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February 2009

## ***Growing, Growing, Gone!***

*Adjusting to Normalcy after Years of Decline*

By Jillian Daly, YFA President

As LTAC, CSEA, and YFA all move toward ratification of bargaining agreements, YCCD upper management head towards a salary restructure, and MJC begins to tap on the breaks for an estimated 20% reduction in course offerings this Summer, many faculty and staff are beginning to wonder, "What is Going on!?" How is it that YCCD can afford to eek out raises in this economy and with no State Budget in sight while appearing to make cuts? Well, here's an attempt to explain.

## **The State Budget and Community Colleges**

First, the reality is that Sacramento has finally heard our message about the importance of community colleges for economic recovery and for the creation of a strong workforce for California's future. California community colleges are the largest provider of workforce training in the state, offering more than 175 degree and certificate programs in vocational fields such as nursing, business, and computer science. Furthermore, community college students who earn a degree or certificate experience a 63% wage gain on average within three years. Often I have heard the statistic that for every dollar invested in the community college system, the state earns back four dollars, and each budget proposal on the table in Sacramento recognizes this.

Yes, the State budget reality is that California is in a \$40 billion dollar deficit and will soon adopt an 18-month budget that will call for a combination of spending cuts and increased taxes. California community colleges, though, have remained a priority in all budget proposals and will not be taking a funding hit save for the loss of the proposed .68% COLA. Growth is funded at 3%, Basic Skills and Career & Technical Education will continue to receive funding support, and there is a Governor's statute that will soon pass to give community colleges the same

property tax shortfall backfill that the K-12 system enjoys. All this is good news and means that YCCD will receive *more* money this year than it did last year.

## **The State of YCCD: Where We Were and Where We Are Now**

Two years ago, I wrote a *YFA Insider* article entitled "State Budget Highs and FTES Lows in a Year of Negotiation." Ironically, YCCD is now experiencing the flip side to that scenario. As many of you recall, in 2003 YCCD started to slip into an enrollment decline, and by 2004-2005 could no longer stave off the inevitable and declared a decline in base FTES to the State. What that means is that for five years faculty, staff, and administrators have all been told to "Grow, Grow, Grow!" and we were given State Restoration funding for every FTE we gained on our way back up to our base number. Section offerings increased, our Summer sessions became larger, administration at MJC began studying the need for a Winter Intersession all in the need to grow FTES back to our 2004-2005 base within our allotted three-year Restoration funding period. By mid-Summer 2008, we had done it—we were back to base. What that means, though, is beginning Fall 2009, YCCD began to live under "normalcy." From now on, we are funded for our base FTES apportionment and are allowed to "Grow, Grow, Grow" only the amount funded each year from the State—the proposal for the 18-month budget now being debated in Sacramento is for 3% growth. Unfortunately (though, arguably a good place to be in), YCCD is growing at a current 10% growth rate—way above the funding allotted to us from the State, and hence the need to begin pulling back on section offerings for Summer 2009.

Thus far, all the growth within the district has occurred very efficiently, and though our FTES is above 3%, we are achieving all that growth within the funding (cont'd on pg 3)



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*Faculty and Staff Are Invited by ASMJC and YFA to participate in the  
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*For California Community Colleges*

*The Purpose of the Rally is to Advocate for California Community College Funding.*

*Students, Faculty, and Staff from Every Community College Across the State are Coming  
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allotted to us. Increasing our productivity and managing our enrollment efficiently will be the key in order for MJC and Columbia College to meet the needs of our increased student populations while remaining within the funds allocated to us from the State. Furthermore, YCCD will no doubt begin an “adjustment period” in order to figure out how to meet funding priorities under the “normalcy” of living within State growth percents. And one of those recognized priorities is trying to get employee/administrative total compensation packages to be at least “average.”

