

21 May 2020

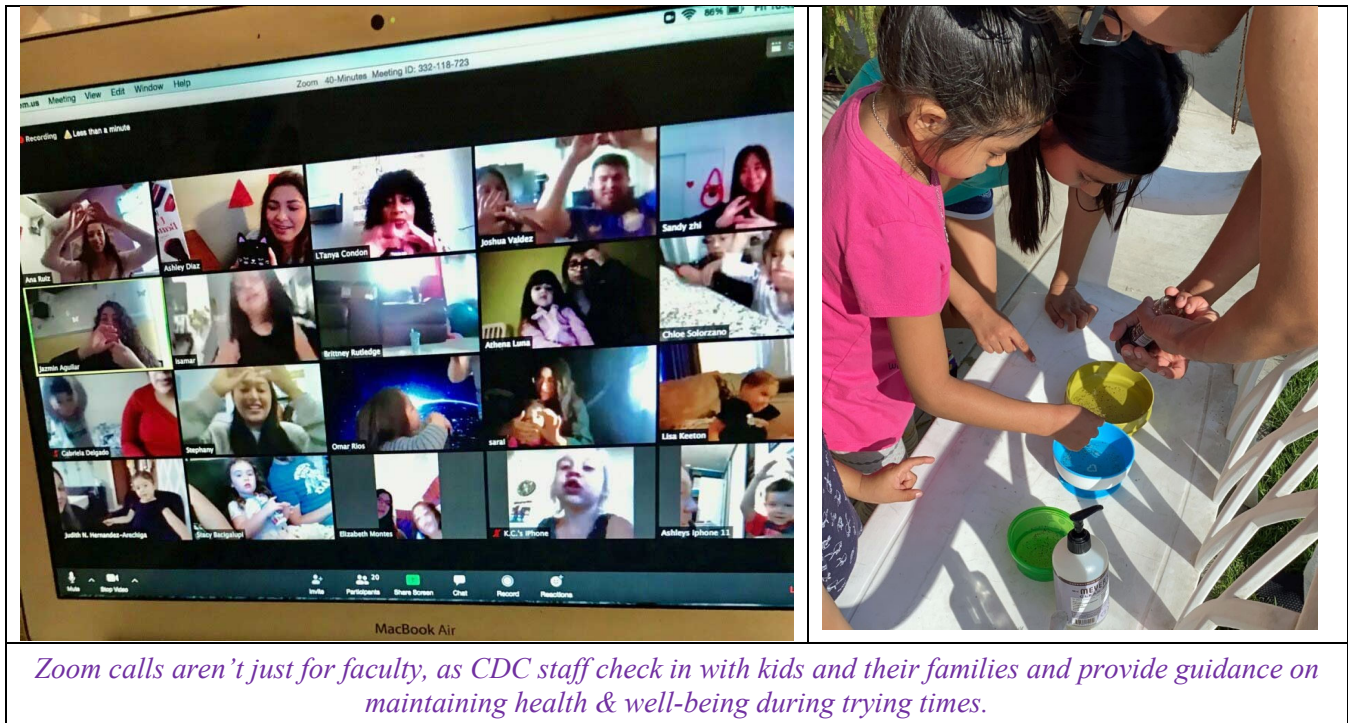
Colleagues~

It's week thirteen. Memorial Day weekend is coming, after which thoughts turn to finals and the arrival of summer. This academic year is not ending like any other any of us have experienced. I know that many of us are still struggling to adapt to the new normal. Without forgetting those struggles, I'd like to share some initiatives our colleagues are taking to support others in a challenging time.

This is Classified School Employees Week—for all our challenges, where would the college be without the *exceptional* support of the staff who make such a huge contribution to our community? This support takes many forms. From *many* examples across the campus, I'd like to highlight two contributions made by staff in the Child Development Center and Engineering and note some other contributions to our community.

The Child Development Center

During this unique and challenging period, the Child Development Center has focused on providing simple and fun educational activities and ideas to children and families, parent education, mental health care for the family, and information about COVID-19. They have also provided a host of professional development activities and opportunities for all staff.



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To maintain regular communication with families, CDC staff uses email, phone calls, and Zoom meetings to check-in with children and families, assess children's developmental and family needs, and guide parents in using effective child engagement strategies at home. The computer app, Learning Genie, allows staff and parents to review child developmental assessments so parents can focus on specific learning needs while at home.

One important part of this work is encouraging families to follow predictable routines, which includes daily or regular connections with Child Development Center staff. The Zoom meetings allow for children to see and talk to their teachers and friends, share fun activities, introduce family members (including pets!) to their classmates, and share their experiences and feelings. Parents use this time to share ideas and challenges, as well as support each other in trying to create and maintain a positive, healthy environment for their families.

