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Sent by: President's
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Please respond to
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To PRES-ALL@MTSAC.EDU

cc

Subje [PRES-ALL] MONTHLY LETTER TO THE CAMPUS
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Colleagues,

The spring semester brings record numbers of new and continuing students, eager and engaged, as they enter Mt. SAC to find themselves and to pursue new or rediscovered directions. The opportunities and obligations we pursue for those students are exciting and challenging, and, as I encounter faculty and staff across campus, I see the eagerness and engagement of the students reflected in the faces of our dedicated professionals. Those qualities of professional commitment and enthusiasm are historical criteria for membership in the Mt. SAC family, applied first through our hiring processes.

This week I participated in final interviews for a tenure track faculty position, and standard questions from me are why community college as a career choice and why Mt. SAC. The two finalists gave similar, very satisfying responses. Both had entered higher education through community college, and both began their studies without a well formed sense of direction or purpose. The two candidates also recounted how inspiring teachers and counselors helped and motivated them to discover passion for fields of study, community involvement, and career directions. They also stated that finding that sense of connection and purpose may not have been possible at a large university, where undergraduate education is not a focus. They concluded by saying that now they want to give back, offering new generations of students the same opportunities and support they received at community college. They are the type of candidate I want to interview, and they are the type of candidate Mt. SAC attracts and hires.

Many students come to Mt. SAC with the same notion that community college is the best place to begin in higher education, some with a formed sense of direction, and many still searching for connections and purpose. I had the pleasure this week of meeting one of our best and brightest, Leanne Dogoldogol, who recently was named to the "All California Academic First Team," an awards program co-sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa (community college honors society) and the Community College League of California. Leanne, who is in our RN program, was an academic all-star in high school. She was accepted by several universities, but, on the advice of her high school counselor, she chose community college. I asked Leanne what tipped the scale in her decision to attend Mt. SAC, and she replied that her parents recommended Mt. SAC (She lives in Chino Hills, which is outside of our district.) and that she heard from friends that at Mt. SAC she could enroll in the classes she needed and that she would receive a lot of assistance and encouragement.

Now in her second year in the nursing program, Leanne eagerly attests to those assumptions. She cannot say enough about her teachers, academic advisor, and faculty leaders of the Honors Program and Phi Theta Kappa, who have supported and encouraged her and opened doors of opportunity and new interests. She joined clubs and organizations, was president of Phi Theta Kappa, volunteered with the Mt. SAC Foundation, and is a student employee of the college. Leanne's story is not isolated, and her very positive experiences at Mt. SAC reflect the power and pride of the Mt. SAC family. Because of that power and pride, Leanne is emblematic of the type of student Mt. SAC attracts and guides to success. Thank you for all you do for students.

Regards,

John

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