

SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

D E A R M E M B E R O F T H E L C C C O M M U N I T Y ,

As we kick off the 2023-2024 academic year, I would like to extend a warm welcome to all of you. Whether you are a familiar face or a newcomer, your presence is valued and appreciated. I hope that the Fall semester has been going well for each and every one of you. As we move forward into this new academic year, I want to provide you with some important updates.

Just recently, I shared a summary of our budget decisions for the fiscal year 2024. These decisions were made with the goal of strengthening our workforce, meeting institutional priorities, and enhancing the overall student experience. We developed our plans based on our 2023-24 Key Priorities and made sure that our fiscal investments align with these priorities and actions. The result is a balanced budget projection that includes a 3% enrollment growth, modest tuition increases, and investments in our students and staff.

I am pleased to inform you that as of 09/28/23, our College has experienced growth. We realized a **260 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) or a 5.4% increase in FTE. Headcount increased by 7% to 722 students compared to last fall.** This growth is directly attributed to our combined efforts across the institution and to our unwavering commitment to our mission. Our continuing student population is up 9.3%. concurrent students are up 13%, new first-time students are up 6%, and readmit students are up 18%. These numbers reflect the positive impact of our work and our dedication to providing an exceptional educational experience. A few online late-start pending census dates might impact final numbers.

The previous academic year was marked by transition, **with 68 vacancies** that have now been filled. This **represents 73.24% of our full-time staff.** We are now almost fully staffed. Kudos to our HR team and all who served on a search committee. This accomplishment not only helps us meet our strategic priorities but also ensures that we can better serve our students and our local communities.

Now, our focus is on implementing critical training initiatives. We are providing training in various areas such as faculty IREPO training, CRM Recruit, Navigate, finance, student accounts, marketing, workforce, DEI, foundation, planning and assessment, and more. The IREPO and Title III grants have been instrumental in supporting these trainings. Our aim is to equip our colleagues with not just the tools of the job, but also the knowledge and skills to succeed and make a positive impact on our students and our institution's success. I want to extend my gratitude to all those who have been involved in these trainings and conferences, as your commitment to growth and improvement is greatly appreciated.

As we embark on this new academic year at Lamar Community College, let us remember that we are part of a community that is dedicated to supporting, valuing, and respecting every member. We thrive on our collective efforts and individual achievements. Our faculty bring their expertise to the forefront of learning, our dedicated staff ensure the smooth functioning of our operations, and our talented students enrich our College with their energy, dedication, and aspirations.

I want to express how pleased we are to have each and every one of you as part of our Lopes family. Here's to a successful and rewarding academic year!

Sincerely,



Dr. Rosana Reyes

## UPDATES

- The College **recently hired** several key staff, including *Amber Settles, Autum Fisher, Tammy Nickelson, Patti England, Kyle Davis, Riley Nelson, Greg Cary, David Tecklenburg, Aliceson Fierro, DeBodric White, Jinjie Zhang, Holly Hopkins, and Julie Bellomy*. Please continue to welcome and support our new Lopes.
- Lamar Community College has been selected as one of the three lead colleges to host a **Workforce Resilience Program (WRP)** Coordinator position. This grant aims to support local industry, including non-for-profits workforce training and development in alignment with Skill Advance work currently underway at LCC. We will be leading Trinida College, Pueblo Community College and Otero Community College.
- Advance Skills survey was distributed recently, seeking information on our local industries' workforce training needs. Currently our team is meeting with respondents to developed and implement their requested **customized training** for their staff.
- **Assurance Review** has been completed and reviewed. Professor Emick has led this effort as part of our HLC accreditation process. Thank you to all who contributed to this critical step that demonstrates LCC compliance with the Criteria for Accreditation and other HLC requirements.
- Recently LCC was **approved to participate in Title IV funding and administration until June 30, 2029**. Over the last several years LCC has been on monitoring status. This approval to 2029 is an incredible and vital accomplishment for LCC, led by our Financial Aid Director Jordan Kemp.
- As a reminder, LCC is now offering **Free Fitness Center membership** information to all College staff as part of our desire to promote a healthy and active workforce. Please take advantage of this staff benefit.
- We have a total of **184 student enrolled in pre-collegiate COSI, a 12% increase from last year**. LCC COSI team has added Springfield, Walsh, and Las Animas HS to our service sites. With these additional HS, we have **increased 50 students and the number of schools from 4 to 8**. We retained our MSS Scholarship grant has been extended to 2024. So far, we have over 150 eligible students for this scholarships program. Back to Work and Finish What You Started programs are also growing with the addition of 8 and 10 students respectively. Our First COSI connection BBQ held on 09/25 was a hit and we thank everyone who attended. College 101 nights are in full swing for all participating schools and are being done in partnership with Office of Financial Aid.
- **LCC Health Clinic** service hours are being revised at the request of High Plains. Additional details will be provided soon.
- The College has recently identified Dr. Book, as **LCC's Athletic Trainer**. Dr. Book is starting to support are student athletes on and off the field, and guest athletes during some of our home games.
- Our **Construction COPERR grant initiative** under Professor Jake Specht leadership, recently acquired a land property to provide our students the opportunity to learn building a new home.
- LCC Workforce Team, led by Courtney Morris recently brought back **LCC/PEP Career Fair/Job Expo**. The successful event hosted over **40 industry partners**, who interacted **with over 200 high school students and 30 college/adult students**. Thank you to all who helped make this day a success and who showcase your respective areas to these prospective students.
- **Conversation Day** – *a day when all faculty and staff come together to discuss institutional priorities, provide information, and feedback, and connect with each other* – **will be held on October 13 at 8 AM** in the Lecture Hall. Besides sharing updates, engaging in collaboration, and enjoying being together, this event will focus on

finalizing the draft of LCC Strategic Plan Year 4 (2023-24) & 5 (2024-2025). Your input on these two years' priorities and efforts is needed.

- The College recently launched a **new website**, funded under our Title III grant, led by Kelli Gaines. Please take the time to review your respective page(s) to ensure accuracy, effective layout, and expanded resources you wish to make available to our current and prospective students.
- LCC recently received **Career Advance Colorado** funding to cover tuition and fees for students enrolled in identified degree under Construction, Welding, Nursing, and Education. The College has identified 60 currently attending eligible students and **have awarded \$92,712.18 of these funds**. We expect to award additional students as requirements of qualifications are satisfied.