## **Compensation Realities at YCCD**

At the bargaining table this last round, both District and YFA were confronted with a grim picture. Three years ago we had bargained a compensation package and infused our salary schedule in such a way as to reach at least median against our cohorts in total compensation. This round, the data revealed that we had lost ground. In salary alone, faculty would need between a 13-6% raise, depending on step, just to get to median; once total compensation data was added, faculty would need an average 6% salary increase. After discussion at the table, we realized that negotiating over COLA is no longer enough for YCCD, and that if we ever want to remain competitive, we will have to begin bargaining for COLA plus additional funds just to catch up to being “average.” In the Santa Rosa annual State Salary Comparison, YCCD ranks between 57<sup>th</sup> and 64<sup>th</sup> out of 72 community college districts in the State, depending upon what step you are on. That’s not where we need to be if we want to attract quality faculty to our district.

Furthermore, total compensation figures for our upper management reveal that we are ranked 72 in the State, and though we do not have comparison

data yet for CSEA, it has been five years waiting for the Reclassification Study to be funded, so one assumes they’re keeping company with the rest of us.

In the world of “normalcy” that YCCD has entered, new monies coming in from the State will mostly be from three sources: increased apportionment from the previous year’s growth FTES, new growth money (within the % determined by the State), and COLA. Increased compensation over and above COLA will have to be an ongoing part of all budget and enrollment management discussions for the foreseeable future. (Note: with no COLA offered to us from the State, all bargaining agreements used monies over and above COLA this year). Do we use the money to increase sections, for professional development, for increased healthcare costs, for energy and upkeep for our new Measure E facilities, or for compensation? It’s a tough discussion to have. For this year, the two colleges and Central Services have been asked to “give back” monies to the district in order to cover the expenses accrued through the bargaining agreements, approximately \$2.3 million in total. (By the way, faculty’s salary increase for 2008-2009 came to about \$190,000). Over the last several years, though, efficiencies have allowed the three entities to save money and to keep all savings rather than allocate back to district. This year at MJC, for instance, while district has asked the college to return \$1 million, MJC’s total savings is at about \$1.6 million without counting additional growth funds that will be allocated to the college once the State budget is finalized. YCCD’s portion of 3% growth should come to about \$3.2 million in additional funds.

## **What’s Next?**

Due to increased efficiencies and conservative budgeting, YCCD is in fairly good shape—the main issue for both colleges is how to manage growth. Columbia College is small and for years has had its own enrollment



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management system involving a group of four types of class priorities and three class-size scenarios. Each semester, depending upon State growth funding and previous semester FTES numbers, one of the scenarios is chosen to maintain enrollment figures. At MJC, the picture is not so clear. Within the last year, MJC has changed its decision-making processes, and though, admittedly, those processes are still in progress, it has resulted in a current fragmentation and disconnect in making key enrollment management decisions. Clearly discussion must begin to take place to determine the relationship between the Instructional Administrator's Council (IAC), the Planning and Budget Committee, the Enrollment Management Workgroup, and College Council. Currently all entities seem to be having good discussions about how to schedule more efficiently, but each seems to be doing so in a vacuum. In the short-term, the President's Cabinet has made the decision to cut back MJC's Summer offerings, but for the long-term, a clearer process based in shared governance must be created as enrollment management seems to be in our long-term future.

Finally, while unemployment numbers increase and the economy continues to plunge, we know that the population will turn to our community colleges for retraining in record numbers. While community colleges have not experienced budget cuts in any of the budget proposals, *more money* will be needed to manage increased enrollment and all the other priorities outlined above. We must advocate for our system! It is imperative that all of us who work within the community college system begin a systematic campaign to ensure that community college funding remains a priority for our legislators in Sacramento. If you are angry that sections are being cut to manage our growth, then do something about it and tell your legislators we need more growth money. I encourage all of you to continue the letter-writing campaign and

to participate in the March in March, March 16<sup>th</sup> or the FACCC Advocacy and Policy Conference March 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> (See information below).

As I said at MJC on Institute Day, AB 1725 has given us a partnership within this system we all care so much about, and with that partnership comes responsibilities—to our programs, our services, and to our students. It's time to take the next step and advocate.