Measure L Breaks Ground

Page 10
Dear Friends,

It is quite an exciting time at Cuesta College. For the first time ever, both the San Luis Obispo and North County campuses are seeing construction begin simultaneously on two new, bond-funded buildings. The SLO Campus is breaking ground March 11th on the new 32,000 square-foot Instructional Building, while the 43,000 square-foot North County Campus Center will follow suit on March 24th. It’s all thanks to the voters of San Luis Obispo County, who passed Measure L in 2014 with the intent to support student learning and success. The bond breaks ground on page 10.

This year, four former students – each from different decades – were selected to receive the 2016 Honored Alumni Awards. Since their time as Cuesta College students, they have left their mark on the worlds of architecture, emergency services, the U.S. State Department and environmental waste and recycling. Read about their accomplishments and memories of being a Cougar on page 8.

Did you know that for two years in a row, the college has been designated a Military Friendly® School? Only the top colleges, universities and trade schools in the country are awarded this distinction for their veteran support services. Find out more on page 3.

And also for a second year in a row, Cuesta College’s Drama Department received major recognition for an original production by the Kennedy Center. Take a look at Refried Elvis and its accolades on page 6.

As we begin the 2016 year, I am extremely pleased with Cuesta College’s commitment to student success. Educating students, preparing them for their futures, creating pathways to opportunities – it’s what we do best. I hope you enjoy reading about the accomplishments of our faculty, staff and students within the following pages of this issue of CC News.

Sincerely,

Gilbert H. Stork, Ed.D.
Superintendent/President

The Great Water Reduction of 2015

In response to the State mandate to reduce water usage by 25%, Cuesta College cut its usage by 44%.

Want to know more? Go to www.cuesta.edu and click on News.

On the cover: Bond-funded demolition began on the North County Campus in January, making way for the new Campus Center.
For the second year in a row, Cuesta College was designated a Military Friendly® School by Victory Media, the leader in successfully connecting the military and civilian worlds. The Military Friendly® School designation is awarded to the top colleges, universities and trade schools in the country that are doing the most to embrace military students, and to dedicate resources to ensure their success in the classroom and after graduation.

“Being designated a Military Friendly® School in 2015 and 2016 validates the ongoing work of Cuesta College to support our veterans,” said Dr. John Cascamo, Cuesta College’s dean of economic workforce and development and a current Air National Guardsman. “Our goal is to help these men and women translate their military experience into a college degree or certificate so they can advance in the civilian workforce and bring their talents back to their communities.”

Cuesta College currently serves more than 200 veterans annually and has a dedicated Veterans Resource Center on the San Luis Obispo Campus, where veterans, reservists and military dependents as well as prospective students with military experience, can learn about available benefits, connect with one another, and become active in other aspects of campus life. The center allows staff to more easily manage veterans’ services from one central location and provides free tutoring services, workshops, and opportunities to connect with the Veterans Club and other veterans’ service organizations.

“The Veterans Resource Center is the heart of the college’s veteran community and serves as a gathering place for student veterans to connect and socialize,” said Cuesta College Veterans Resource Center Coordinator Karen Andrews. “One of the biggest issues facing combat veterans is social isolation, and many have difficulties adjusting to civilian life, especially adjusting to college. Veterans from all branches of service are welcome and can expect to receive professional, courteous, and compassionate support as they pursue their educational and vocational goals at Cuesta College.”

“The center has made my transition back to civilian and college life a lot simpler and smoother,” said student veteran Michael Winberry. “It has offered me a place where I’m surrounded by other student veterans my age going through the same thing and who share my experiences. It’s great to have a place that we can come together and have that kind of a support system.”

For more info on the Veterans Resource Center, call (805) 546-3142.
These days, CSI-type shows are all the rage. Turn on the TV and you’ll likely find some version of a gritty, crime scene investigation series. Here at Cuesta College, our students are learning to become real deal crime scene investigators.

Within the college’s Criminal Justice Degree Program is a course titled CJ210: Principles of Investigation. Offered on the San Luis Obispo Campus each fall and spring semester, the course focuses on teaching students the investigation fundamentals of crime scene searches, how to collect and record evidence, and proper arrest, interview and interrogation procedures.

