

VOLUME XXIV SPRING 2018

MiraCosta

Transforming Lives



*Guiding a
Community
of Leaders:*
Pathways to Success

FRIENDS OF MIRACOSTA COLLEGE:



At MiraCosta College, we strive to keep our students on the path to success. Together, our faculty and staff are rethinking the student experience and developing innovative ways to support students and provide helpful direction as they move toward their goals. Building on an 84-year history of academic excellence, MiraCosta College is implementing a framework that integrates existing student support programs with new ones. By defining clear pathways for our students, we can ensure they have the best possible chance to succeed.

We are also strategically applying many of the best practices from programs like Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), Resources and Assistance for Former Foster Youth (RAFFY), and CalWORKs. Ultimately, our students will have access to career exploration, rich academic programs, relevant hands-on experience, and support services that keep them on the path. Additionally, the Transfer Center provides a bridge between MiraCosta and four-year universities.

As students progress through their journey with us, MiraCosta College assists them by providing holistic support to address their academic and non-academic needs. The Honors Scholar Program challenges students in the classroom while fostering a sense of community and collaboration. Student clubs and athletics provide opportunities to practice teamwork and leadership skills.

In this edition of Transforming Lives, you will learn how many of our unique programs impact the student experience. At MiraCosta College, every student truly does matter, and we are excited to share some of their stories with you. As always, thank you for your support; it's only through your generosity that we can continue to do even more to positively impact the lives of our students and our community.

Sunny

Dr. Sunny Cooke
Superintendent/President
MiraCosta College



The award-winning *MiraCosta, Transforming Lives* is published by the MiraCosta College Office of Institutional Advancement. We greatly appreciate the participation of those who allowed us to share their stories.



On the Cover

Lindsey Tam delivered six research presentations through the Honors Scholar Program and will transfer to Pomona College upon graduating in 2018.

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR
Cynthia Rice Carroll

MAGAZINE EDITOR
Kristen Huyck

ART DIRECTOR/PHOTOGRAPHER
Alex Karvounis

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Elaine Dodge
Justin Morris
David Ogul

LEARN MORE AT
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COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS
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Call it the place where *Dreams Come True.*

That's the message from Dr. Lise Flocken and the counselors at the MiraCosta College Transfer Center who dedicate themselves daily to ensure students are on track to get into some of the top four-year colleges and universities in the country.

"We are here to provide guidance and help a student bridge from MiraCosta to the college or university of their choice," explains Flocken, a counselor who also serves as the Transfer Center's faculty director. "And thanks to our amazing transfer staff and counselors throughout the college, we do that every semester."

The numbers back her up. Just shy of 1,600 MiraCosta College students were accepted into a University of California campus in the fall of 2017, including 325 who are now enrolled at UC San Diego.

"MiraCosta is not just crafting an education plan from a template," Flocken said. "MiraCosta is creating a bridge to our students' future careers by facilitating internships, volunteering opportunities, resume building experiences, and preparations for graduate school. The goal is to work together as an educational institution to provide a package for success to their dream career."

Andrew Pinkard is a believer.

"When I started at MiraCosta, I was unsure of what to study, how to study, and where I wanted to go with my studies," Pinkard said. "The faculty helped give me direction both through coursework and mentorship. The Transfer Center, in particular, was an excellent resource for figuring out my next steps. The staff was knowledgeable, helpful, and attentive to student needs and goals. Dr. Lise Flocken personally made sure I was on the right track towards transferring to any UC and CSU institution. I ended up enrolling at CSU San Marcos, which was a perfect fit for me, majored in chemistry, and I'm now completing my Ph.D. in the subject at Columbia University."

Flocken said her passion is guided by her background as a community college math instructor. It was during conversations with her students that she became convinced too many lacked the guidance they needed to find their path. She returned to school, earned a doctorate and reinvented herself as a counselor, gaining the tools and the background to become a Transfer Center maestro.

