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Subject: Campus Update
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Dear Monarchs,

Good evening! We've been in the response phase of the COVID-19 pandemic for close to 7 months now. In the various campus updates, I've talked about many of the challenges we have faced, including moving nearly all of our classes and services online, concerns about our own health and that of our loved ones, the events this summer that placed a worldwide spotlight on systemic racism, skyrocketing unemployment in the early months of the pandemic, figuring out how to support our children as their schools closed to in-person instruction, and all of the trauma and anxiety that so many of us are experiencing. Most recently, we are seeing the conflict and violence in Nagorno-Karabakh and the profound impact that it is having on our Armenian community, including our students, faculty, and staff. The weight of these events is at historic levels.

Despite these unprecedented challenges, you have enabled 15,753 students to continue their education and advance towards their educational goals, opening life-changing opportunities. If that weren't enough, you also continue to advance efforts to increase success, promote equity, and help Valley become an anti-racist college. All I can say is, this campus community is amazing! You are amazing! Resilient! Dedicated! Thank you! And of course, please let me know if there is anything I can do. I am certainly committed to shouldering as much as I can to support you.

In addition to expressing my appreciation, I wanted to provide the following updates:

- **LAVC Call to Action on Anti-Racism.** I mentioned above the efforts to make Valley an anti-racist college. Earlier this week, Michelle Fowles provided an update to IEC on these efforts. This includes a Commitment statement, Campus Action Plan Objectives, and Framework that includes:
 - Arts and Expression
 - Communication, Marketing, and Messaging
 - Context, Social, Historical
 - Curriculum
 - Data
 - Financial Aid
 - Hiring and Staffing
 - Partnerships & Coordination (Community Involvement etc.)
 - Policies and Practices
 - Professional Development
 - Security, Sheriff, Discipline
 - Staff engagement
 - Student Engagement

While the planning continues to develop, there is already quite a bit of impressive detail that has been developed and I think will have an important impact. My thanks to everyone working on the committee!

- **Flooding.** Last week, a pipe in the east tunnel burst that carried chilled water used for cooling our buildings. This released about 250,000 gallons of water, flooding the tunnel and Campus

Center basement, which then damaged several transformers and knocked out power to a large portion of campus. Facilities took quick action to begin pumping out the water, staying until nearly midnight the first night. They are also working to repair transformers and return power and cooling to normal operations. For those who are storing items in the Campus Center basement, Mike Lee and his folks will be reaching out to arrange a time for you to check for any water damage. Our thanks to Facilities for all of their efforts!

- **CARES Support.** We have approved and distributed additional support for our students through the CARES Act resources. This included awards for students to purchase Chromebooks or other devices. We also have funds allocated for other technology support, such as internet access and emergency grants.
- **Chromebooks.** We did receive 400 Chromebooks that are available for purchase through the Bookstore. If you know of any students who need a Chromebook, please let them know. Also, we will be receiving additional Surface Go devices and Lenovo Chromebooks sometime this month. These devices should help us continue to meet student needs for the remainder of the year.
- **Employee Recognition.** Tanya is getting our Employee Recognition committee together. This year, the committee will be expanding its focus to include more celebratory, fun events. This could include any idea dreamed up, including costume contest, decompression session, presidential dunk tank, yoga, kids' bedtime stories, parenting events, innovative ideas award, diversity award, faculty scholarly presentation, cultural celebrations, unsung heroes award. Home cooking competition, and baby pictures competition, to name just a few. Of course, in the near term, the activities will have to be online. If you are interested in helping, please email Tanya at sirkinta@lavc.edu. We would love all the help we can get to ensure that we take a few minutes to have some fun and support out community despite the pandemic.
- **Safety Measures.** For those who are on campus for the limited in-person instruction of essential workforce training, providing essential services, or working in support of remote learning, I wanted to provide some reminders:
 - If you are sick, stay home.
 - Per the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance, we strongly urge you to get an influenza vaccination.
 - Information about leave benefits related to COVID-19 can be found at the [LACCD Coronavirus Faculty and Staff Update webpage](#).
 - Complete a symptom check online prior to coming to campus.
 - Wear a facial covering while on campus (preferably, the LA Valley College face mask that everyone should receive soon).
 - Maintain physical distance while on campus, remaining at least 6 feet from others, and avoid congregating, including break/lunch rooms.

- **Borrowing Equipment.** I expect that the District will be updating the equipment borrowing guidelines. You will be able to continue to borrow any technology you need following the prescribed process. If you need to borrow additional items from your office, please let your supervisor know.
- **Changes to Institutions of Higher Education Guidelines.** We continue to plan for Winter and Spring classes and services to be offered in the same format we are using for the Fall semester. The County has indicated that they do not plan to announce any major changes prior to Thanksgiving. Even at that time, it's hard to imagine that we will be making major changes soon. From my perspective, our efforts to keep people safe are successful. To date, districtwide, we have only had about 170 reports of positive COVID-19 cases. To put that number into perspective, a university in Texas has had over 1,100 positive cases. I attribute this striking difference to the vigilant efforts locally that are focused on keeping people safe. While we don't expect major changes, we are continuing to seek guidance on some issues, including options for making hotspots available, student athlete training, and planning for the next phase of recovery. We will continue to keep you updated with any new developments.
- **IEPI.** We are requesting a new Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative (IEPI) Partnership Resource Team (PRT). Our last PRT provided some support in terms of expertise and resources (\$200,000) to advance our professional development efforts. The grant was recently closed out and we were able to request a new PRT. We have asked the PRT to provide some ideas and assistance on the following areas: organizational change; participatory governance; strategic marketing and communication; diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism; and integrated planning. The first of three visits from the team will be later this month. We look forward to the ideas from the PRT and dialog.

If you have any questions on any of these updates or anything else, please let me know. Thank you again for all of your efforts! Together we will continue to overcome obstacles, innovate, and succeed in supporting our students.

Stay safe and be well,

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