“There really isn’t any one specific type of student that this course is designed for,” said Cuesta College Criminal Justice instructor Teri Prince, who also works in toxicology for San Luis Obispo County. “Any student vaguely curious about the criminal justice field would benefit from a class like CJ210. It gives students the opportunity to dip their toes in the water and see if a career in criminal justice is something they might want to pursue.”

Wendy Bevin, who graduated from Cuesta College last year with degrees in Paralegal and Legal Studies, is back on campus this spring and enrolled in CJ210. She hopes to one day be an attorney, and has found great value in the Criminal Justice Program.

“I realized how valuable the criminal justice classes are to me, a law student, as they enhance my knowledge and understanding of evidence and how law enforcement play a role in our judicial system,” said Bevin, who plans to become an attorney specializing in advocacy. “I find this class very helpful in supporting my goals of becoming an advocate for justice. A successful investigation can lead to the arrest and prosecution of criminals. What I learn from these criminal justice classes is knowledge that will help me be an asset to the legal profession.”

Although students in CJ210 learn how to navigate a crime scene, the experience is quite different from fictional portrayals.

“The main distortion between factual and fictional forensic science in crime labs is time frame,” said Prince. “It can take several weeks or months to get results back from a lab in real life. And although TV programs like Law and Order or CSI: Miami may be thoroughly entertaining, they’ve created what is known in academic and professional circles as the ‘CSI: effect,’ which is the perception of the near-infallibility of forensic science. Jurors, judges and attorneys expect the crime lab to have all the answers. They may expect test results for un-testable evidence.”

So her goal is for students to leave the course with an increased awareness of the basic real-world principles of and importance in the process of an investigation. That’s done by way of hands-on experience with laboratory techniques for black powder fingerprint lifting, fingerprint analysis, evidence collection, sketching styles, note taking, search techniques and more.

“This class can definitely help students looking for careers in law enforcement, the court systems, correctional agencies, forensic science and even private security agencies,” said Prince. “The subject matter covered goes far beyond ‘Crime Scene Investigation.’”

Want to know more about the Criminal Justice Program? Call (805) 546-3264.
In November of 2015, Cuesta College launched myCuesta Pathway, a fully-online degree audit tool designed to help students understand the course requirements for a major, degree, or certificate. The tool allows students to see a concise list of all the classes they have taken at Cuesta College, how those courses affect their current course of study, classes still needed in order to graduate and options for those who are considering changing their major.

“Student success starts with a clear pathway, and our goal with myCuesta Pathway is to help students reach their goals more efficiently and easily, anytime, anywhere,” said Vice President of Student Services Sandee McLaughlin.

The web-based program takes Cuesta College courses from a student’s transcript and reorganizes them in order to track progress toward degree completion. The ‘What If’ feature allows students to hypothesize a change in major and ascertain how far along they would be if they changed their academic goal.

“I really like myCuesta Pathway, how it tells you exactly where you are in your degree attainment and how easy it is to navigate. It’s already made my life a lot easier,” said current Cuesta College student Christine Serrano.

“myCuesta Pathway is a very effective tool benefiting both counselors and students,” said Cuesta College Counselor Glenda Moscoso. “In a matter of minutes, myCuesta Pathway is able to generate a report that shows the counselor and student courses still needed to achieve an established academic goal, or what courses are needed if a student decides to switch majors. Having this information readily available makes counseling appointments more efficient.”

For more information, visit bit.ly/mycuestapathway.

Cuesta College kicked off 2016 by offering a new mix of courses via its South County Center, including many that are free to the public. Located on the campus of Arroyo Grande High School, the Center’s offerings include traditional college courses that apply toward college degrees and transfer, courses for students who are still in high school that apply toward high school credit and/or college credit and GED preparation non-credit courses for residents without a high school diploma.

And for the first time in seven years, the Center began offering free Emeritus College non-credit courses, providing a source of lifelong learning, vocational education, and cultural development for adult community members. Course topics include composing your life story, creative writing, drawing, wills and trusts, creative cooking, film appreciation and more.

“Cuesta College has a long history of offering classes in South County and we are proud to continue that tradition,” said Vice President of Student Services Sandee McLaughlin. “We hope that the South County community takes advantage of the many great classes we are now offering in both the fall and spring semesters right in their own backyard.”