"I believe in what I do," Flocken said. "Everybody in the Transfer Center does." ■

Students enjoy a welcoming atmosphere outside the Transfer Center, in the center of the Oceanside Campus.



Honors Scholar students Margaux Hingey (l), Megan Lockhart (c), and Kyle Harris explore the grounds of the University of San Diego as part of the campus tour.



FINDING HER FOCUS

Cassie Montoya was working as a hair stylist when she enrolled at MiraCosta College in search of an education that would lead to the career of her dreams. The transition was far from easy.

“It was hard,” explained Montoya, a 24-year-old Carlsbad resident. “I hadn’t been in school for five years, so I was pretty lost on what I had to do. I didn’t know how to go about making a schedule or what classes I needed to take. It wasn’t until my sister told me I needed to see a counselor that I sought out some guidance and started to map out what to do.”

Montoya’s experience illustrates the importance of creating academic roadmaps that lay out which courses students must take to reach their goals. Furthermore, she’s not alone. In a recent survey, students said that when selecting a major, they were challenged by uncertainty, trying to match majors with passions and interests, and finding majors that would support a career.

That is why MiraCosta College joined with 19 other community colleges to participate in the California Guided Pathways Project, a venture designed to substantially increase the number of students who earn a degree or a certificate. ‘Clarifying the Path’—determining student goals early on, guiding them through a methodical process, and

providing extensive support—is among the pillars of an effective Guided Pathways framework.

Montoya got the help she needed after meeting with counselors and seeking support services. She now has an education plan and is on track toward a career in engineering and clean energy.

“A more structured pathway model would really benefit students,” she said. “I think it’s a great idea.”

MiraCosta College offers quality instruction coupled with comprehensive student services. Now, through the implementation of Guided Pathways, the college will refine and enhance its services to even more effectively guide students through the complexity of higher education. As a result, the college will enable students to reach their goals quickly and easily. ■

A LITTLE HELP FROM HIS FRIENDS



JAIME MEDINA **HADN'T OPENED** **A TEXTBOOK FOR** **NEARLY TWO DECADES**

when he enrolled at MiraCosta College in the summer of 2013. But thanks to the abundance of support, guidance, and counseling he received through Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS), the former high school dropout graduated with an associate degree and is now at UC San Diego en route to a career in engineering.

“EOPS was vital,” Medina said. “They helped me financially, they made me fill out progress reports, had instructors monitor how I was doing, made sure I met with a counselor, allowed me to access tutors, and they held a whole bunch of social events that helped keep me involved. I was at school all the time. If they weren’t there, I don’t know where I would have ended up.”

This underscores why services like EOPS and Resources and Assistance for Former Foster Youth (RAFFY) are seen as a blueprint for MiraCosta and 19 other community colleges taking part in Guided Pathways. Ultimately, Guided Pathways will provide a structured, campus-wide framework that delineates academic roadmaps for students while providing a bevy of support services. These programs will significantly boost graduation rates and provide the resources students, like Medina, need to reaffirm that college is for them.

EOPS set the standard for Guided Pathways decades earlier. Established in 1969, EOPS’s mission is to encourage the enrollment, retention, graduation, and transfer of students disadvantaged by language barriers or social, economic, or educational circumstances.

“The whole idea behind Guided Pathways is having hands-on, face-to-face contact with students to make sure they have the resources and are getting the help they need to develop

and adhere to an education plan,” said Larry Burns, an EOPS counselor that worked closely with Medina, who graduated in the spring of 2017. “EOPS is doing that already. We check in with our students regularly and get progress reports from their instructors every semester. Because we work so closely with them, we’re able to find the underlying cause that may be keeping a student from doing as well as they should, whether it’s a job or a family situation or something else.”

The RAFFY Program is another model for success. Open to current or former foster youth, RAFFY students must meet with a counselor at least once a month and are provided with academic counseling, personal advising, priority registration, referrals to community resources, and more.

