

SOLANO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT  
GOVERNING BOARD

UNADOPTED MINUTES

March 17, 2010

**APPENDIX A**

Vice President Young recognized Ms. Charlene Snow, who requested to comment on Item 10. (b) Independent Contractors, Contract Education, Rockridge Partners, Inc.

“I’m Charlene Snow, Vice President of the Solano College Faculty Association. Tom Grube could not be here tonight and asked me to address you on his behalf and read the following: ‘On the attachment to the Agenda, pages 2 and 3, hiding between some small hourly hires we find two items totaling \$100,000 for Rockridge Partners. Do you know what Rockridge Partners is going to do to earn their \$100,000? Have you asked whether these services are needed or worth what we’re paying for them? What have we spent with them in the past? What have they done for us? I’ve asked several people, but couldn’t get a clear idea from anyone regarding exactly what they do for the College. I couldn’t let a \$100,000 expense for a consultant just slip through on the Consent Agenda. I don’t know whether to rejoice or get upset when I hear this contract is for much less than we’ve spent with them in the past.

The DSP Reading Specialist position has been eliminated. Several CSEA members have been given pink slips. The justification given was that the categorical fund that was paying them got cut. We can’t pay them out of the general fund? There isn’t enough money in the general fund to do so? Yet the general fund has \$100,000 for Rockridge Partners?

Do you know the kind of work that the employees working in the programs that have been cut provide? Do you know what services Rockridge Partners provides will still get done without a consultant? What is lost if this contract is not renewed?

With the work provided by the employees who’ve seen their positions get cut get done without them? What is lost when these employees are gone?

I don’t have the answers to all of the questions I’ve asked. In particular, despite a bit of effort, I don’t have answers regarding the work done by Rockridge Partners. If you don’t know either, might I suggest you take the time to demand some answers before this \$100,000 consultant contract quietly slides through on the Consent Agenda? Perhaps this should be tabled until some answers can be provided to you, to the College employees who are losing their jobs, to the citizens of Solano County, to FaBPAC (the committee which is supposed to have input on budget items), and to the students who have come to depend on the services that will no longer be available next year because the general fund doesn’t have the money to pay for them.”

Vice President Young recognized Ms. Maureen Mason-Muyco, who requested to comment on financial aid.

“I have had the privilege of representing Solano Community College as the Financial Aid Outreach Specialist since November 2006. I also serve with the California

Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (CASFAA) on the High School Relations Committee and recently was elected to serve as the association's 2010 Vice President of State Issues. My position as the Financial Aid Outreach Specialist is the beginning of my second career. I previously enjoyed a successful, dynamic and lucrative career in private industry.

Since beginning my position as Financial Aid Outreach Specialist, I have witnessed phenomenal changes at Solano Community College in the student financial aid industry affecting both access and delivery to students.

During the past four years, I have witnessed numerous changes in student financial aid policy legislation at the federal and state levels. These legislative changes have affected students increased access and impacted school financial aid administrative staff to deliver student aid in a timely, efficient manner while complying with regulatory changes.

For example, the major federal changes witnessed to student financial aid include:

- HERA 2006: Higher Education Reconciliation Act
- CCRAA 2007: College Cost Reduction and Access Act
- HEOA 2008: Higher Education Opportunity Act\*
- ECASLA 2009: Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act
- ARRA 2009: American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
- SAFRA: Student Aid Fiscal Responsibility Act

(November 2009 passed House; March 2010 pending Senate decision—held up behind Healthcare Reform debate—note College Access Challenge Grant [Cal-SOAP]).

\*Important to note that 2008 HEOA has legislated changes for schools to disclose specific consumer information topics which I will be happy to address at another time.

In addition, increased student access to the Federal Pell Grant has been astonishing over the last four years. For example, the FAO has experiences an annual 30% increase in applications (FAFSA/ISIR) in 2008-09 and 2009-10. Our SCC financial aid office has served more students and awarded more Pell Grants than ever before. For example:

- \$1.7M awarded in 2006-07
- \$3.4M awarded in 2007-08
- \$5.5M awarded in 2008-09
- \$5.8M awarded in 2009-10 with a projection to reach \$11M by 6/30/10

I like to think these phenomenal increases reflect the results of my stellar efforts as Financial Aid Specialist, but fully understand impact of the current economic crisis impacting our nation and affecting our local student population.

I am here tonight to speak on behalf of Solano Community College financial aid students and the financial aid staff who serves them. We are serving more students and awarding more aid with less staff, while navigating institutional instability, technical challenges with new system software implementation and lack of instructional training

for both (students and staff), along with phenomenal increases in the number of financial aid awards and students.

We experienced dramatic challenges in 2008-09:

- Go live Banner financial aid module.
- Transitioned from Federal Student Aid FFELP to Direct Loan Program (prior to SAFRA).
- 1 SSA II resigned from position—January 2008; 1 SSA II promoted to Interim Financial Aid Analyst—September 2008.
- Hired one new FA SSA II staff (replacement).
- Banner recovery begins.
- Lost three key FA staff:
  - FA Advisor, passed away March 2009—position unfilled.
  - FA Dean, retired April 2009—position unfilled until July 2009.
  - FA Analyst, retired August 2009—position unfilled.

I want to thank the SCC Governing Board and Dr. Laguerre for their continued support of Art Lopez, Interim Dean of Enrollment Management/Financial Aid Director. Dean Art Lopez has tremendously helped both the SCC financial aid staff and the students we seek to serve. Specifically, I want to point out the vital need for trained financial aid staff to continue to serve increased volumes of students while striving to manage record breaking increases in Federal Pell Grant awards to our students.”