The Center is open Mondays through Thursdays from 4:30 - 9:00 pm during the Fall and Spring semesters and is located in the 900 Wing of Arroyo Grande High School on Orchard Avenue. For more information, call (805) 474-3913 or visit bit.ly/southcountycenter.
Desiree’ was born and raised in Italy. She and her family relocated to California when she was 14, eventually settling in San Luis Obispo where she is now taking theatre classes at Cuesta. “I took classes with bree valle*, and I realized how great she was,” Desiree’ said. “I thought I knew a lot about theatre and acting from taking classes at other schools. Then you take her class and you feel like you’ve never taken an acting class before because she’s so professional.”

Ivy agrees. She grew up on the Central Coast and attended Cuesta College to become a teacher. When she finished the requirements for her major in Liberal Studies, she took a few extracurricular classes just for fun. That’s when she met valle and decided to switch her major to Theatre Arts. “bree is tough, but I love that because she actually wants you to learn,” Ivy said. “She’s not just feeding you the things that you need to pass the class. She expects the best out of you, and she pushes you to that.”

Desiree’ and Ivy have been given the opportunity to practice what they’re learning in the classroom right on stage. In the fall of 2015, both were cast in the original Cuesta College production of *Refried Elvis*, which is described by director valle as a “slicked back thrill ride that re-imagines the origins of rock and roll and takes the audience behind the scenes during Elvis Presley’s rise to fame.” The musical comedy features a three-piece rock band (one of the members is Desiree’s father), more than a dozen songs, and 1950’s inspired costumes and dance choreography. “The show has a lot to do with movement from the actors,” Desiree’ said. “The scenery is simple, and the lighting is gorgeous. But what bree wanted us to do was build the show using actors and movement.”

It’s the practical application and hands-on approach to theatre that Desiree’ and Ivy appreciate about the drama program and their experience with the show. “It feels like real life,” Ivy said. “bree treats us like real actors – like a company. I’ve heard people talk about how professional we all look on stage, in comparison with other shows they’ve seen at other colleges. And I think that’s really unique to have that experience here; to have a professional atmosphere.”

All their hard work didn’t go unnoticed. For the second time in the drama program’s history, a Cuesta College original production hit the national stage. The show was selected to be featured at the 2016 Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival (KCACTF) in Oahu, HI, and in February, the cast and crew performed *Refried Elvis* on the campus of the University of Hawaii. The students were also given the chance to audition for scholarships and jobs in the theatre industry. “Performing on stage in front of people who really appreciate your work is wonderful, so I want to do it for the rest of my life,” Desiree’ said.

Days before departing for Hawaii, the students reflected on the significance of this opportunity. “It’s such an honor that we were chosen as one of only four schools from our region to compete in Hawaii,” said Ivy. “It’s crazy to me because we’re such a small school in comparison to other schools, and we’re a community college at that. We are definitely going to give it our all.”

*Artistic Director of the Cuesta College Drama Program who prefers her name without capital letters.*
In the summer of 2014, Cuesta College marine biology professor Laurie McConnico went on sabbatical; a period of paid leave granted to college faculty for study or travel. McConnico did both. And then some. She traveled south of the border to Mexico and the Caribbean region of Panama where she spent months conducting research on the nutrient dynamics associated with marine calcified red algae. In other words: “I studied calcified seaweeds that roll around like tumbleweeds in the ocean. Hundreds of organisms live inside these balls of algae and I wanted to see whether their waste products contribute to the surrounding nutrient pool.” McConnico discovered that they indeed do. She also submitted and published papers, presented research at international conferences, initiated research projects and learned new molecular techniques. All while working toward the completion of a Ph.D. The result? We’ll let her tell you.

“The sabbatical year granted by Cuesta College provided me with opportunities beyond measure. My work not only re-established the part of me that is a scientist, it has helped me feel more fulfilled. The ability to integrate what I learned in the courses I took while on leave and then share my own research experiences will be key to delivering thoughtful and interesting lectures to my students. I am now developing new projects that will hopefully allow future students to participate in summer research expeditions to Baja, California; opening these students up to the world of field biology and research in a unique setting. Also important is the attention that international research brings to Cuesta College. It’s helped to establish Cuesta as an excellent teaching institution that also supports high quality biologists. The Sabbatical Program at Cuesta College is not only essential for the successful professional development of faculty that will be paid forward for years to come, but also to the overall quality of the education we offer our students and the reputation of the college.”