“The ultimate goal of the RAFFY Program is to make sure our students stay on the path, make sure they have the resources to succeed, and make sure they get the help they may need to reach their destination,” said Jaymie Gonzaga, a MiraCosta College counselor who coordinates the foster



Jaymie Gonzaga, counselor

youth program and who meets with his students at least once per month.

Students enrolled in the RAFFY program must sign a contract committing themselves to meeting various benchmarks that are critical components of degree completion. The result: the RAFFY program has a retention rate exceeding 90 percent for students utilizing all of its services.

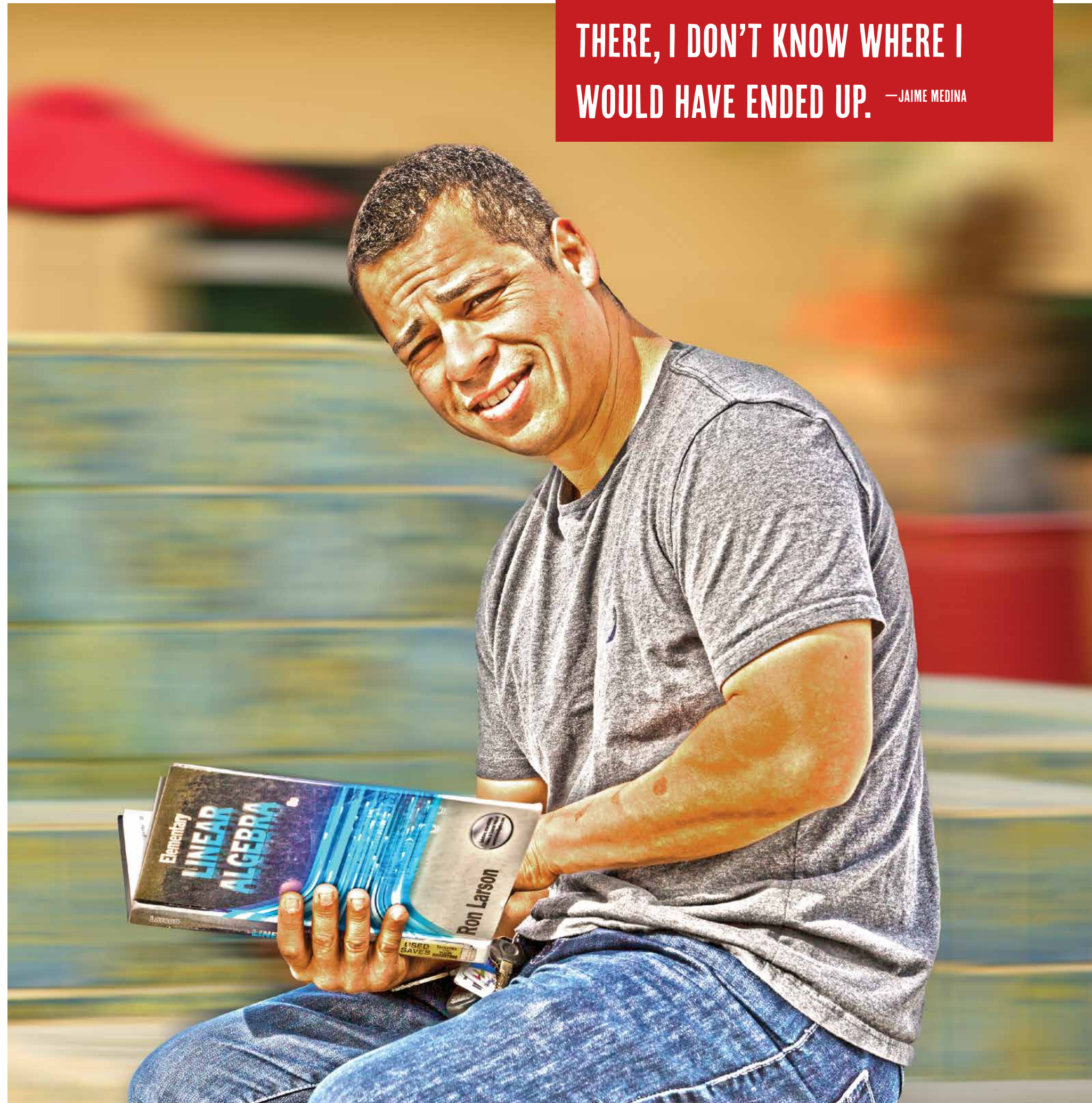
“RAFFY, EOPS, and all of these programs are setting the standard in making sure students succeed,” Gonzaga said. “Creating a pathway and providing the services they need is critical.”

