

2008 EXEMPLARY PROGRAM AWARDS 1.2

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

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Issue

This item presents the recipients of the *2008 Exemplary Program Awards* for recognition by the Board of Governors.

Background

The *Exemplary Program Awards* were established in 1991 by the Board of Governors to recognize outstanding community college programs. As many as two California Community College programs receive cash awards of \$4,000 and up to four programs receive honorable mention plaques. The awards are sponsored by the Foundation for California Community Colleges and provide an excellent opportunity for colleges to showcase exceptional programs. The theme for 2008-09 is *Growing our Own: Showcasing Innovative Development Programs for Faculty*.

Student success is dependent on highly qualified, enthusiastic, and engaged faculty members. Focused development programs create opportunities for cohorts of faculty to improve their knowledge of the college, discipline specific content, teaching and learning strategies and methodologies, or a combination of these and other desirable outcomes. Many colleges are focusing on new full-time faculty orientation and mentoring programs while others are dedicating resources and energy to part-time faculty development. Faculty from academic senates and bargaining units together with administrators sought grants and other creative funding, such as Basic Skills Initiative funding, to launch these exemplary programs. Costs incurred in the creation of these programs subside as the programs become institutionalized and sustained by the college. The Academic Senate wishes to recognize colleges that address the mission of the California community colleges through well-planned and sustainable development programs.

Each college may nominate one program. Local academic senates are encouraged to form selection committees with representation from student government, staff, administration, and faculty. A committee that included representatives of the state administrator groups, students, and faculty evaluated nominees at the state level.

This year, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has selected two Exemplary Award winners and four honorable mentions. The winners and honorable mentions are providing essential training and development for full- and part-time faculty, thus creating improved learning environments for students.

The awards recognize programs that:

- show evidence of the overall success of the program including length of time in place;
- contribute to faculty engagement through programs directed at cohort(s) of faculty;
- demonstrate response to the needs of the faculty and their colleges;
- provide evidence (both direct student or other data and indirect reports from other sources) that demonstrates how the program supports the community college mission; and,
- can be used as models for other community colleges, in whole or in part, and can be adopted to improve programs at other community colleges.

Exemplary Award Winners

College of the Canyons – Institute of Teaching and Learning

College of the Canyons implemented the *Institute of Teaching and Learning* (ITL) in order to support faculty efforts to enrich their teaching abilities. The ITL encourages faculty to engage in “reflective practice” at every stage of the process, and supports this by promoting classroom research by granting stipends to faculty members who design and perform research projects based on ideas or principles learned in the ITL classes. Stipends can be awarded for projects that promote “reflection and change in classroom practices.” The ITL is committed to helping all faculty improve their teaching skills, and even has a portion focused on adjunct faculty, The Associate Program. This program is extremely popular on campus, with an average of 33-35 applications a year for the 20 available seats. Once adjunct faculty complete the program, they are awarded the status of Associate Adjunct and receive a permanent 10 percent increase in pay. Additionally, the program reports, “Participants usually find a very direct and immediate application for the concepts and techniques discussed and practiced in the workshop.” Most graduates indicated that completing the Associate Program was extremely helpful in pursuing a full-time teaching position. Since 2002, College of the Canyons has had 230 instructors take at

least one ITL course, and 102 of its 196 full-time faculty have participated in the program. It is for these reasons and many others that the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is proud to name the Institute of Teaching and Learning as one of the *2008 Exemplary Award Winners*.

Mt. San Antonio College – Developmental Education Faculty Certification Program

In 2002, Mt. San Antonio College (Mt. SAC) created the *Developmental Education Faculty Certification Program*, which focuses on professional development to educate and inform Mt. SAC faculty about the developmental education needs of students on campus. Since its inception, 74 full-time faculty members and six adjunct faculty members have taken part in the program. The program has tirelessly pursued its goal of providing participants with opportunities to understand the basic developmental education principles, current learning theory, and active learning strategies that will support student success; it even goes beyond theory and addresses practical application strategies for both inside and outside of the classroom. The *Developmental Education Faculty Certification Program* is broken down into three modules to give faculty time to learn and process all of the new material. The modules are designed to promote cognitive, social, emotional, and professional growth to help make faculty aware of different learning aspects students may have and to promote lesson plans to fit those needs. One Mt. SAC faculty member who has been through the program said, “I have found these classes to be invaluable. Although I have taught for many years, up ‘til now, I have never had any background in education theory...I used to feel like students just weren’t trying or making school a focus. Now, I am thinking about how my teaching actually influences their learning.” In recognition of the work the *Developmental Education Faculty Certification Program* has done, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is proud to honor it as a *2008 Exemplary Award Winner*.

