



# Board of Trustees Report



February 8, 2022

Dr. David M. Johnson, President



I would like to begin by acknowledging the collective efforts of the faculty, classified professional staff, and administrators to make the first few weeks of the semester (particularly the on-campus instruction and delivery of in-person student services) more successful than many had anticipated. An appraisal of the class schedule reveals that over seventy percent of our Spring 2022 course offerings are online, and several faculty members have shared with me that having had the benefit of a couple of semesters of online instruction under their belts has made them much more adept at utilizing this modality. Although the majority of sections are online, many students are still coming to campus to take classes and receive services. As such, I

appreciate those faculty and classified professional staff members who are on site to meet the needs of our students—I greatly appreciate your commitment to “putting students first.” I also need to recognize the work of our custodial workers and groundskeepers—despite staffing challenges and the criticism you face at times, you continue to come in every day and give your best. Finally, I want to note the helpful feedback that Merritt received from PFT and SEIU leadership. As administrators we are committed to ensuring that the colleges are as safe as possible, and your insights and suggestions contribute to that cooperative effort.



On January 27, 2022, Merritt College hosted our first Grab and Go/Informational Session of the calendar year. With *Power in Unity* as the theme, our categorical programs came together to put on an amazing event. Students were provided with hot meals, PPE, and timely information regarding course offerings, support services, and other resources. Much thanks to the principal organizers: Margie Rubio (NextUp), Carmen Jones (EOPS), and Ree’shemah Thornton (Dean of Enrollment Services). To quote Ms. Rubio, “It’s all about being intentional with our efforts with a TEAMWORK MINDSET. Continue to be the change!” I think we would do well to take heed of her exhortation!



## UC DAVIS Transfer Opportunity Program

In closing, here is a bit of news that we can use. Transfer Counselor Angela Khoo and Dean of Counseling and Equity Lisa Webb recently secured an agreement with UC Davis that allows Merritt College to become part of their Transfer Opportunity Program (TOP). TOP is a transfer preparation program designed to support partner colleges in their efforts to increase the number of transfer-ready students (particularly first generation, low income, and underrepresented students). This partnership will make the following opportunities available to Merritt Students:

*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.*

1. Regularly scheduled individual online transfer advising sessions with a TOP Advisor (which includes discussing the UC application process, university admission process, major requirements, and student housing).
2. Group peer opportunities for students interested in similar majors
3. Access to TOP annual events
  - Discover UC Davis (March 4, 2022): a transfer empowerment conference showcasing the many opportunities available to transfer students at UC Davis
  - Aggie Transfer Scholars Week: a week-long program for prospective students focused on transfer and career planning

As great as this opportunity is, I am thrilled to report that as a result of a grant we received through the *Student Academic Preparation and Educational Partnerships* (SAPEP) Program, the fee that community colleges typically pay once they are designated as a TOP institution school has been waived for the next three years.