EOPS and RAFFY are two examples of successful programs targeted to select groups of MiraCosta College students. Through the implementation of Guided Pathways, MiraCosta utilizes the best practices from both programs to develop a scaled and integrated approach to ensure all students have the support needed to enter on a path, stay on track, and reach success through attainment of their career goals. ■

QUOTE RAFFY, EOPS, CALWORKS—ALL OF THESE PROGRAMS ARE SETTING THE STANDARD IN MAKING SURE OUR STUDENTS SUCCEED. —JAYMIE GONZAGA

QUOTE

EOPS WAS VITAL. IF THEY WEREN'T THERE, I DON'T KNOW WHERE I WOULD HAVE ENDED UP. —JAIMIE MEDINA





Honors Scholar student Lindsey Tam will graduate in 2018 and is transferring to Pomona College.

The Honors Scholar Program at MiraCosta College guides a community of leaders.

Served by a robust support system, students who join the Honors Scholar Program experience structure, guidance, and a strong sense of community—setting them up to transfer successfully and excel academically at four-year colleges and universities.

“We have students who are food insecure or financially insecure and can’t afford their textbooks. Our students are reflective of the MiraCosta population as a whole, and a lot of them are facing personal obstacles in the way of their success,” states Christopher Sleeper, a professor who has served as the Honors Coordinator since 2009. “What’s great about Honors Scholar Program is that, because the faculty care so much and the district has ensured resources to create a firm foundation, we’re able to remove some of these obstacles. Our students are able to find success, find growth, and find a place where they’re safe to be themselves—but also challenge themselves as scholars and professionals.”

The Honors Scholar Program, which is open to any MiraCosta student with at least a 3.25 college GPA or 3.5 high school GPA, is predicated on four goals: enhanced academic experiences, transfer success, self-development, and community-building.

ENHANCED ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES

The seminar-style classes offered by the Honors Scholar Program are small, with an average class size of 19, and strive to expose students to a discussion-based pedagogical model.

Recently, the program initiated a system called Honors Contracts under which an individual student and a professor work together to coordinate a tailored academic experience for that student (in the context of a regular course). Currently there are 80 faculty members available for Honors Contracts, with the number expanding. Since any transfer-level course can potentially become an Honors course, this flexible system has the potential to expose the Honors model to a broader population of students.

The Honors Scholar Program also provides opportunities for students to conduct individual research projects and present to their peers through on-campus events like OMNI and off-campus conferences like the Bay Area Consortium. Each student is connected with a faculty mentor, who advises them at every step of the process. The strong correlation between faculty-student interactions and student success outcomes has been confirmed by a variety of higher education studies.

“Research presentations allow students to take ownership

PATH TO SUCCESS

of their education and personalize it. It becomes yours. Choose something you're passionate about, develop it, and share what you've learned. That's what the research conferences are all about," says Sleeper.

Public speaking is a terrifying prospect for a lot of people, but speaking clearly and confidently is also a critical component of many contemporary careers. Through research conferences, the Honors program encourages students to attack that fear directly—inside a supportive community and through gradual exposure.

Lindsey Tam heard about Honors while attending a college fair during high school and was attracted to the research opportunities. She feels so strongly about the value of the Honors community that she commutes to MiraCosta for an hour every day, even though there are closer colleges. She has since delivered six research presentations all over California and is on track to do two more.