Honorable Mentions

Los Medanos College – Math Department Teaching Communities

The Los Medanos College (LMC) Mathematics Department decided to try something new in the spring of 2003. Instead of sticking with their typical faculty interactions, the LMC Mathematics Department decided to create *Teaching Communities* for its faculty, based on the student learning communities, which have been encouraged in recent years. They started with an *Intermediate Algebra Teaching Community* and eventually added *Algebra* and *Statistics Teaching Communities*, comprised of both part- and full-time faculty. These teaching communities have proven to be invaluable for the department since 50 percent of their course sections are taught by part-time faculty. Additionally, each *Teaching Community* has written collaborative curriculum and common finals. There has been a huge level of participation from LMC’s Mathematics Department faculty: 70-80 percent of faculty from both the main campus and the satellite campus participated in the *Statistics Teaching Community*; 60 percent of their part-time faculty have participated in *Teaching Communities*; and 100 percent of LMC’s full time mathematics faculty

have participated. Due to their commitment to improving student learning outcomes, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges is proud to recognize Los Medanos College's *Math Department Teaching Communities* as a *2008 Exemplary Award Honorable Mention*.

San Diego City College – Pedagogy of Love: Organic Praxis in Teaching and Learning

San Diego City College's *Pedagogy of Love: Organic Praxis in Teaching and Learning* program is a professional development program linked to Learning Communities and designed for faculty, by faculty. Since Spring 2006, the program has offered university extension courses, trainings and materials, integrated curriculum, and weekly "cafes" for both full- and part-time faculty. These professional development opportunities allow faculty to reflect and dialogue about teaching, learning theory and research and their Learning Community classroom experiences. The number of Learning Communities offered on campus has increased by 850 percent (increasing from 2 to 17 offerings in the span of a year) while increasing student retention and success in basic skills English reading and writing. This program serves as the core of San Diego City College's professional development program and serves as a model for professional development to other colleges. For these reasons, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has chosen the *Pedagogy of Love: Organic Praxis in Teaching and Learning* as a *2008 Exemplary Award Honorable Mention*.

Santa Barbara City College – SLO Faculty Development Project

The *SLO Faculty Development Project* is a catalyst for institutional transformation at Santa Barbara City College. Beginning in June 2004, over 200 full-time faculty and 98 adjunct faculty have participated in this program. Through the project, members of the college community have been engaged in an intense, ongoing, self-reflective dialogue about using SLOs to improve student learning. The college has also developed and institutionalized an SLO implementation cycle that includes course, program, and institutional SLOs. The process is faculty driven and has garnered strong support and intensive participation from other faculty across campus. The project includes extensive trainings, collection of student performance data, and the development of student learning improvement plans. Products of this project have included the development of numerous resources, guides, handbooks, and online tools to further faculty work on SLOs. College committees, councils, the academic senate, and intensive cohorts drive the work for this project. These cohorts consist of classroom faculty and student support programs and services that meet for an entire academic year as they move through the implementation cycle. The project speaks directly to the college's mission, focuses on student learning through increased faculty involvement and engagement, and provides fundamental principles and processes that can be adopted or adapted at other colleges throughout the state. Therefore, the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges has chosen the *SLO Faculty Development Project* as a *2008 Exemplary Award Honorable Mention*.

West Los Angeles College – Leadership Retreats

The *Leadership Retreats* program at West Los Angeles College is truly a “home grown” program. Created in response to accreditation recommendations, this program is coordinated locally by a diverse planning committee, which hosts an annual retreat to focus on various topics, including the college’s mission, participatory governance practices, planning, and accreditation, retention strategies and teaching practices under the belief that “all are leaders.” The program integrates classroom instruction with student services, counseling, and administration. The program has received dedicated support and funding from various campus constituencies, including the academic senate and college president. Currently, many of the new ventures on campus include ideas that found their genesis at a leadership retreat. Focusing on topics that directly address the core missions of the California community colleges and providing a sustainable model of stakeholder support, West Los Angeles College’s *Leadership Retreats* program has been selected as a 2008 *Exemplary Award Honorable Mention* by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges.