

2008-09 PRESIDENT OF THE STUDENT SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

5.2

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Presentation: *Lance T. Izumi, President, Board of Governors*
Jack Scott, Chancellor
Linda Michalowski, Vice Chancellor, Student Services and Special Programs

Issue

This item recognizes the 2008-09 President of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges.

Background

In 2004-05, the Chancellor's Office and representatives of the Consultation Council issued a call to action to all student body government presidents to create an independent Student Senate organization that could speak for California's 2.6 million community college students in state-level shared governance processes. For the next year, students from all regions of the state worked tirelessly to create a truly representative, accountable and sustainable structure for the Student Senate. In May 2006, the Constitution of the Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC) was ratified. Since that time, the SSCCC has successfully convened General Assemblies that have provided student delegates from every community college the opportunity to bring policy issues forward through formal resolutions for discussion, debate, and action. Through this process, the voice of students has been carried to advisory committees, ad hoc committees, Consultation Council and the Board of Governors.

Richael Young was elected as an At-Large Senator at the 2008 Spring General Assembly and was subsequently elected Student Senate President by the 30 At-Large and Regional Senators serving on the 2008-09 Student Senate Council. Richael's leadership and representation on behalf of the SSCCC have been extraordinary. She has continued the work of her predecessors in strengthening the organization's structure and effectiveness. She has also been at the forefront of the system's efforts to preserve funding, leading efforts to organize the March in March, which brought thousands of students and their supporters to the steps and halls of the Capitol to support the community college budget. Richael also led efforts to bring supporters to Sacramento for the Budget Conference Committee hearing on June 1 when public comment was invited. With more than 200 students, faculty, administrators and classified staff overflowing the

hearing room, Richael demonstrated her creativity by asking everyone whose lives had been affected by community colleges to stand. This brought almost everyone in the room, including the Conference Committee Chair, to their feet.

Richael began attending the College of San Mateo at age 14. After graduating from high school she served as co-president of the college honor society and as student trustee while majoring in Engineering and Philosophy. This Fall, she will enroll at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Scholar.

Writing last fall in *Change Magazine* about her hopes for the new Obama administration, Richael said, “The benefits of a college education become more apparent in my life each day. All of the skills that my professors have taught me—to write, listen, speak, manage my time, share ideas, do research, and think critically—I use daily.... Our country needs to make it a national priority to restore and enhance funding for community colleges and to increase the financial assistance available to their students. Our nation will reap the long-term benefits—a diverse, educated, and civically engaged population—that will make our investment worthwhile.”

Conclusion

The Board of Governors and Chancellor’s Office are honored to recognize Richael Young for her leadership on behalf of the 2.8 million students of the California Community Colleges and for her service to the system. Ms. Young is a shining example of student success in the community college system and we wish her well in all her future endeavors.