Laurie McConnico
How did attending Cuesta College change your life?

Brandon: Cuesta College was where I learned how to be a student. It was the experiences and professors that pushed me to be better, take education seriously and truly apply myself. Without this foundation that Cuesta College provided, I would not have been successful in my educational journey and career.

Leonard: My mission in life is to help create as much housing as possible, which is very challenging on the Central Coast and in California. When I graduated from San Luis Obispo High School in 1983, I was not ready for the vigorous architectural education, so Cuesta College was a perfect place to mature and take prerequisite courses that I would need to graduate. Cuesta College also allowed me to pursue other interests, such as competitive golf and art. So it was a great place to learn collaboration, motivation, compromise, and how to deal with failure in a productive way.

John: As an Arroyo Grande High School graduate, Cuesta was the perfect place for me to take my first steps in college life. I found it to be both a welcoming and a challenging institution, a place where the learning process is nurtured by hometown roots sunk deeply into a robust academic environment.

Dale: It’s been 50 years – a half a century – so there are a lot of miles between then and now. So I would say it’s the great foundation it provided me. In order to build anything, you must have a great foundation, or your building will not flourish. I think Cuesta gave that to me.

Care to share a favorite memory?

Leonard: I have great memories competing on the Cuesta College Golf team. We practiced every day, competed rain or shine, and bonded as a team. Our coach was Doc Sutter, a cross between WC Fields and Walter Matthau. The competition, comradery, and dealing with adversary situations helped me mature and become a strong collaborator and leader today.

Dale: One of our English teachers, Dr. Paul McGill, took us on camping trips to Big Sur and we did lots of things I had never done before, like kayaking. And I remember all my football team mates. Dr. Gil Stork was one my coaches and was very instrumental to me. Seeing what he’s done for Cuesta College has been amazing and influenced my career. He is definitely my number one mentor.

Brandon: During my first semester at Cuesta, I had to take English 56 because I didn’t have the scores to get into 1A. Well, to my dismay, I failed the class. It wasn’t for lack of ability; it was for lack of a basic respect for things like applying myself, actually reading the assignments, and turning in the homework. This had a significant impact on me.

John: Certainly one of my favorite memories is of the now legendary Eagles/Neil Young concert, which was
organized by my good friend and fellow Cuestonian newspaper staffer, Bruce Hall. Another is attending a fascinating lecture at the college by The Twilight Zone creator and host Rod Serling - at which he quipped and smoked and enthralled us with his industry insights.

> How did Cuesta shape your professional career?

**Brandon:** During one of my semesters at Cuesta, I took the Emergency Medical Technician course. I'll never forget the first day of class when the instructor Mike Messina put a graphic picture up on the screen and said that if this picture bothers you, then you've chosen the wrong career. I did receive my Emergency Medical Technician certification, which I still retain today. That class set the stage for what has become a career in emergency management. I have been very fortunate to work in every capacity of an EMT, including for the Cuesta College Public Safety Department.

**Leonard:** Architecture is more than drawing floor plans and elevations. It's about understanding how people work together in a community, fulfill their mission, live together, raise families, etc. Cuesta College allowed me the time to get on my path and learn how to hone my skills while also developing an understanding of economics, politics, writing, literature, philosophy and other subjects that helped me understand the environment in which I practice architecture today.

**John:** During my diplomatic career with the U.S. State Department, I frequently drew on the strong foundation that was laid through courses I took in international politics, American government, political science, journalism and foreign languages.

> What value do you see in Cuesta College?

**Dale:** I think Cuesta is a tremendous asset to our community. The Cuesta faculty give students the tools to move forward and be ready for the next realm of education. It prepared me to go to UCSB, which I attended through a football scholarship. It really provides a great foundation.

**Leonard:** Maturation, challenge, and education. In my mind, Cuesta College is an invaluable institution for our Central Coast community. Cuesta College, its instructors, coaches, and administrators are there to support students as they uncover their mission in life.

**John:** Cuesta is a real community college, and it’s the sense of community that we share with everyone on campus - students, staff and teachers - that is one of Cuesta's most valuable characteristics.

