Championships, Wisly Pierre (110-meter-high hurdles) and Shamar Cook (high jump) are headed south in an attempt to repeat the feat at the State Meet. Bianca Townsend will also compete for the state championship in the hammer throw. I should also add that two weeks ago I had the honor of presenting Wisly and Bianca scholarship awards from the Peralta Association of African American Affairs (PAAAA), so they are student-athletes in the truest sense. The same is true of their teammates. Here are some of the colleges to which these remarkable young people are transferring next fall:

Bianca Townsend—UC Davis  
Naias Johnson—Sacramento State  
Wisly Pierre—Cal (still in the works)  
Yaa Owusu—University of San Francisco (possibly CSUEB)  
Erik Erdiakoff—UC Davis (other possibilities Sac State, UC Santa Barbara, Cal Poly Pomona)  
Shamar Cook—UCLA

Panthers! We are proud of you and good luck at State!

# TRACK & FIELD



*Merritt College puts students first. Through our rich educational programs, we foster a culture of equity and inclusion that empowers students to achieve their greatest potential and make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and our global society.*