Dear Colleagues:

I am in my native village with a group of Solano Community College students whom we proudly call the “Engineers.” The village of Saint George is a village on the Caribbean Sea and filled with coconuts, avocados, mangos, and other native fruit trees. The heat and humidity is a constant.

On July 9, the students broke ground on a new elementary school project where an old and dilapidated one existed. These students have been planning this school for almost two years. Using skills learned from Professor Karen Cook’s classes, they designed the building, planned a budget, and raised funds to make the project a reality. They earned the highest praise last Saturday as they led the clean up effort of the torn-down school. As our students earnestly removed rocks and concrete, I was reminded of the strong community relationships they have built—especially given that this trip is only their third visit.

There is plenty of work to be done here and despite the ever-present heat and humidity of Haiti, the hopes and dreams of the students who are determined to make this village a better place have made me proud and inspired me to continue the work.

Before you return to the College next month, I thought I would highlight some of the summer’s news:

**Postscript on Graduation accomplishments:**
In addition to the College’s fine graduation ceremony in May, it should be noted that the Fire Academy recently graduated the entire class that started together six months ago—quite an accomplishment for these cadets. Additionally, I attended and spoke at the Foster Youth graduation this past month and encouraged all to enroll at the College. Over the past two years, the College has done a commendable job to assist foster youth.

**Center for Land Based Learning (CLBL):**
On the recommendation of Winters’ Councilman Mike Martin, Shirley Lewis, Sandra Diehl, and I visited the CLBL located in Winters on the farm of Mr. Craig McNamara, President and founder of the organization. The CLBL is a 40-acre walnut farm which headquarters the CLBL statewide program, an organization that is dedicated, in part, to teaching California youth about agriculture and respect for the natural environment. Because the CLBL is not working with any other community college, all parties considered the potential for pursuing a program in agriculture at SCC.
**College Presentation to Dixon Chamber of Commerce:**
In an ongoing effort to seek community support for the College, I made a presentation to the Dixon Chamber of Commerce in June. As the Chamber is about to launch an education committee, I volunteered to seek representatives from the College to serve on this committee. The Chamber directors are interested in pursuing ideas to establish a Middle High School and to investigate the potential for establishing educational partnerships with Winters and our College.

**Vacaville Homestay MOU:**
Shemila Johnson, Coordinator of Marketing and Recruitment, has secured a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Vacaville Homestay Program (VHP). The Solano International Education Program (SIEP) provides international students the opportunity to learn about our College and we will be working directly with the Vacaville Homestay Program to provide safe, reliable housing for these students. As the VHP hosts international groups throughout the year, Solano College will be afforded the opportunity to interact with and recruit potential international students to enroll at SCC.

**Working with the National Council on Black American Affairs (NCBAA) and its affiliate, the Western Regional Council on Black American Affairs (WRCBAA):**
Both the NCBAA and WRCBAA are two related organizations serving African-American educators and students. I have served on the WRCBAA Board of Directors organization for approximately five years.

At a recent meeting, the Board of Directors formed an ad hoc committee to formulate recommendations for the Student Success Taskforce for California. I was asked to Chair the group and to ensure that the new legislation coming from the California Taskforce does not inhibit access to community colleges with regard to students of color. My aim is to work with colleagues from the State to evaluate and monitor the new law and to insure its just implementation.

**Budget news:**
For the second year in a row, the budget passed the legislature on time--a budget that relies on voter approval of a November ballot initiative to fund a stay-the-course budget for education. If the budget initiative fails, the $6 million in trigger cuts will primarily fall on education to keep expenditures aligned with revenues. The impact on Solano College could translate to a net apportionment change of $2,823,174 if the tax package fails, to include a workload reduction of -7.30% and total FTES reduction of -618.09. In the meantime, FABPAC has worked diligently on the 2012-2013 tentative budget and recommends that the College move forward with a conservative scenario, assuming the tax package fails.

On the plus side, we did receive word that we will receive a minimum of $1.5M for our solar project; though much less than what we applied for, the amount could increase if College of the Desert decides to use less than what it was allotted.

**Workforce Training:**
Having our Workforce Training Program become self-sufficient is an imperative. This is one area where we can be innovative and make a profit as the program focuses on corporate and contract training. EVP Reyes is streamlining the responsibilities of the current director, Deborah
Mann, by removing duties that have prevented a clear delineation of her responsibilities. We are seeking to reclassify the position to ensure better accountability and clearer expectations as well as to better compensate the staff.

**Grants:**
Cynthia Garcia is our new grant writer. She has expressed interest in resource development, in addition to grants. We expect this position to pay for itself.

**Recreating the Theater program:**
The SCC theater is now on its own to build a program that will include student education as its main feature. As it stands, the College will run the theater and revenues from the rental of the theater will return to the College to continue to enhance the services provided. Because the theater program will now focus on instruction, we will enhance the opportunities for collaborating with some of our other Fine Arts programs on campus. Although we have made major changes, the College looks forward to working with the new Theater program.

**Accreditation progress:**
Faculty and staff are spending time this summer working collaboratively on Accreditation matters. The Academic Senate has assembled a group of SLO coordinators who are working to ready the SLOs for Fall review.

**Foundation:** Transitioning the College funded director of our Foundation to a director that will be self-supporting is a work in progress. By eliminating the public relations aspect of this position, we can expect higher returns from the new director’s efforts. The Foundation Board is seeking an interim director until a full search can take place to replace Mr. Peter Bostic.

**I hope that your summer is going well and look forward to seeing you at Flex-Cal—only one month away!**

Jowel C. Laguerre, Ph.D.
Superintendent-President

“Makak pa janm kwe petit-li led”
A monkey never thinks her baby is ugly.