



Board of Trustees Report



May 24, 2022

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



I want to begin this report by recognizing someone who (without fanfare) has done wonderful things at Merritt over the past several months. And while the *product* of this person's efforts as a team-leader has drawn accolades, his modest and unassuming nature often leads to taking his personal contributions for granted. So, allow me now to formally acknowledge Mr. Nestor Alvarado. Mr. Nestor has been employed many years with the Department of General Services Grounds Division, but Merritt

College has become the campus where he spends most of his time. During these daunting months of the pandemic, Mr. Nestor and his team engaged in the difficult work of transforming the landscape of the college. While many were away, he labored tirelessly to clear, plant, and beautify. And he always does so with a smile and a kind word. We thank him for that and I appreciate the opportunity to "give him his flowers" for everything he has done to make Merritt marvelous.



I am pleased to report that on Tuesday, May 17th Merritt College completed and successfully submitted our application for the Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Grant. In undertaking this effort, we focused on our vision of creating an expanded educational space that will enhance outreach and in-reach services for our students. In addition, we know that the HSI-designation will provide vital resources and funding to increase persistence and transfer-rates, as well as career placement in high-demand industries in the region. Finally, the HSI Grant will strengthen the institution's infrastructure, effectiveness, and capacity to thrive, while also supporting the community at large with improved program quality and increased academic offerings. As such, I want to thank our VPSS Lilia Chavez for her

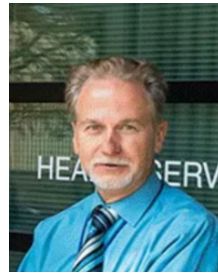
leadership on this, as well as Director of Research and Planning Nathan Pellegrin, Executive Assistant Jamila Saleh, and faculty members Mario Rivas, Marty Zielke, and Rosa Perez. We should know the outcome of our efforts by the end of September.



Finally, I want to salute our four faculty members who are retiring at the end of the semester: Jennifer Briffa (Child Development), Mary Ciddio (Counseling), Jon Murphy (Medical Assisting), and Megan Talbot (Nursing). With their respective departures we lose not only decades of teaching expertise and institutional memory, but also their commitment and affection for their students and this institution. In the weeks to come we will plan a retirement celebration that is befitting of what they have meant and

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.

will always mean to Merritt College. But for now, I hope they know how much we respect, love, and appreciate them.



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.