



Board of Trustees Report



March 22, 2022

Dr. David M. Johnson, President

CALIFORNIA APPRENTICESHIP INITIATIVE

Merritt College is proud to announce that we have been awarded the **California Apprenticeship Initiative Grant: New and Innovative Programs** from the Workforce and Economic Development Division of the State Chancellor's Office. The grant award is for **\$416,509** and will be used to strengthen our Cybersecurity Apprenticeships and increase access to digital literacy for underserved and underrepresented communities.

As the pace and complexity of cybersecurity threats continue to escalate, leveraging automation through software and frameworks that include Artificial Intelligence (AI) is proving to be the only way to keep up. Clearly, demand for trained and skilled practitioners in the field will continue to grow in the future. As such, this grant will strengthen the apprenticeships that are embedded as part of our software development training program into cybersecurity operations. It will also support greater equity by providing opportunities for underrepresented populations to enter, persist, and complete this technical program by maintaining their connection to community support organizations that provide college-readiness training. These organizations will recruit from underrepresented communities, provide instruction to address skill-gaps, and support first-time students as they navigate the college and apprenticeship processes. Suffice it to say, we are excited to be named a grantee and look forward to moving this critical work forward.

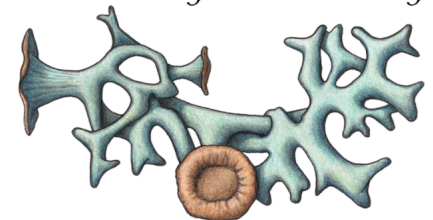


Next, I am pleased to share with you that Ms. Pamela Samuels has been selected as a **2022 Coca-Cola Academic Team Gold Scholar** and will receive a \$1,500 scholarship. Ms. Samuels is the President of our Phi Theta Kappa Chapter here at Merritt College and plans to transfer to a four-year institution in the fall. The Coca-Cola Scholars Foundation sponsors the Academic Team award by recognizing 50 Gold, 50 Silver, and 50 Bronze Scholars nationwide, accounting for nearly \$200,000 in scholarships annually. Selection is based on academic achievement, leadership, and engagement in college and community service. Coca-Cola Academic Team members will be recognized in both local and statewide ceremonies, as well as being honored during Phi Theta Kappa's annual convention to be held in Denver, Colorado, April 7-9. And you might recall that last year Pamela was named a *2021 Coca-Cola Leaders of Promise Scholar*. Congratulations again!!

In closing, I want to give a shout out to our Natural History and Sustainability (NHS) Program. Under the leadership of Faculty Manager Brad Balukjian and instructors such as Ben Nelson, several students have completed the NHS curriculum and secured positions in the environmental sector in recent months. Our success stories include:

- Jaelyn Caldwell, Park Interpreter, Santa Clara County Parks
- Alex Mokhtari-Fox, Restoration Technician, WRA
- Ryan Jones, Park Ranger, East Bay Regional Park District

Natural History and Sustainability



Be Curious.

Merritt College puts students first. Through 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.

- Anushka Drescher, Visitors Service Aide, Friends of Santa Cruz State Park
- Alan Aki, Meter Reader Mechanic, East Bay Municipal Utility District
- Stacy Carlson, Program Communications Coordinator, Monarch Joint Venture
- Nick Clark, Farm Worker, Stonybrook Canyon Farms
- Rebecca Davis, Interpretive Student Aide, Ardenwood Historic Farm

To learn more about NHS, I encourage you to take a moment to view this wonderful video from Ronnique Curry, one of our amazingly talented NHS students. In it, she provides an informative and inspirational overview of this burgeoning program. Enjoy! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ekqJ8iyOfNE>