The 2016 Honored Alumni will be recognized at the 2016 Award Ceremony on April 1. For details, and more info about this year’s individual Honored Alumni, visit www.cuesta.edu and click News.
Breaking Ground on the Bond

The San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles campuses are looking quite different these days. Construction crews are busily prepping two major project sites as the college looks to break ground in the month of March on the first two Measure L-funded buildings.

First to break ground is the new San Luis Obispo Campus Instructional Building. The 32,000 square foot, two-story structure will house eight high-capacity, multi-discipline classrooms on the ground level, capable of serving up to 45 students each. It will also have one forum sized classroom, capable of serving 90 students. The second floor will be comprised of more than 40 offices, staff lounges and meeting rooms. The new structure will sit in the southwest corner of the campus, and will house programs that previously operated in modular structures. Construction will officially begin in early April, with a projected completion date of Fall 2017.

Breaking ground in late March is the new North County Campus Center in Paso Robles. The 43,000 square foot, two-story building will also house programs and offices displaced by the removal of modular structures. Located in the northeast portion of campus, the new structure will include student services like admissions and records, counseling, financial aid, student life and leadership, health center, bookstore and the cafeteria. The college plans to start construction in late April with a completion date of Fall 2017.

Save the Date!

GROUND BREAKING CEREMONIES

SLO Campus Instructional Building
March 11 @ 10:00 am

North County Campus Center
March 24 @ 10:00 am

BOND BREAKDOWN

$275M General Obligation Bond

Nearly 62% Voter Approval

75% of Contracts Awarded to Local Contractors

11/4/14 Passed by SLO County Voters

$75M First Issuance

CITIZENS’ BOND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

This spring, in accordance with Education Code Section 15278(b), the Citizens’ Bond Oversight Committee will present to the Cuesta College Board of Trustees an annual written report outlining their activities and conclusions regarding the expenditure of Measure L bond proceeds.

Want More? Visit www.cuestacollegebond.info
Reflecting on the North County Campus

The original plans to create a campus serving the North County community had to be scrapped after a state bond failed to provide the necessary funding. It took a dedicated team of Paso Robles citizens – including Berna Dallons, Dee Lacey, and Laurie Sinton – to create the momentum to get the project going. In 1996, a collaborative effort in partnership with the Cuesta College Foundation, administration, faculty, staff, North County leaders, and devoted community donors raised more than $2 million.

“The North County Campus is very closely tied to the public,” said Sandee McLaughlin, former North County Campus executive dean and current Vice President of Student Services and Campus Centers. “I have never heard of a greater undertaking by a community to raise the money to start a college campus.”

In August 1998, the North County Campus opened its doors to welcome approximately 1,300 students, 75 faculty and staff, and 100 classes. It started with four modular buildings and eventually two more were added. That was the original North County Campus.

Almost 18 years later, the ‘original campus’ is getting a much-needed facelift. The six modular buildings are now gone; demolished in January 2016 in order to make room for the new Campus Center building.

“It is somewhat surreal to watch the dream of a Cuesta College North County Campus come to fruition – from the concept stage in the early years to the stunning college site it is becoming,” said Sandee. “For me, the original modular buildings are associated with my memories of the magnificent work of many cherished community people. It’s a balance of honoring the past and celebrating the future.”

Sandee added, “My hope for the North County Campus is that we stay in touch with, and endeavor to meet, the needs of north county residents and continue to place a high value on our community connection.”
To learn more about the Cuesta College Business Partner Program, call the Cuesta College Foundation at (805) 546-3279.
Dr. Randolph and Mrs. Patricia Lawrence have been residents of the Central Coast for 30 years and they've seen firsthand the value of a Cuesta College education. Their son, Skyler, is an alumnus of the college and they were impressed by the quality of education he received. The long-time donors to Cuesta also appreciate the services it provides to the community. “We are impressed with the institution and how well it serves the Central Coast, not just San Luis Obispo but the North County as well,” said Dr. Lawrence.

Dr. Lawrence is on active staff at local hospitals in San Luis Obispo and the North County, and he says that a large number of nurses he's worked with are Cuesta College alumni. “In our case as employers and for many employers in the area, we see directly the effect that our donations can have,” he said. “A lot of students come out of Cuesta College well-prepared and well-trained. I’ve seen many of them go from being student-nurses up to the point of becoming senior staff members.”

