



Board of Trustees Report



December 14, 2021

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



Merritt College is pleased to share that we have established a CARE team at our campus. Conceived of as a behavioral intervention initiative at many colleges across the country, the Merritt College CARE Team is committed to going beyond merely responding to reports of at-risk students displaying varying levels of disruptive, disturbed and/or distressed behaviors. Rather, the CARE Team is committed not only to offering assistance after an incident has occurred, but also to support students *before* issues have escalated to a crisis. Providing personal attention and referrals to resources on campus and in the Oakland community is the focus. At present, the CARE Team is composed of faculty members, two deans, and two directors, representing areas in administration, mental health services, counseling, SAS, and the Learning Center. Most frequently, the CARE Team finds itself addressing student issues related to domestic violence, depression, and anxiety caused by financial stress. The challenges are real and the work is considerable, but we stand ready to help, aid, and assist. CARE referrals should be sent to Dr. Lisa S. Webb, Dean of Counseling, Equity, and Achievement. (lisawebb@peralta.edu)

Merritt College is excited to partner with several fire departments across Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, including City of Alameda, Berkeley, Pinole, and Rodeo-Hercules, to coordinate a Regional Joint Firefighter Academy to address the growing need for skills-training in the region. This spring, Merritt's Fire Science program (a State Accredited Regional Training Provider) will also host the new Regional Academy, which we expect to yield upward of thirty new students to our program and pave the way for more innovative ideas to serve the region. This partnership is just one example of the many ways that Merritt College Career Education programs are addressing the needs of the workforce at a regional level, while continuing to generate robust enrollment for our programs within the District.



Finally, you may recall that last year Merritt College partnered with the City of Oakland to secure the *Transformative Climate Communities Implementation Grant*. Currently, that \$28.2 million award is being utilized to create and maintain pathway programs that meet labor market demand and support high employment for East Oakland residents. Merritt College supports this effort through our work with the Black Cultural Zone Community Development Corporation. Last week, we were presented with yet another opportunity to connect with the City of Oakland—this time for the *EDA Good Jobs Challenge Grant*. Specifically, this grant would help our community address staffing needs of healthcare employers by building a culturally and linguistically appropriate healthcare workforce program to train workers for placement in community health clinics to address health equity. In addition, the goal is to train and place individuals from our community into better paying healthcare sector jobs with long-term career pathways. Given Merritt's position as an educational leader in the field of allied health (the result of the expertise of our faculty, the quality of our facilities, and our relationship with community partners) we look forward to discussing the role we might play in bringing this critical project to fruition.

Merritt College puts students first. Though our rich educational programs, we foster a culture of equity and inclusion that empowers students to achieve their greatest potential and make meaningful contributions to their respective communities and our global society.