



Board of Trustees Report



April 25, 2023

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



We recently learned that the Campaign for College Opportunity named Merritt College a **2023 *Champion for Excelling in Equitable Course Placement***. The organization’s mission is to ensure that all eligible and motivated students in California have an opportunity to go to college and succeed, and with the passage of AB 705 they have focused on increasing access to and success in transfer-level English

and math courses across all racial and ethnic groups. **This year we are being recognized specifically for meeting the mark of at least 70% of our Latinx students enrolling in transfer-level English courses, and successfully completing them within one year of their initial enrollment.** What is noteworthy is the fact that Merritt is the only community college in the state being recognized for achieving this metric. You may also recall that two years ago we received similar recognition for dramatically increasing the number of ADTs awarded to African American and Latinx students. The Campaign for College Opportunity will hold their awards ceremony on Wednesday, May 31, and we plan to send an English faculty member and a student to Los Angeles to receive the honor on behalf of the College.

Merritt College will partner with A Case for Cannabis (C4C) in an effort to secure a \$1.2 million grant from the City of Oakland. The purpose of the city’s Request for Proposals (RFP) is to identify organizations/institutions that will prepare workers for the cannabis industry as part of the Cannabis Equity Program Services Initiative. Should the award be granted to C4C, Merritt will institute a training program that will provide training and skill-building in various areas of the cannabis industry, including manufacturing, testing and hospitality. Merritt will also work to develop relevant, contextualized curriculum in science and business so that our students are better prepared to attain competitive positions within the cannabis field.

AFRICANA CENTER

Merritt West) took place on Tuesday evening, April 18, 2023 at McClymonds High School. Nearly 100 educators and students attended the event. This new Africana Center is located within the library, which



is an extremely warm, welcoming, and student-friendly space. The Africana Center itself was best described as “purposefully dark and womb-like,” which signifies the nurturing elements that permeate the space. Dr. Siri Brown, Professor Danae Martinez, and former PCCD Linda Handy were among those presenting. The keynote speaker was Bay Area activist, artist, hip hop historian, and media critic Dave “Davey D” Cook, who reminded the audience of the critical importance of maintaining creative, safe spaces for intellectual curiosity, introspection, and personal growth—particularly for young African American students. We look forward to continuing this exciting partnership with McClymonds, as we also plan the formal re-opening of Africana Center I 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.