"The presentation process is very nerve-racking, but also very rewarding. At the end of this process, the Honors Scholar Program shapes their presenters to be well-rounded and well-versed in all aspects of their project. After my presentation, other students will approach me and ask me intriguing questions about my research and my methods. It was rewarding to be able to connect with students with whom I shared similar interests," she stated. Tam is transferring to Pomona College, and plans to double major in anthropology and mathematics.

BEYOND MIRACOSTA

The Honors Scholar Program endeavors to equip students with the best possible chance to gain admittance to a four-year university, which is one reason why



97 percent of MiraCosta Honors Scholar Program students are able to transfer successfully.

First, the program connects students with the support and guidance they need to navigate the (often complex) transfer process. The Honors Lounge is staffed daily by Ariana Lewis, who provides information and student support in her role as the Honors Scholar Program secretary. During the Honors Orientation and beyond, students are informed about requirements, advised to meet with a counselor at the Transfer Center, and encouraged to take a campus tour to see if a college is the right fit for them.

Over the past three years, the Honors Scholar Program has sent an average of 50 students each year to visit UC campuses, and over 30 students each year to visit CSU campuses. Tour participants meet with admissions officers, transfer centers, and even

MiraCosta alumni to ensure they have multiple opportunities to have their questions answered.

Second, the program focuses on enhancing students' college applications. Students can indicate their self-discipline to admissions officers by participating in Honors classes or presenting research at a conference.

Another powerful tool for Honors students to utilize is the Transfer Alliance Program (TAP)—a transfer agreement between UCLA and MiraCosta College that offers priority consideration to students that complete five Honors courses with a GPA of 3.5 or higher. The UCLA transfer rate for these students is between 70–90 percent every year. There are also Honors transfer agreements with 20 other private and public colleges.

SELF-DEVELOPMENT

The experience of an Honors class or a research conference is a taste of the academic rigor students will encounter when they move on to a university. The skills Honors students develop during these challenges ensure that they are fully prepared for what's ahead.

"Honors has taught me a range of life skills, including writing, researching, and presenting. The research experience also taught me to show initiative, to persevere, and to constantly do my best to improve. When I ran into an obstacle, I had to reach out to my mentor and library staff for assistance. I learned how to ask for help if I need it. In all, I am incredibly grateful to the program for giving students the resources we need to succeed," said Tam.

COMMUNITY-BUILDING

The students that join the Honors Scholar Program are united by a shared passion for knowledge and a similar goal: transferring to a four-year college. Their cohesion is further strengthened by social activities like campus tours, trivia nights, and even "bad poetry contests." Honors students go to the movies or experience MiraCosta College theatre productions as a group. The program also encourages students and faculty to connect through Q&A discussions like "pizza with a

professor." Research has long demonstrated that this kind of participation has a positive effect on GPAs and retention rates because students are especially motivated to work on their education when they're connected to other students inside the context of a supportive community.