This year marks a decade of continuous giving to the Cuesta Fund by the Lawrence’s. Seeing the direct results of their donations encourages them to continue to support educational opportunities.

“Our hope is that our donations will help students take advantage of the quality education at Cuesta College and better themselves. It makes not only for a strong individual, but also a strong community.”

HOW TO DONATE:

There are several ways to donate to Cuesta College:

1. Online: bit.ly/donatetocuesta
2. Mail: Send a check to Cuesta College Foundation, P.O. Box 8106, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403
3. Call: (805) 546-3279 to make a credit card gift over the phone

Gifts to the Cuesta Fund help to support the college’s priority needs and technology upgrades.
1: PG&E presented Cuesta with a more than $40K energy incentive check in October for the district’s work on completed Proposition 39 facility projects.

2: The 2nd Annual Promise Day was held in October and attended by more than 700 local high school seniors who learned all about how to get a fee-free first year at Cuesta via the Promise Scholarship.

3: A total of 14 paramedics graduated in the fall of 2015 from Cuesta’s Paramedic Program.

4: Ten faculty were recognized at Teacher Appreciation Night, held in December 2015 by the Alpha Gamma Sigma, the college’s academic honor society and service organization.

5: The Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery kicked off its spring 2016 exhibit schedule with artist Robbie Conal and his series of politically inspired posters and paintings.

6: Veterans Resource Center Coordinator Karen Andrews was awarded the 2016 Elaine Holley Coats Service Excellence Award at the Spring Opening Day Ceremony held in January.
Longevity Breeds Success

Over the years, Cuesta College has produced many talented student athletes, both in the competitive arena and the classroom. There are several reasons for their success and one is our exceptional coaches. In my opinion, we have the best coaching staff in the entire state. Our coaches work daily with their student athletes and year-round recruiting more athletes and are dedicated to raising monies for their programs and supporting the mission of Cuesta College.

With an athletics program that boasts 15 intercollegiate sports, nearly 300 student athletes and ten head coaches, three of those coaches stand out in regard to longevity.

Bob Wilson is the first and only head Women's Soccer coach at Cuesta College and, for the past 21 years, has led our team to more than 200 wins. Roche Nystrom, Women's Volleyball coach, has been the head coach for 23 years; however, she began at Cuesta as an assistant in 1985 for a total of 31 years on the bench. Seven-time Coach of the Year Rusty Blair has been the head Men's Basketball coach for the past 24 years, winning the Western State Conference title four out of the past five years. It is believed that Rusty and Roche may be the longest serving non-tenured head basketball and volleyball coaches, respectively, within the California Community College system. The longevity and commitment of these coaches has made their programs successful for decades and they have set a high standard for all their fellow coaches to push their programs to the top.

I want to thank all of our coaches for the enthusiasm, dedication and passion they have shown toward not only the student athletes, but to the entire Cuesta College community. I am proud to be a Cuesta College Cougar!

Bob Mariucci, Director of Athletics
MARCH

2: Board of Trustees meeting
11-12: 38th Swim & Dive Invitational
11: 33rd Annual Cuesta College Central Coast Jazz Festival Concert
15: Book of the Year Author Talk
17: Women of Distinction Award Ceremony

APRIL

1: WSC Coast Track & Field Meet
4-9: Spring Break
6: Board of Trustees meeting
12: Baseball v. Santa Barbara
14: Softball v. Santa Barbara
15: Opening Reception ~ Annual Juried Student Exhibition
21-23: 2016 Western State Conference Swim & Dive Championships
21-23: Shakespeare in the Raw
22: SLO County Band Festival

MAY

3 & 5: An Evening of Opera Scenes
4: Board of Trustees meeting
7: Jazz Ensemble Concert
11: Wind Ensemble Concert
13: Cuesta Choirs Concert
22: SLO County Band Festival

JUNE

1: Board of Trustees meeting
15: Summer school begins
17-19: The Pirates of Penzance
20: Summer Group Art Exhibition

>> FOR MORE DETAILS, CHECK OUT THE EVENTS LISTED AT WWW.CUESTA.EDU