Physics & Engineering

Within a week of the campus closure, Maria Vaughn took the lead in the conversion of 15 different engineering and physics lab courses. Through her support of over 30 faculty members, she organized materials for new video-recorded lab demos, student take-home lab kits, and even supervised several drive-through lab kit pick-ups for students. She is helping to coordinate the department's plans for scheduling, social distancing, and supporting modified lab courses in the summer and the fall.



Not only did Physics & Engineered lab tech Maria Vaughn assemble lab kits to allow students to keep up with their already established labs, but her student assistant, Maria Galvan, donned PPE and met students on campus (with proper social distance) to distribute these kits—one such student receives his kit.

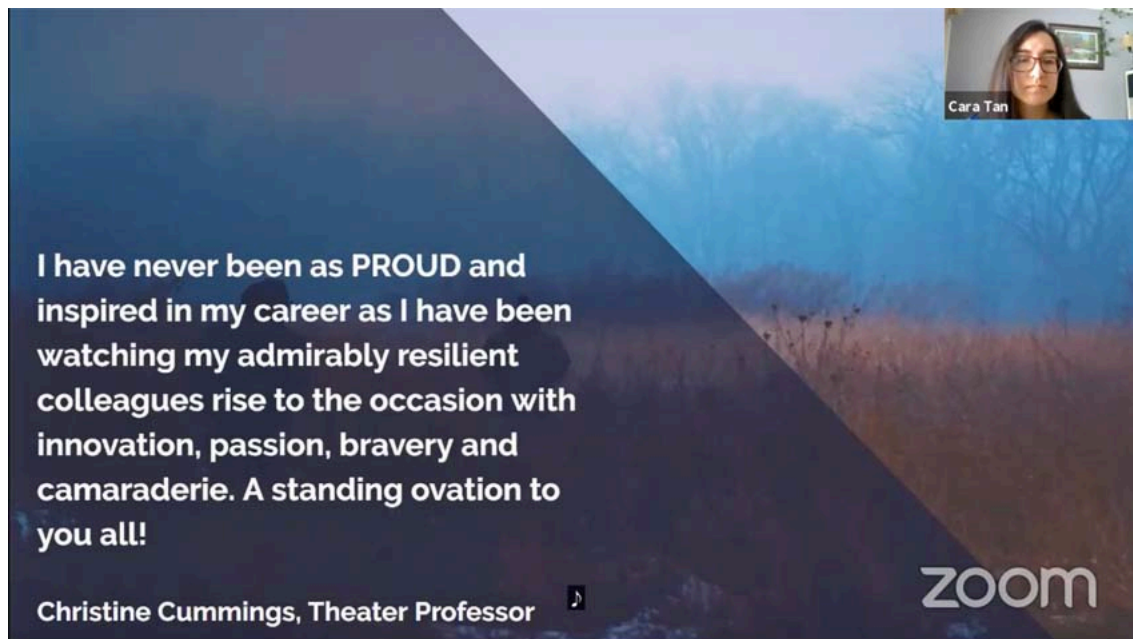
No one could deny Mt. SAC students, families, faculty, and staff have risen to the challenge of unprecedented times in ways that draw on the strengths they bring to campus every day.

The Road Ahead

Mt. SAC held a campus wide Town Hall yesterday (Wednesday May 20), updating the campus community on a variety of topics that provide some clarity about what the near-term future will look like. 400+ Mounties participated. If you weren't able to join, you can review the presentations and Q&A here:

www.mtsac.edu/townhall

I also hope many of you were able to participate in the Mt. SAC Vigil on Tuesday—it was organized by new first-year/tenure-track faculty members Alejandra Pulido, Francesca Rinaldi, and Cara Tan. It's common for faculty to have a special bond with the other faculty in their hiring cohort; this year's class will have an *unforgettable* bond. Many of you contributed to the Vigil with this example from Theater Professor Christine Cummings being just one of many instances:



More to Come

There is more to celebrate I plan to share before the semester winds down.

- Ellen Caldwell in Art History is one of 40 recipients *nationally* of a Mellon Community College Faculty fellowship.
- Chemistry faculty members Dhaval Doshi & Iraj Nejad have been awarded (two separate) grants to explore online tools in teaching Chemistry and to involve Mt. SAC students in undergraduate research.
- Dance faculty have been collaborating with their colleagues regionally to educate and support their students—who would have thought Dance could be taught online?

I will share more about these accomplishments after we return from Memorial Day.

Until then, *please let the Classified employees with whom you work how much you appreciate their contributions to Mt. SAC.*