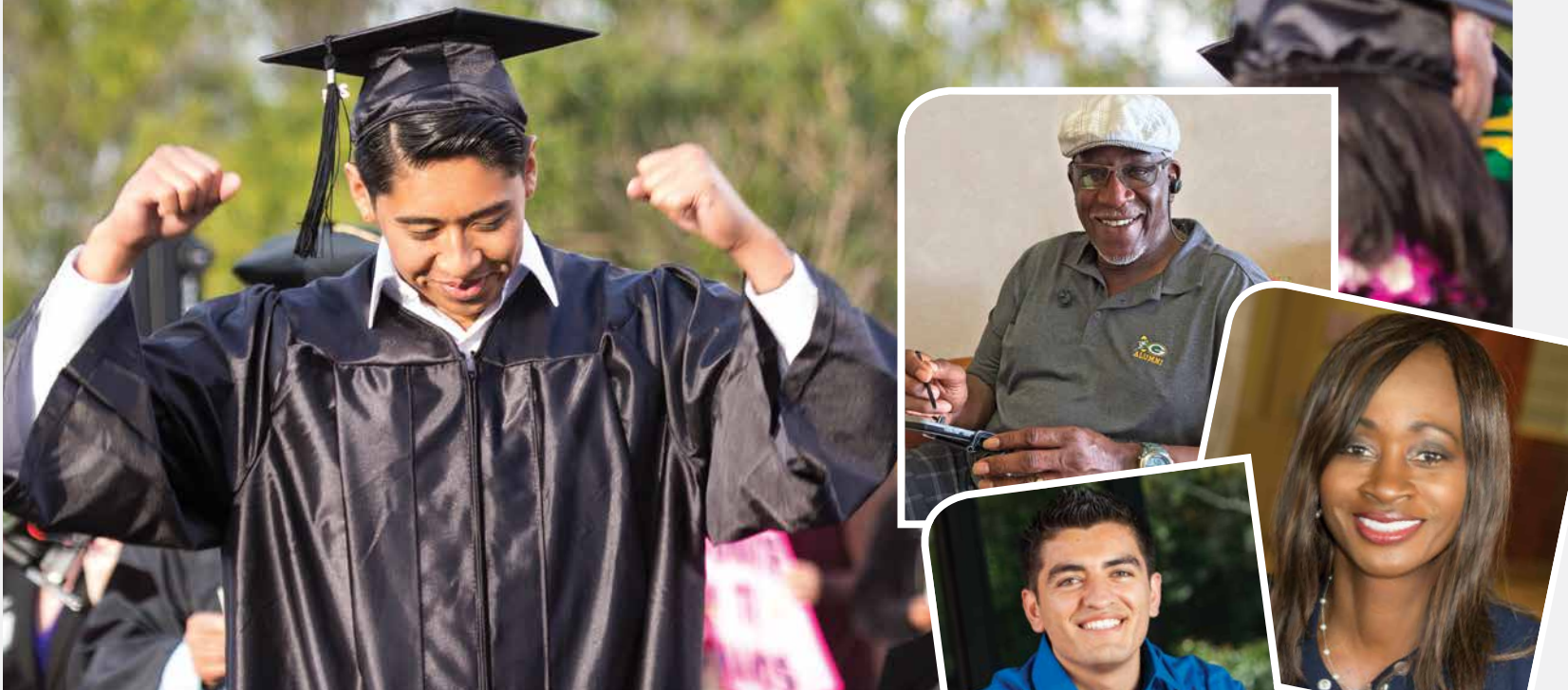
"It is always great to connect with students who are going through the same things as you. The support network is immensely helpful, especially if a student is struggling. Whenever someone walks into the lounge, they can expect to be greeted by name by a team of amazing staff and peers. Another reason the Honors experience is so fulfilling is that it gives students a chance to teach themselves and to teach others," Tam said. ■

Honors Scholar student and Jack Kent Cooke Scholar Josue Luna meets with secretary Ariana Lewis in the Honors Scholar Lounge.



The Honors Scholar Program experience gives students a chance to teach themselves and to teach others.

ONCE A SPARTAN ALWAYS A SPARTAN



MiraCosta College Foundation Launches Alumni Association

The MiraCosta College Foundation, part of the Office of Institutional Advancement, is connecting alumni, students, and community with the launch of the MiraCosta Alumni Association. Since its official launch in February 2018, the Alumni Association has acquired more than 500 registered members and the numbers continue to grow.

The MiraCosta Alumni Association is all about Spartan pride. Membership is free and membership lasts a lifetime. "As alumni, you play an important role in strengthening MiraCosta's tradition of excellence. The Alumni Association is an easy way to stay connected, keep up with the latest news, get involved in events, and share what MiraCosta means to you," said Dr. Sunny Cooke, MiraCosta College superintendent/president.

"The education I received at MiraCosta College has given me the confidence to achieve anything I want to

accomplish; and with the establishment of the MiraCosta Alumni Association, I can continue the amazing connections I have built, and better support the institution that made a big difference in my life...no matter where life takes me," explains France Magtira, class of 2010.

The Alumni Association is open to anyone who attended MiraCosta for a class, completed a certificate, or earned a degree at MiraCosta College. Benefits include:

- Access to a nationwide network of alumni
- Invitations to alumni activities including social and career networking events and fundraisers
- Lifelong learning
- Highlighting of accomplishments and service in newsletters and online

Are you an alumnus of MiraCosta College? Sign up for free at alumni.miracosta.edu.



A Message from MiraCosta College Foundation Board President
Stephen "Hap" L'Heureux



College receives \$260,000 planned gift from the Bringe estate

The MiraCosta College Foundation recently accepted a check presented by Larry Hatter, former Foundation board member, for \$260,000 from the Bringe estate. Mrs. Anita Bringe and her husband Merlin William were longtime residents of Oceanside. MiraCosta College's largest planned gift on record is \$1 million from the Masinter estate, received in 2001.

Bequests, such as those received from the Bringe and Masinter estates, provide much-needed support to the college while allowing donors to continue their philanthropic work

and establish their legacies in perpetuity. We are very grateful for every planned gift made to the college.

Gifts of this magnitude are always very thoughtfully made. They serve as powerful testaments to a donor's trust and confidence that MiraCosta College will honor their intent beyond their lifetime.

If you love what MiraCosta College does for our community, we encourage you to take the time to put MiraCosta College in your plans.

Your gifts can make a difference in students' lives, and giving can benefit you!

While tax laws have changed, there are still many ways you can make a gift to support student success.

Even with the changes, making a gift to MiraCosta College can still provide benefits to you.

Contact Elaine Dodge, 760.795.6652 to learn more.

1

IRA Rollover Gift

If you are 70 ½ or older you can avoid extra income this year by making a gift from your IRA.

2

Gift of Securities

Donate your appreciated stock (with a low basis) and avoid capital gains tax.

3

Life Insurance Gift

Eliminate an unneeded life insurance policy by making a gift of the cash balance to support our work.

4

Life Income Gift

Fund a charitable gift annuity or charitable remainder trust and receive lifetime payments. Ask for a free illustration with your benefits.

5

Charitable Bequest

Make a gift to support students that costs you nothing today. Provide for your loved ones first and then MiraCosta College with a bequest made in your will or trust.



1 Barnard Drive
Oceanside, CA 92056

FOUNDATION

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A special
THANK YOU
to the **KURTHS** *for their*
planned gift.

Janice Kurth M.D., Ph.D. and Matthias Kurth, M.D., Ph.D. are champions for MiraCosta College students. As medical doctors, Janice and Matthias have dedicated their careers to helping others. Believing in the transformative power of an education, Janice and Matthias have chosen to include the MiraCosta College Foundation in their trust. Their bequest will fund “scholarships for students with financial needs.”

Matthias worked as a neurologist, and is a pharmaceutical physician, as well as a Rotarian. Janice devoted her medical career to biomedical research and pharmaceutical consulting. Currently, she mentors teenage students, serves as a member of The San Diego Women’s Foundation and has been an active Rotarian since 2004. She is a past district governor and currently serves as the district Rotary Foundation chairperson. Janice joined the MiraCosta College Foundation Board of Directors in 2016, serving on the scholarship committee and comprehensive campaign task force.

Janice and Matthias have lived in North San Diego County for 21 years, where they raised their two daughters. They are members of the MiraCosta College Foundation’s Heritage Society, and enjoy invitations to unique campus events and selected faculty lectures, hosted receptions with the college president, and are setting an example for others through philanthropy. ■



For information on how you can make a planned gift in support of higher education, contact Elaine Dodge at 760.795.6652 or edodge@miracosta.edu.